

WARRIOR

whispering

Connections:

National Research Agenda

State Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum

Regional and Local Coordinated Responses



Director's message

You will note a change of face leading into the Director's message. This introduces the first of several changes occurring at CDFVR. Early in the year (and I think I can still hear some quiet crying) we said goodbye to Heather Nancarrow, CDFVR's longstanding Director. As many readers will know, Heather departed to take up the CEO position of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) (then called the NCE, the National Centre of Excellence to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children). Heather has written an article for this edition of the Re@der which will keep you up to date on the vital work she is undertaking.

A little about myself: I commenced in late January as Interim Director, and have the privilege of being in this role until November this year. I have enjoyed returning to Mackay, having lived here from 1977 to 2005. During that time I raised a family and worked in the child care, group home, neighbourhood centre and disability sectors, as well as roles in the (then) Department of Communities. I then moved to Brisbane to work in the program and policy areas of the Department before leaving during late 2012 to complete doctoral studies. My PhD work is a feminist, narrative study which I commenced in Mackay, with local stakeholders, focused on child protection and foster care. So my research, past work and interests have strong linkages to domestic and family violence and the current child protection system in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In the past months it has been so rewarding to re-engage with CQUniversity, the domestic violence sector and other key stakeholders... which brings me to the theme of this edition of the Re@der: connections. This Re@der explores the idea of "connections" at multiple levels, from the changes in the child protection sphere, to the Coal Face interview, via the reflections on the 2014 Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum.

In Queensland there is a continued resurgence of interest in bridging the gap between child protection and domestic violence theory and practice as noted in the last Director's Message. You may remember that in our December Re@der, Katrina Finn provided a commentary about the report from the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry *Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection*. In this issue Katrina discusses the implications for domestic violence responses in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 'roadmap'. On a related note, CDFVR is providing advice, literature and information through a variety of mechanisms as the Queensland government moves to implement these recommendations. PeakCare Qld Inc has released a discussion paper "Towards a better understanding and management of the nexus between child protection and domestic and family violence", and CDFVR is "connecting" with a range of stakeholders to facilitate the engagement of



the sector and providing advice to government regarding the child protection/domestic and family violence interface.

May, of course, saw Domestic and Family Violence Prevention month, and as part of this annual event CDFVR continues to host the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum. This is always a highlight of the year, but this Forum was very special, since it marked the Queensland Forum's 10th anniversary. I won't elaborate as we have devoted a number of pages in this Re@der to celebrating this important networking, learning and sharing event. During the Forum, we had the privilege of Heather Nancarrow speaking about the national research scene, prior to the launch of the ANROWS National Research Agenda. Heather's article articulates the strategic research themes, and I encourage all readers to visit their website to subscribe for updates from ANROWS.

During May I was kept busy with media requests, and the 'Make the Call' theme for the month was a great vehicle to convey some of the month's key messages for friends, family, colleagues and community in general. At the end of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month CDFVR also launched a new resource, 'Orders and Breaches', and we extend our thanks to all who contributed to finalising this document. This new factsheet has been written in "frequently asked question" style to provide key insights into domestic violence orders (e.g. application options, court processes etc.), and implications for failure to comply with orders.

As readers may be aware, CDFVR is also tasked with supporting the training/ professional development needs of nominated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence prevention services. Staff from these services identified a need to undertake the accredited 'Course in Responding to Domestic and Family Violence' (30949QLD), so CDFVR has been working with Save the Children (a Registered Training Organisation) to deliver the three modules in Mackay and Cherbourg.

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In concluding I will flag with you further exciting changes happening at CDFVR in the coming months. Firstly, we are "on the move" physically: CQUniversity is set to merge with Central Queensland Institute of TAFE (CQ TAFE) to create Queensland's first dual sector university. Across five states, the merger affects up to 40,000 students and staff... including the CDFVR team. The two institutions merge on 1 July, 2014, with full integration expected in 2015. As many of our readers know, we have been resident at CQUniversity Mackay's Ooralea Campus since 2002, so it will be the beginning of a new era when the Centre moves to the CQUniversity Mackay's City Campus in Sydney Street. CDFVR staff will keep you posted as final details are confirmed, but it is not anticipated that we will leave our current location until the merger is in progress. To finish on a "connections" note, our other big

news is the re-structure of our website, an activity that has been on the CDFVR agenda for some time. In the latter part of the year we hope that you benefit from an updated and more interactive site, including a CDFVR presence on social media. We will also be moving to utilise webinars and other technology to more broadly reach, and support, service providers and workers. Finally, recruitment processes are in progress for staff at the Director and Researcher levels, and there will be a focus on responding to the National Research Priorities. Please visit our website to find out more about these developments. I take this opportunity to thank all who have assisted CDFVR during these past months of staff transition. I have valued the collegial support extended to me during my months in this position. Best wishes,

Heather Lovatt



Left to right: With the new *Orders and Breaches* resource, Cindy Reck (DoCCSDS), Lauren Pattie (CDFVR), Heather Lovatt (CDFVR), Jude Marshall (DVRs Mackay) and Debbie Dow (DoCCSDS)

Implications for domestic violence responses in the implementation of *Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection*, the Report of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry

by Katrina Finn, CDFVR

Amongst other recommendations, *Taking Responsibility: A Roadmap for Queensland Child Protection* (the Report) called for the development of an expanded and coordinated secondary service system in Queensland - to intervene early and address underlying issues in families and reduce the demand on tertiary responses. Fundamental to this recommendation is the implementation of a differential response, where families are assessed for support needs, including specialist needs such as domestic violence, health (including mental health and drug and alcohol services), housing and disability. When families are assessed as not meeting the threshold for formal child protection responses they are diverted to the appropriate family/specialist services.

In December 2013, the Queensland Government published a response to the Report. The Government's endorsement of the Report was a good sign for much-needed reform in this state. However, the challenges in adequately raising the visibility of domestic violence responses in the system are seen as potential road-blocks to reform by some domestic violence advocates.

In cases involving domestic violence, an analysis of domestic violence must underpin all responses, including child protection interventions- to protect the carers of young people and hold users of violence accountable for their violence, therefore achieving protection for children and young people. In the implementation of the reforms, there is much to be done to ensure that responses to domestic violence are: embedded in the child protection framework and integrated responses to families; and backed by a clear legislative / policy framework and substantial cultural change across the state and community service system.

The differential response

The success of the differential response and the resulting interventions rests on timely and accurate assessment at the point of intake - across the service system. The identification of violence must influence the type of response required, even where a child protection intervention is part of that response. In addition, early assessment of domestic violence- with appropriately tailored responses- will improve outcomes across the system, ranging from safety and wellbeing, to education, housing, justice and accountability. Assessments must be undertaken by staff with demonstrated skills in identifying domestic violence.

“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.”

**- Heather Nancarrow
CDFVRe@der December 2013**

Additionally, as can be seen from recent innovations in some of the other states of Australia, a differential assessment (and resulting interventions by an integrated response) requires agreement on a common framework, priorities and definitions and a common risk assessment. This will necessitate a whole of government approach and commitment from state and government-funded services to the agreed policy and protocols - through service agreements, reporting requirements, MOU's, relevant training and position qualification/ accreditation requirements. Key players will include government departments and services funded to support families - such as services funded under the 'Helping Out Families' initiative.

One example can be seen in the triage process, introduced in Western Australia, for responding to domestic violence incident reports. This is a collaborative process, utilising the skills and experience of child protection and domestic violence services to assess interventions required. The Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams (FDVRT) also include police and are underpinned by a gendered domestic violence analysis, as well as formal agreement and operating procedures, which inform the assessment process.

The FDVRT process and other innovative integrated responses have also tackled the thorny issue of information sharing within the constraints of privacy legislation. South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia have all provided guidance at a state policy level on the scope and limitations of information sharing. Clarity and policy direction on these issues will enhance the capacity for early, accurate assessment and coordinated/integrated interventions.

Child protection interventions

Where a formal child protection intervention is required, the Report recommends the adoption of the *Signs of Safety* model (or similar) to shift the Department's engagement with families to a strengths-based approach, aimed at working in partnership with families to keep young people at home wherever possible. The model requires workers to identify the 'signs of safety' in the existing family environment that can be built on in a formal child safety response.

As with the differential response, the successful implementation of such a model necessitates, where domestic violence has been identified, that the approach be informed by interventions appropriate in these circumstances. One such intervention is the *Safe and Together™* model, developed in the United States to improve responses to domestic violence within the child protection system. In Queensland, incorporating strategies from the *Safe and Together™* model will require a shift away from focussing on the victim of the violence, to engage the perpetrator of that violence. Failing to engage with the perpetrator fails to address the underlying issues, fully assess the risks to the mother and her child/ren and hold him accountable for the abuse – and this leaves the system vulnerable to failure. Working with and supporting the woman victim can be a valuable way to start the work with a perpetrator – her protective behaviours are often tailored to the specific risks in the family and provide valuable information about the perpetrator's use of violence. In the Australian context, a Western Australian resource¹ incorporates similar strategies to the *Safe and Together™* model. Importantly, the resource relates directly back to the *Signs of Safety* model and provides information on risk assessment and case management when engaging with perpetrators in a child protection response. These innovations and others, internationally and within Australia, can be drawn on to inform the reform process, including the implementation of a *Signs of Safety* type model and other child protection processes in Queensland.

There are positive indications that, in the implementation of the reforms, the Queensland Government is considering models such as *Safe and Together™* and additional innovations identified by domestic violence advocates and others. The detail required to 'flesh out' the Report's recommendations, relating to the integration of domestic violence responses, will be best identified in consultation with domestic violence advocates. It is hoped that the dialogue between government and these advocates will continue and together, government and community can introduce transformational reform in Queensland.

“In cases involving domestic violence, an analysis of domestic violence must underpin all responses... to protect the carers of young people and hold users of violence accountable for their violence...”

¹Department 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*

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Launch of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and its research grants

By Heather Nancarrow, CEO, ANROWS (guest contributor)

Following a welcome to country by Ngunnawal elder Mr Warren Daley, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) was launched by Minister for Social Services, Kevin Andrews, at Parliament House, Canberra on 16 May 2014.



Ngunnawal Elder, Warren Daley with (from far left) Heather Nancarrow, Minister Kevin Andrews, Senator Michaelia Cash, Emeritus Professor Anne R Edwards AO, and Shirley Slann.

ANROWS, formerly known as the National Centre of Excellence to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments of Australia to support the implementation of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. Further information about ANROWS can be found at: www.anrows.org.au.

The Australian governments have invested in ANROWS to deliver evidence to guide their policy and program decisions and to support best practice in responding to and preventing violence against women and their children.

ANROWS will deliver on these expectations through three core, intersecting functions:

1. Leadership in the development of evidenced based policy and practice to address violence against women and their children;
2. The production of knowledge in priority areas; and
3. The translation and exchange of knowledge to support the conversion of evidence to policy and practice.

The first major task of ANROWS was to produce a National Research Agenda to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (the NRA). Building on 127 written submissions received, ANROWS convened six roundtable consultations with policy makers, service providers and

researchers as well as commissioning knowledge gap analyses of statistical information and contemporary Australian literature, from 2000, on violence against women. The NRA is endorsed by the Commonwealth and all states and territories and provides a coherent framework for Australian research on violence against women and their children, regardless of the source of funding. It was launched by Senator Michaelia Cash, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women, at ANROWS's launch.

The NRA is framed around four strategic research themes, related to the National Plan. They are:

1. Experience and impacts;
2. Gender inequality and primary prevention;
3. Service responses and interventions; and
4. Systems.

These are replicated in ANROWS's research priorities, derived from the NRA; however, ANROWS has added a fifth strategic theme – research translation and evaluation. This will provide an evidence base for its own work (as well as others) in the translation and exchange of knowledge. Chair of the ANROWS Board, Emeritus Professor Anne R Edwards AO, launched the ANROWS research priorities, and announced that applications for ANROWS's open grants round were open, immediately after Senator Cash had launched the NRA.

ANROWS's research projects fall within four types, as follows.

1. Projects funded under ANROWS's Research Priorities Grants round.
2. Large-scale, multi-jurisdictional national projects, supported by advisory groups with appropriate expertise in the relevant topic.
3. Small-scale projects to be commissioned directly by ANROWS to provide a conceptual or theoretical underpinning for subsequent empirical research.
4. Other research projects which ANROWS has been commissioned to undertake. This includes funding from the Commonwealth Government to establish a dedicated perpetrator intervention research stream.

Applications for the Research Priorities Grants round opened on 16 May 2014 and close on 11 July 2014. There are several priority topic areas in strategic research themes 1, 3 and 4, for which applications are sought. ANROWS encourages collaborative research teams including academics, service providers, communities and others. Further details on the research topics and grants application process are available at: www.anrows.org.au/research.

ANROWS is working in collaboration with the Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children and VicHealth on primary prevention research (research theme 2) and has recently commissioned research on the translation and exchange of knowledge (research theme 5).



Left to right: Ngunnawal Elder, Warren Daley; Heather Nancarrow; South Australian Minister for Women, Gail Gago; NSW Minister for Women, Pru Goward and launch MC Virginia Haussegger, award winning journalist and Board Member UN Women Australia.

While all ANROWS's core functions are critical to its work, the translation and exchange of knowledge is arguably the most critical. There is no point in having a rigorous evidence base if it is not communicated effectively to the policy makers and practitioners who need it to make confident decisions in the development of policy and programs and the implementation of service responses. ANROWS staff have been working with Dr Jan Brackenridge and Dr Antonia Quadara for their support and assistance in the transition of clearinghouse functions to ANROWS from the Australian Domestic Family Violence Clearinghouse and the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault. The transition will be complete later in the year. However,

the final Australian Domestic Family Violence Clearinghouse Issues Paper, funded by ANROWS, is now available on the ANROWS website.

ANROWS's leadership role involves:

1. Setting, and promoting, the violence against women research agenda;
2. Facilitating research practice that builds capacity and meaningfully engages the people it aims to benefit;
3. Implementing our Reconciliation Action Plan (see www.anrows.org.au/about/reconciliation);
4. Ensuring that diversity is reflected in our work and that of others; and
5. Advocating for evidence emerging from the research to be taken up in policy and practice.

In all of these functions ANROWS will consult and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders in government, research, peak organisations and services. Collaboration with the violence against women's research community is also critical to the delivery of ANROWS's research priorities under the National Research Agenda. It was encouraging to see so many researchers, as well as practitioners and policy makers at the ANROWS launch, including Professor Cathy Humphreys and Professor Kelsey Hegarty from Melbourne; Professor Donna Chung and Professor Harry Blagg from Western Australia and Professor Patrick O'Leary from Queensland. They, their colleagues and their research students will play a critical role in the delivery of ANROWS's open grant and commissioned research projects.

ANROWS looks forward to working with its funders, researchers, policy makers and practitioners across the country in its efforts to end violence against women and their children; and looks forward to the day when all Australian women and children live free from violence.



ANROWS CEO and Board Directors. Left to right: Heather Nancarrow, Melanie Heenan, Anne Edwards, Reg Graycar, Ian Ward-Ambler, Cate McKenzie, Shirley Slann and Simon Phemister.

'Storms'

By guest contributor Robert Lachowicz, Education Coordinator Refugee and Immigration Legal Service (RAILS) West End, Queensland

A powerful family violence educational music video has been created by RAILS. 'Storms' tells the story of the search for safety and security in the rough seas of family conflict. The video highlights factors which help build and maintain family relationships, and aspects of family violence and support services available.

The four minute animated info-music clip gives key information through a catchy original song, strong visual messages and plain English key words. This makes it broadly accessible to the whole community.

"In a short clip, this piece provides a snapshot of the different types of domestic violence, from threats through to femicide. In acknowledging the experience of women as victims it also gives hope and information about help available. Great to see that in such a succinct piece it also deals with perpetrator accountability and the choice to stop perpetrating abuse. A great resource, particularly for people who have limited English proficiency and for those who like visual information."

Cecilia Barassi-Rubio, Director, Immigrant Women's Support Service, Brisbane

The song was written and produced by RAILS's Robert Lachowicz, in collaboration with District Court Judge Ian Dearden. Justice Dearden is an accomplished musician and sang, played instruments and recorded the song in his home studio. The striking images are by Ingrid Burkett and video animation is by Iain Anderson.

There are two versions of the 'Storms' video for different educational settings. One includes the last verse where the victim is seen being taken away in a coffin and the perpetrator is revealed sitting in jail reflecting. The second version does not include this verse.

The video is a stand-alone, available through RAILS website and is also included in an innovative music legal education package developed by RAILS. The "Folk Law" CD contains 18 original songs about common legal problems, how to prevent them and where to get help if they arise. The songs come from real cases and community legal education workshops held by RAILS over many years. An accompanying Songbook shows how to play the songs on ukulele and guitar, and provides practical legal and music information alongside learning activities.

The Storms and Folk Law resources will be officially launched in Brisbane and are available through: www.rails.org.au/education. Contact Robert Lachowicz or Raquel Aldunate on 07 3846 9300 for more information.



Storms

*Sailing together in the intimacy,
of a relationship love is the key.*

*But when storms come around then life gets rough
Staying afloat can be really tough.*

*Conflict is natural but can be sorted out
By talking about our fears and doubts
By giving and being equal, and loving again
and never stop respecting even when love brings pain*

*But when love and trust are broken - and so is respect
In icy cold water, relationship's wrecked
Storms are all around and life gets really tough
Where's the life boat when you've had enough of*

*Chorus: Violence is violence is against the law.
It's hitting, it's punching and it's so much more
It's threats it's control and intimidation.
Family violence is a crime. Will you leave this time?*

*When you need to be rescued, when you're drowning
alone,
in this deep dark ocean of violence in the home
But you're still in love and can't work it out
Where do you go to sort your fears and doubts
Talk to friends and counsellors and legal aid
There's free shelters to go to if it's not safe to stay
Police they must help you, Magistrates too
when family violence is threatening you .*

Chorus

*You're now part of the ocean your ashes are spread
and scattered in the watery grave of the dead
While I sit here in jail, knowing I should
have treated you as equal, but I was no good.*

RAILS is a well-established community legal centre which works closely with family violence support services throughout Queensland. It specialises in refugee and immigration cases and also gives advice on consumer, employment and child protection matters. RAILS takes on many family violence cases under the provisions of the Migration Regulations. It recently held a series of training workshops with family violence workers throughout Brisbane and regional Queensland as part of a Legal Aid Collaboration project.

WARRIOR Whispering

by Colleen Gunning, CDFVR

The 10th Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum, *Warrior Whispering*, was held in Mackay on the 7th and 8th May. It was a time of sharing, learning and remembering, and the evaluation conducted at the end of each day revealed that the Forum continues to be extremely valuable for those responding to domestic and family violence. In addition to the daily process evaluation which informs Forum planning, the final session yielded a wonderful 'roadmap' for the 2015 Forum and beyond.

CDFVR's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference group has already considered all feedback and commenced planning for our next event. Furthermore, it has been encouraging and energising to receive informal, spontaneous feedback from participants, after they have returned to their home community and work environments.

A full report about the Forum is available at: www.noviolence.com.au, but, in keeping with our *connections* theme we provide a snapshot of the event and feedback from participants and presenters.

The Forum opened with an official Acknowledgement of Country of the Yuwi Yuibera People. Charles Passi, a member of CDFVR's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, then presented a very well-received opening address: *Reclaiming the Warrior Within*.

Later, Shirley Slann, another CDFVR Reference Group member, chaired a panel discussion on working with male perpetrators of violence, which provided valuable insights to Forum participants.

Yarning Circles are recognised as meaningful learning spaces and were integrated into the Forum program, with participants being given the opportunity to explore the theme: *Families subjected to domestic and family violence*.

The packed program continued after lunch with a keynote address from Des Rogers, whose presentation *Customs, Kinship and Cultural Lore: the Warrior Whispering Way* encompassed elements of traditional Aboriginal culture, as well as the history of Aboriginal male violence and sexual abuse.

The day concluded with a Hard Yarns session, around *Warrior Whispering* issues, prior to participants returning to the venue for the Forum Dinner, which featured an enchanted forest theme.

On Day Two, three successful Queensland programs were showcased and Forum participants were also able to learn more about the national scene, particularly the National Research Agenda.

Dr Jackie Huggins AM brought the event to a close, facilitating a session to plan for future Forums. Participants enthusiastically collaborated to generate ideas to ensure the continued relevance of the Forum. This session clearly underscored that there are many talented and dedicated workers across Queensland, and that the Forum plays a key role in supporting them to create safer communities.

CDFVR thanks all involved in the planning and delivery of another successful event, and looks forward to welcoming attendees to the next Forum in May 2015.

PREVIOUS FORUM THEMES

2004 Which way now?

2006 Men, women and community-partners

2008 Addressing problems- sharing solutions

2010 Safe homes, solid families- let's build on it

2012 Culture and healing- the hard yarns

2005 Men and women working together

2007 Breaking the chains- reclaiming the future

2009 The big picture- putting the pieces together

2011 Let's unite- stop the fight

2013 Olgeta Yarn Up

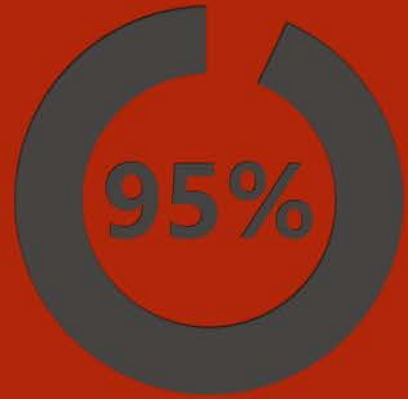


From a 2014 presenter

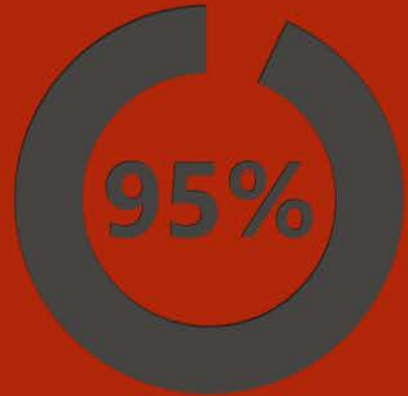
“ Just a quick email to provide you with info regarding the 2014 DV Forum. Thank you for allowing me to present this year, I got so much from the feedback from the participants. The opportunity to meet so many strong Indigenous people made my day, also the chance to make very important links with other communities and service providers have given me strength to become a stronger advocate for my people.

”

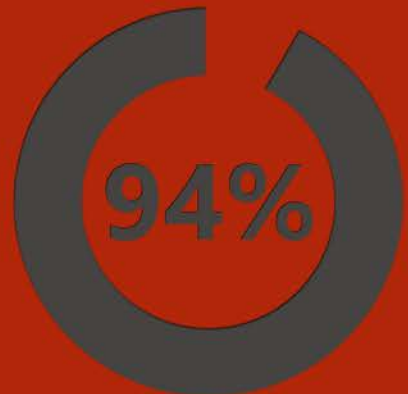




of respondents were from Queensland.



of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they "learnt new things" at the Forum.



of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they could use what they learnt at the Forum in their own work (paid or voluntary).

From a 2014 participant

“ Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this great forum. Just in response to this, I wanted to let you know that this forum was such an advantage to me. There are a number of things that I specifically got out of it:

- Information and an opportunity to see how other organisations are addressing areas of need. Although some of these ideas are region specific, there are a lot of useful ideas and approaches that I found would be really useful in my community
- Being able to experience the ‘united’ feeling that most organisations are headed in the same direction and the goals are similar or common in nature. This experience had at times during the forum, became an emotional experience for me.
- Networking...there is so much knowledge and wisdom in that room.

”

From the 2014 process evaluation

“ The best thing/s about the Forum (and reasons I would come back!):

- The speakers who shared their views and allowed themselves to be vulnerable by sharing their pain.
- The discussion about male services in the state and what/ how they work with men.
- Hearing the number of people committed to challenging DV- including men taking responsibility for teaching other men.
- The diversity of experience and willingness to share.
- Being with people with the same goals- keep all of our people safe.
- Men stepping up talking up against domestic violence.
- Hearing about new programs and work being undertaken across Qld - success, challenges, shared issues.
- The sharing of other groups and what they do with clients. The importance of holistic healing.
- Male perspectives on their engagement/ work at organisational/ community/ individual level etc.
- People talking about their programs and what works on the ground.
- The sharing of program information and the challenges and the resilience of workers.
- Gives you time to reflect and learn about issues from grass root services.
- It has been a pleasure to be around such wise, inspiring and heartfelt people.
- Support from peers, hearing how they practice and finding inspiration.
- To continue to strengthen the bonds made with others and organisations to reconnect and rethink the future.

”

DATE CLAIMER

11th Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum 6th and 7th May 2015

Keep the week of the 4th May 2015 free so you can participate in the next Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum. We are planning training and other activities to fit around the Forum, so we hope to see you next year for these great professional development opportunities.

At the coal face

Linda-Ann Northey, WAVSS

Linda-Ann has been the Manager of the **Working Against Violence Support Service Inc. (WAVSS)** in Logan for the past five years. WAVSS is the Regional Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Service for the Logan region, one of 15 specialist DFV service agencies working together across Queensland with a shared focus on proactively preventing violence against women and children. Funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS), WAVSS provides extensive and free support services for crisis response, risk assessment and safety planning, counselling, community education and training, information, advice and referral, and court support (Beaudesert and Cleveland courts).

Established in 1994, WAVSS has many years' experience in providing service delivery responses across a range of areas, both independently and in partnership with other agencies. As the Regional Domestic Violence Service, WAVSS has also been actively involved in the foundation of the Logan *Helping Out Families* (HOF) Initiative.

“Connections” is a theme of this issue of the Re@der. How important is partnering with others and “connecting” in the provision of your services?

A solid partnership framework is absolutely essential - no single service can do it all. The old adage “it takes a village to raise a child” certainly rings true. In our experience, it takes a community to support a child, and to effectively support women and their children experiencing Domestic and Family Violence (DFV). Particularly in crisis work, where the need for immediate response to safety and risk is paramount, I think that a community of specialist service agencies working together locally and statewide is the key.

What partnerships and networks are you involved in?

WAVSS is actively involved in a number of partnerships and networks including our mentoring partnership with the Logan City Saints Rugby Union Club, activities in the Logan City Integrated Community Response (ICR) and Beaudesert Coordinated Community Response (CCR), and shared service work in the Logan HOF Initiative.

How do they work?

Football Partnership

Since 2011, WAVSS has built a strong partnership with the Logan City Saints Rugby Union Club as part of our *Logan Cares: Say No to Violence* campaign. Last season, the Saints started wearing



Linda-Ann Northey and partners, Logan City Saints Rugby Union Club players, say “no to violence”.

the WAVSS logo predominantly on the front of their jerseys, shorts and socks, and the team has made a commitment to publicly explain what wearing the logo means to them.

WAVSS and the Club members are looking at proactive ways to provide truly integrated support to vulnerable families through innovative engagement strategies that aim to increase community awareness and create longer-term social change. Together, we actively build skills and knowledge with men, who identify as non-violent, speaking out against violence in the home and the community. We do this by creating leadership options for young people through mentoring support, and by becoming qualified “Mentors In Violence Prevention” through training with Dr Shannon Spriggs, Griffith University.

As mentors, team members:

- Take referrals from WAVSS to meet with young men who have experienced violence
- Provide mentoring support and role modelling i.e. counselling that doesn't look like counselling
- Participate as mentors in therapeutic group work
- Learn “what to say, what to do, and what actions to take” when they see or become aware of situations that may escalate to violence
- Have new skills to assist in getting involved in everyday challenges in a non-threatening way
- Support young people to learn positive behaviours and non-violent responses
- Achieve change through sport, and by making public statements against violence
- Model good citizenship, good behaviours, and better ways to deal with conflict
- Take the White Ribbon Day oath as men speaking out against violence in the community
- Become involved in advocacy and social action through awareness-raising events like the Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony

Integrated Community Response

The Logan ICR and the Beaudesert CCR are active community networks of government, non-government, corporate and community agencies working together to provide advocacy, community support, child safety, counselling, court support, crisis care, education, information, police liaison, refuge and shelter. The Integrated Community Response (ICR) model aims to deliver a local cooperative effort toward resolving issues of DFV, with a commitment to eliminating violence in our communities. Please see our website for more information: qlddomesticviolencelink.org.au

As the lead agency, WAVSS has a signed memorandum of agreement with over 30 partnership agencies in the Logan region, and 10 agencies in the Beaudesert region: we are non-government organisations (NGO), state and federal government services committed to working effectively together to provide better service and system responses on-the-ground.

Together, we connect services, give information, provide support and share resources to create a stronger net for immediate crisis response for people (predominantly women and children) experiencing domestic violence. Through such a committed partnership, underpinned by regular meetings, we get to know each other well, individually and collectively, and create better links between the agencies and services available in the Logan and Beaudesert regions. We make a difference by undertaking community activities, holding public events and running local media campaigns that raise DFV awareness and advocate for our community and client group.

“Our best work happens quietly behind-the-scenes, when the ICR agencies work together to break down barriers and red tape in the service systems ... when individual women and their children require immediate safety.”

Helping Out Families (HOF) Initiative

WAVSS has been heavily involved in the pilot program for the HOF Initiative since its inception in 2010. Helping Out Families has since become an established program of collaborative support for vulnerable families across Logan, Beenleigh and the Gold Coast. At its core, the Logan HOF Initiative involves increased levels of collaboration and key partnerships with the Family Support Alliance (FSA) and Integrated Family Support (IFS) services within Uniting Community Care (UCC) and the domestic and family violence agencies, WAVSS and Youth and Family Services (YFS).

In contrast to our Football Partnership and the ICR models, which primarily focus on leading

shared crisis response and change within the DFV sector, the HOF partnership has a primary focus on whole of family responses through a family support model targeting early intervention and prevention for vulnerable families. The HOF FSA services come from a family support framework using case management, and the DFV services provide specialist crisis support, counselling and court support.

The model involves recognition of unique practice frameworks where collaborative responses are given to families actively engaging with services that provide holistic, side-by-side support. Families are referred to the FSA where consent is gained from individual families for referral to the specialist DFV services - as core partners - and other local agencies. Referral pathways include self-referrals from families and the community, plus direct referrals from key agencies such as Queensland Health (Health Home Visiting), the Queensland Police Service and the DCCSDS.

In the early stages, and at different points along the way, the DFV services were able to provide assistance and advice at the first level of client engagement and during the process of gaining consent for referral. Collaboration began at the time of the initial allocation meeting, including identification of soft entry points and shared approaches for clients as a strategy for obtaining consent. Examples have included client invitations to informal chats and events where WAVSS are present, and where YFS accompany the IFS workers on home visits.

Shared case reviews and shared case planning are a developing part of the process, and joint discussions and collaborative efforts have been of great benefit to the clients and agencies alike.

What have been the challenges of partnering?

At first it was challenging to “get a handle on what we were all supposed to do”. People weren’t quite sure what was meant by HOF, and service integration. After nearly four years’ work, in my view, HOF is about sector transformation, where we provide truly unique service responses to clients through progressive and integrated service delivery work.

Successful implementation of the HOF model was achieved by having a solution-focussed approach:

- It was recognised early that integration means different things to different people/ agencies
- There are diverse needs in individual communities
- Services/ organisations do have very different ways of doing things
- Development of the model and referral pathways continues to evolve
- It is beneficial to investigate the dynamics of the existing service systems first, to have a good start

- Good on-the-ground work requires a strong willingness to problem-solve when obstacles arise
- It is also important to make sure that we keep good communication strategies in place

In developing integrated services, clients differ and needs differ, so we can't just use "one-size-fits-all" or "cookie cutter" approaches. There are very different communities we have to adapt to, so the approach needs to work with what is in each region. The community culture has a really big impact on engagement, and it needs to be recognised that there are lots of pieces of the puzzle that do good work, and better work when they fit together.

From a purely DFV perspective, the reality of the statistics present challenges. Since it is estimated that 80-90% of HOF client families experience DFV, a corresponding need for 80-90% participation and responsiveness from specialist DFV services has been created. In direct response to this need, it has been valuable and important to prioritise the positioning of specialist DFV knowledge within the model at a level that best assists with initial client consent, intake decision-making and support, and informed case review.

"Safe communication strategies and information-sharing in joint meetings are important."

What have been accomplishments of your partnerships?

The HOF initiative has greatly expanded our service capacity to work more holistically with families through early intervention and prevention strategies, service education and mentorship, shared alliances, and integration between services. HOF has given services a joint reason to come together, and a focus point for collaborative work and understanding.

Professional Friendship

I think that we have developed a positive level of "professional friendship". In order to blend individual service approaches effectively, each service has demonstrated a high-level of professional respect and camaraderie with a focus on the client. Where integration has worked, it has been because of the willingness of service staff to work across all agencies, and to share individual and personal goodwill.

To me, it feels like the HOF agencies are now "part of one agency", and everyone who works in the HOF program is part of the same team. No matter which service we actually work for, we identify as the 'HOF' team, true work colleagues with one vision and shared values.

There is recognition that this work is not always easy and it is important to keep on talking to one another to achieve desired outcomes for families, services and system change. All of these things take time and take trust.

"A deep understanding and respect for how each agency works is critical (insider knowledge of the day-to-day service functioning of partner agencies)."

Achievements on-the-ground

Families:

- are offered support at an early point of time
- have voluntary participation
- do not have time limits with their workers
- have minimal involvement with Child Safety Services
- benefit from ready access to brokerage funds
- receive a holistic response to multiple issues
- receive ACTION from collaborative connections and brokerage monies

Services have:

- flexibility to respond to families and systems issues
- a new way of partnering between NGO and Government sectors
- shared passion and common goals
- a safe place to hold challenging conversations
- honesty in relation to partnerships
- the opportunity to form new alliances
- the ability to respond creatively to family needs and build families' capacity to function in the community
- experience of positive acceptance by the community of HOF

Systems are:

- able to resolve issues through the alliance structure
- shaped by the alliance (particularly the secondary service system)
- experiencing a greater voice for women and children
- closely monitoring and evaluating to ensure data is available so Government decisions are informed and the right actions and results are achieved
- able to influence across government and effect change

Do you have any 'must do' messages for those who are establishing an integrated approach or network?

Integrated approaches provide the opportunity for a complete paradigm shift in family thinking, agency thinking and community thinking. Primary prevention and early intervention strategies need to occur in ways that challenge current thinking, approaches, bureaucracies, systems constraints and societal beliefs.

Research Seminar: Dr Molly Dragiewicz

by Colleen Gunning

On the 4th February Dr Molly Dragiewicz, Associate Professor in the School of Justice at Queensland University of Technology, visited Mackay for the first research seminar of 2014. Molly's research is focused on violence, gender, and family law, and her presentation was entitled *Sex differences in domestic violence: recent research*.

Molly began the presentation by highlighting that conflicting claims are part of "the conversation" about domestic violence in professional and popular contexts, and that new studies are reported on a daily basis. However, because usually research articles are written for specialist audiences and "locked away in password protected academic libraries", Molly suggested many practitioners are not able access the latest research on violence and abuse.

Molly's presentation then focused on current social science research on sex, gender, and domestic violence and she asked the audience about claims they may have heard about the research on sex differences in domestic violence. She highlighted common inaccurate claims about what "the research shows":

- Women are "as violent as or more violent" than men
- All of the representative sample/ quantitative/ large sample/ "community sample" studies do not show sex differences in DV
- Only "clinical"/ small sample/ qualitative research shows sex differences or that gender matters.

Molly indicated that although the research literature has grown, the debates about sex differences have not changed much since 1977. She noted that international and national research from all disciplines finds marked sex differences in women and men's perpetration and experiences of violence, and that sex differences increase as violence gets more serious. In fact, Molly went on to say, making claims about "sex symmetry," requires ignoring a plethora of data, including those from crime and victimisation studies, sexual and separation assault, homicide, stalking and animal abuse.

Molly's presentation noted that data relating to intimate partner homicide are particularly telling, since they provide a measure of the most serious form of violence. Although homicide cases are under-identified as domestic violence related, homicide is more frequently reported than other crimes. These statistics are also less disputed than other estimates because they "avoid some definitional and measurement issues endemic to



Dr Molly Dragiewicz

the study of sublethal violence and abuse". It is imperative to consider lethal as well as sub-lethal violence in order to gain an accurate image of domestic violence.

Molly highlighted questions practitioners can ask when presented with a new piece of research:

- What question items did this study use to learn about domestic violence?
- Are there questions that help us understand the meaning of what happened (context, meaning, motive, outcomes)?
- How was the information collected?
- Who was left out?
- How does this relate to the rest of the research?
- How can we use these data to better prevent/ intervene in violence?

She concluded by reminding her audience that "all data are political", having implications for power. Choices about what to study, how to study it, and what to do with the findings are shaped by existing power relations and social inequality. Ultimately, data cannot resolve what are fundamentally ideological debates over questions such as whether violence against women merits a collective response or is their own fault. We need to continue to have difficult conversations about the social conditions that produce violence.

Molly is currently developing a study of violence against staff in the domestic violence field with colleagues from Australia and the U.S.

She is author of *Equality with a vengeance: Men's rights groups, battered women, and antifeminist backlash* and co-editor of The Routledge handbook of critical criminology with Walter DeKeseredy. Molly received the Critical Criminologist of the Year Award from the American Society of Criminology Division on Critical Criminology in 2012 and the New Scholar Award from the American Society of Criminology Division on Women and Crime in 2009.

Domestic Violence in cultural and religious communities

by Yasmin Khan, President Qld Eidfest Association Inc.

I couldn't find the figures, but I had heard the stories, so our first campaign to stop Domestic Violence within Muslim, Sikh and Hindu communities was based on what we knew from our networks.

When the State Government offered funding for Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month 2014, we put in an application in the hope that we would "lead the pack" in working with other communities. As the biggest segment in the state's Muslim faith is the "Indo-Pak" community, I thought it was wise to team up with the Sikh and Hindu groups also represented in this community. Whilst the religions were different the cultures were the same: we spoke the same or similar languages, we ate the same food, and wore the same or similar clothes. I have always been critical of others who talk constantly of working with others to create a more inclusive community, but do not actually end up working together... so I was going to be different!

The idea was to have a series of posters that we would then send to every Mosque, Gurdhwara (Sikh Temple) and Hindu Temple in Queensland. Because we had similar religious obligations and because the posters were going up in religious buildings we had to get the messages and images right. The image of bangles was very obvious to me, and initially I visualised the other side as a man in handcuffs. However, as we were arranging the graphics, it was decided that the handcuffs theme was too provocative an image to have, and our concern was that it may deter women from calling for help, because of the ramifications of the perpetrator being led away in handcuffs.

Like women from other cultures, women in our communities don't necessarily want to break up the family, they just want the abuse to stop. However, many feel they don't have other places to go, and some live in intergenerational households, where they are at the mercy of their in-laws, who think women "bring it on themselves" because they "can't cook properly or look after the house or the kids".

So we had to take into account a lot of considerations. What would imams in the mosque tolerate? Many won't put up posters that portray faces, so we had to make sure that our choice of graphic didn't become an excuse to ignore our posters. We had to get the words right: for example, using the word "veil" was problematic, since even though all three religions wore veils to varying degrees, the word itself was seen as "more Muslim" than the others. So in the end we didn't use a descriptor at all.

For a few reasons we had one specific poster for the Muslim community. Firstly, there are more mosques and Muslims in Queensland than Sikhs and Hindus. Secondly, this poster addressed men rather than women, and we scoured sources for a relevant religious edict and used that as our wording. The Imam's Council signed off on our poster, as well the National Centre of Excellence of Islamic Studies at Griffith University. This was our way of appeasing some clerics who would get the poster in the mail and wonder "Who and why is this woman sending me posters about a subject I don't want to address?".

Although we can't guarantee our religious leaders will display the posters, the good news is that someone has offered me a spare office to start a DV "drop-in" centre, to provide information and later, access to counselling services and help. We have started the conversation and this is going to support the victims across the three religious communities. I don't believe in re-inventing the wheel, so if you want to offer me help and guidance in getting our project going, I can be contacted at: bilkees@bigpond.net.au.



One of the suite of resources produced by Queensland Eidfest Association to promote awareness about domestic violence.

The Circle of Security Intervention: a review

by Colleen Gunning

At the heart of this publication- and this book has a big heart- is the concept of “attachment... a watershed theory” developed by John Bowlby more than 40 years ago. Since then researchers have continued to gather evidence underscoring the role of attachment in childhood psychological development and well-being, as well as the emotional health of adults across the lifespan. Within the attachment paradigm, it follows then, that adults’ early attachment experiences “shape” their own parenting style, and consequently the psychological development of their children.

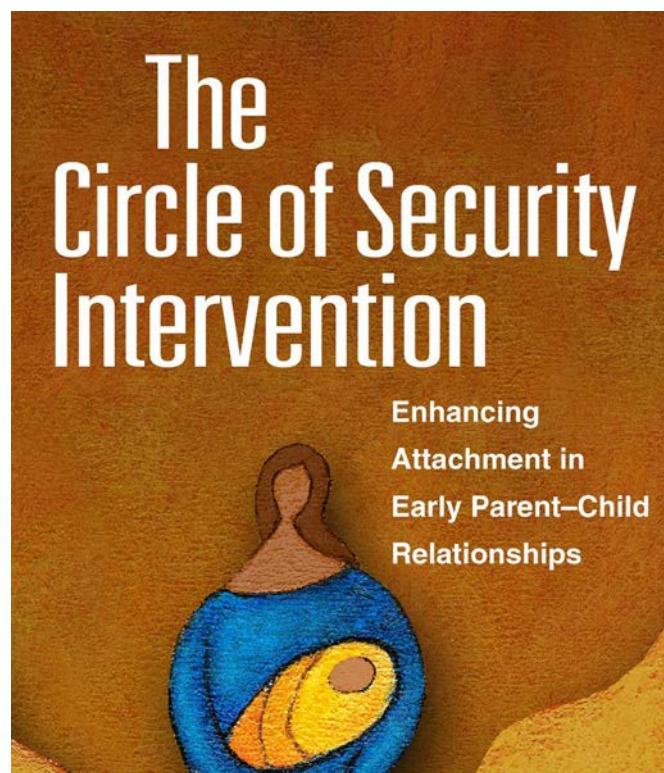
The authors of The Circle of Security Intervention (COSI), Bert Powell, Glen Cooper, and Kent Hoffman, have worked together in clinical practice in Washington since 1985. The COSI began in 1998 with an early model of parents meeting weekly to review edited videos of themselves and their children. Although there are now adaptations of this program, it is the original intervention which is described throughout this book.

Presented in three sections, Part One (Chapters 1-6) revisits the theory of attachment, establishing its core terminology and concepts. It explores the needs of children, and how attachment forms through caregiver-child interactions. The figure of the “the Circle” is introduced, as a roadmap to help caregivers navigate responding to their child’s needs and so form secure attachment. The authors explain that “in the spirit of making attachment theory more accessible, we undertook the project of creating a one-page graphic to illustrate the salient features of secure attachment, which we call the Circle of Security, and it became the cornerstone of our intervention” (p. xv).

The final chapter of Part One, “Completing the Circle” sets the scene for the book’s core, the COSI itself. Breaking a cycle of insecure attachment and disrupted development is possible, according to the authors, through following the COSI protocol, a five-step path to “creating a secure parent-child attachment” (p. 119).

It is at this point that the book hits its stride for the practitioner. Whilst Part One is a lucid and accessible read, and could be useful for care-givers who seek insight into attachment theory and its potential, it is the following almost-300 pages which are particularly aimed at those who work with families of young children. Specifically, Part Two presents a detailed description of the COSI, and three richly detailed case studies form Part Three.

Part Two opens with a discussion on intake and referral issues and identifies caregivers who



ISBN 978-1-59385-314-3 / 1593853149

Title: *The Circle of Security Intervention: Enhancing Attachment in Early Parent-Child Relationships*

Authors: Bert Powell, Glen Cooper, Kent Hoffman, and Bob Marvin

Format: Hardcover

Year: 2013

Pages: 396

Publisher: Guilford Publications

are not good candidates for the COSI group intervention. This includes “those who live within a context of domestic violence and choose to prioritise a dangerous partner over the needs of the child with no willingness to reconsider this choice” and “those who are using drugs and alcohol with no commitment to actively seek concurrent treatment” (p 127). Clearly the group approach has advantages, in that it offers carers the support of their peers, but the authors recognise that other approaches may be helpful for those whose “defences compromise the safety and coherence need for the... group therapy”. Hence Chapter 12 teases out the options for those not suited to the group approach, such as individual, couple and family therapies.

Released in late 2013, this text is a valuable addition to the library of practitioners who work with infants, young children and their caregivers. Professionals from a range of disciplines who work with families will find this publication useful, and whilst Part One is insightful, overall this book is not designed for the “lay person”. Affecting case studies and intelligent graphics punctuate *The Circle of Security Intervention*, and it is a pleasure to read, offering inspiration to those who seek to improve the lives of children and their caregivers. The authors write with skill and love, and their commitment to helping parents be “bigger, stronger, wiser and kind” speaks from every page.

Conferences and date claimers

Conferences

23-25 July, 2014

2014 Australian Winter School Conference
- connecting the alcohol and other drug sector
Brisbane
winterschool.info

30 July-1 August, 2014

Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference
2014: Families in a rapidly changing world.
Melbourne
conference.aifs.gov.au

4-8 August, 2014

Australian Childhood Foundation
Childhood Trauma: understanding the basis of
change and recovery
Melbourne
www.childtraumaconf.org

4-7 September, 2014

Victorian Australia Branch of Early Childhood
Australia
29th National Conference: Seasons of Change.
Melbourne
www.ecaconference.com.au

13-15 October, 2014

Indigenous Men's Conference
Indigenous Women's Conference
Cairns
www.indigenoushealth.net

8-10 December, 2014

World Domestic Violence Conference
Cairns
www.indigenoushealth.net

15-17 December, 2014

World Indigenous Health Conference
Cairns
www.indigenoushealth.net

6th and 7th May 2015

11th Queensland Indigenous Family Violence
Prevention Forum

Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family
Violence Research

www.noviolence.com.au

Training

Brisbane 8-9 July, 2014

Melbourne 11-12 July, 2014

New Depression Workshops in Australia
www.kassanevents.com

30 July, 2014

Effective Supervision for Supervisors – targeted at
supervisors in child and family welfare and youth
support services.
Brisbane, QLD
www.efac.com.au/workshops.htm#Supervisors

2 August, 2014

Strengths Based Case Management in Action
Brisbane, QLD
www.lighthouseresources.com.au/training/2013-training-calendar/date/2013-08-02/

Men's behaviour change program

Every Wednesday and Thursday evenings from
6-8pm

Men's Domestic Violence Education and
Intervention Program (MDVEIP)
Southport on the Gold Coast

Website: www.domesticviolence.com.au

Email contact:

mensdvprogram@domesticviolence.com.au

Changing gears men's behaviour change program

Every Tuesday 2 open groups

Morning 9.30am – 11.30am

Evening 5.45pm – 7.45pm

Gold Coast

Email Contact: cqc@centacarebrisbane.net.au

30 July-19 September, 2014

MenTER Program

NQDVRs, Townsville

www.nqdvr.org.au

Contact Chris Brabrook

mensprogram@nqdvr.org.au

(Men will need to attend induction sessions prior
to their being accepted into the program.)

16 September to 28 October, 2014

Men's Perpetrator Fathering Education and
Intervention Program (MPFEIP)
Southport on the Gold Coast

Website: www.domesticviolence.com.au

Email contact:

mensdvprogram@domesticviolence.com.au

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