PROMOTING POSITIVE GENDER RELATIONSHIPS

A report of a study into the feasibility of developing and delivering curriculum through Queensland state schools to promote positive gender relationships

December 2004

A collaborative project between Office for Women and Curriculum Strategy Branch, Education Queensland

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2004, the Office for Women and Education Queensland worked collaboratively on a project to determine the feasibility of developing and implementing curriculum in Queensland state schools providing students with the knowledges and life skills necessary for enhanced gender relationships in work, family and civic life.

It was agreed that this feasibility study would involve a scan of relevant literature, consultation with stakeholders in schools, communities, other government and non-government agencies, in locations across Queensland and would examine the ways other states, nations, and other Australian education systems have addressed the problem.

The evidence gathered and analysed for this report indicates that it is feasible to develop and deliver, in Education Queensland schools, curriculum programs that facilitate positive, healthy, respectful gender relationships between young people. This is indicated by the fact that such programs are already being implemented in schools in diverse locations, amongst a range of populations and groups, in primary and secondary schools, and are also being implemented in other Australian states and overseas.

Research indicates that effective prevention of gendered violence can occur through curriculum for all age groups that gives students the critical skills to identify the taken-for-granted social attitudes and beliefs about gender that support relationship and family violence, and builds their confidence and courage to challenge such violence in peer, family, social and institutional contexts[1] [2]. Such skills might be understood collectively as *lifeskills*, but are captured more dynamically in the concept of *citizenship* that is central to the Education Queensland flagship strategy, *Queensland State Education – 2010*[3], and is a critical element of major reform initiatives.

Schools can offer primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs, as can other institutions. Indeed, many schools already offer curriculum programs which skill students to deal with conflict, clearly primary prevention. But schools are unique in that through programs which give students agency to explore understandings of gendered violence, they can confront and prevent such violence thus helping to create a less violent society. The potential for schools to do this is not always being realised, for a range of reasons which have been identified in this report. Schools are clearly more comfortable with programs addressing general interpersonal skills and self-esteem than those that explicitly challenge those social practices which foster violence.

Those interviewed as part of this project were concerned that, for schools to carry out their role effectively, a phased and multi-layered strategy, congruent with other major Education Queensland strategies, was required. However, many interviewees cautioned that addressing family and relationship violence involved risk, and that a clear leadership and risk management strategy would enhance their confidence in addressing the issues. Most

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[1] Indemauer, D., Atkinson, L., and Blagg, H. (1998). Working with adolescents to prevent domestic violence: Rural town model, In *National Campaign Against Violence and Crime, Full Report.* Perth: Crime Research Centre, University of Western Australia. p. 33.

[2] Mills, M. (2001). Challenging violence in schools: An issue of masculinities. In series: *Educating Boys, Learning Gender.* Series Eds. Debbie Epstein and Mairtin Mac an Ghaill. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

[3] Education Queensland. (2000). Queensland State Education – 2010. Brisbane: Queensland Government.

of the senior officers interviewed, including principals, confirmed that issues around violence were a serious educational concern and strongly emphasised the importance of programs to assist schools to develop the quality of relationships with their communities required for effective introduction of relevant programs.

Research undertaken for this project indicates that a crucial leadership role is fostering public awareness of:

> - the way the trauma of family and relationship violence impacts on students' social and academic outcomes and life pathways

> - family and relationship violence as a public, rather than private, concern, with implications for the equity and citizenship goals of public schooling[4]

> - the knowledge and skills required of teachers in countering gendered violence, and its relationship to other social justice concerns including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, ethnicity, poverty, disability and sexuality and

> - the role of schools in modelling respectful gender relations and respect for human-rights; and developing students skills for, and commitment to, an active role in eliminating violence.

The resurgence of interest in values and ethics education and a recognition that effective values education requires attention to the formal, informal and hidden curriculum operating in schools may support the implementation of such curriculum. The value of active citizenship, expressed through a capacity to engage in shaping community life within a shared democratic culture, is central to Education Queensland's curriculum programs, strongly positioning Education Queensland to develop and implement curriculum for enhancing gender relationships and preventing family and relationship violence.

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[4] Carter, J. (2003). *Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Youth Violence: Strategies for Prevention and Early Intervention.* San Francisco: Family Violence Prevention Fund. Retrieved October 1, 2004, from http://www.mincava.umn.edu/link/documents/fvpf2.shtml.

KEY FINDINGS

1. *Education has been ascribed roles and responsibilities in whole-of-government strategies on gendered violence since 1992. For many principals and teachers, however, this is still unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory. (page 14)*

2. *Curriculum programs for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence may be seen as relevant only to adolescence. However, it is important that they are introduced across the full age range of schooling, from the preschool years to Year 12. (page 17)*

3. *When considering who is best to deliver curriculum programs for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence, it may be that the nature of the program (as well as the nature of the school context) is the best determinant. Programs primarily considered to be tertiary in nature, as per the definitions given earlier, may best be delivered by individuals employed by the school specifically in supportive capacities, like guidance officers, counsellors and nurses. Clearly curriculum programs which employ socially critical approaches to identifying and challenging the causes of violence are best delivered by teaching professionals. (page 19)*

4. *The platform for developing and delivering a curriculum program for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence clearly already exists in policy in Queensland state schools, and there is a history of successful projects from the 1990s that could be drawn upon. Existing educational agendas like productive pedagogies and ETRF with their emphasis on student engagement and relevant learning also provide an arena for curriculum addressing gendered violence, but it appears that schools are not in general using the opportunities that these offer for this to happen. (page 19)*

5. *Education Queensland personnel interviewed appear to have the perception that the policies which provide a platform for developing and delivering a curriculum program to address gendered violence are no longer operating. (page 20)*

6. *There appears to be a perception that issues of sexual harassment are now located within the child protection arena (and not linked to curriculum) and that the numbers of people with responsibility for these issues and knowledge of the range of ways of addressing them in schools have decreased. (page 22)*

7. *The existence of relevant policies emanating from the Central Office of Education Queensland is not sufficient to ensure that programs are delivered, or how effectively they are delivered. Accountability around implementation of these policies is crucial. (page 23)*

8. *Recent discussions of the place of values in schools potentially provide renewed opportunities for schools to consider how they explicitly address relationship issues with students. (page 25)*

9. *It appears that people in schools are not clear about their mandate for dealing with issues like sexual harassment and perceive a lack of systemic support for this. There*

is a need for a strong stance from leaders at all levels within Education Queensland. (page 27)

10. *The gendered aspect of family and relationship violence needs to be discussed in curriculum programs addressing this. (page 29)*

11. *Syllabus documents provide opportunities for developing and delivering curriculum for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence, though the term 'lifeskills' may not be useful to apply to this. Information about existing approaches may be more useful to schools than specific pre-developed resources. (page 32)*

12. *It is felt that knowledge of social justice (including gender) issues has diminished within the profession along with the perceived need for such knowledge. Yet teachers require a range of specialised knowledges and skills for the implementation of curriculum programs for enhancing gender relationships and preventing family and relationship violence. (page 34)*

13. *Research and evaluations point to the factors which are most likely to ensure the effectiveness of a school's program to address gendered violence. Clearly, simple solutions do not work. Careful planning using the results of research and evaluations is necessary. (page 37)*

14. *There are special challenges in supporting students at risk and those who experience multiple forms of discrimination or violence. However, local relevance, working collaboratively with the community and intellectually challenging curriculum are important parts of practices which can transform students' lived experiences. (page 41)*

15. *The learnings from programs developed in the past and/or in other locations should not be ignored. In particular, the experiences of those principals and school communities – government and non-government agencies and key individuals – who are already working together to address family and relationship violence need to be recognised and drawn on in the development of programs in the future. (page 45)*

GLOSSARY

*_Curriculum_, in the context of this report, refers to the formal, informal and hidden elements of curriculum. These can be understood, respectively as:

- organised learning programs, whether these take place in the school or other sites;
- the values, beliefs and practices around which the life of the school is organised; and
- aspects of school life that are unplanned, but which unintentionally convey values and beliefs.

*_Gendered violence_, in the context of this report, refers to all forms of violence where inappropriate socially or culturally approved stereotypes of masculinity or femininity are implicated. This report is concerned primarily about relationship and family violence, but recognises that any program to eliminate family or relationship violence must be grounded in programs that build awareness that violence occurs on a continuum, with minor forms of violence being the antecedents to more serious forms. Minor forms of sexual harassment and violence foster the attitudes and beliefs that make serious forms of gendered violence seem permissible. The term 'gendered violence' is used with recognition of the fact that, for many students, such violence is inextricably interwoven with practices targeting sexuality, race, ethnicity, poverty or disability.

*_Curriculum and learning frameworks_ in this report refers to programs such as New Basics, Productive Pedagogies; Building Success Together: The Framework for Students at Educational risk; the Inclusive Curriculum Statement; and the Assessment and Reporting Framework

*_Productive Pedagogies_ refers to the elements of effective teaching practices as outlined in the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study, based on research in Queensland state schools.

INTRODUCTION

During 2002, the State Government's Office for Women (OFW) undertook extensive consultations under the *Mapping the Future: A Discussion Paper for Queensland Women and Girls* to determine priorities for addressing the persistent inequities women experience in both their public and private lives. The concerns detailed by women involved in this consultation, together with issues brought forward by the Ministerial Taskforce on Work and Family, impacted on the development of the state government's five year policy framework: *Queensland Women in the Smart State Directions Statement 2003-2008.*

The Office for Women is driving, monitoring and enacting this plan, ensuring that all state government agencies contribute appropriately to improving outcomes for Queensland women and girls.

The statistics about gendered violence provided as part of the consultations, together with women's own experiences, provoked a very high level of concern from Queensland women. Many women understood this violence as linked to a larger disturbing picture, part of which involved the perceived rising level of child abuse. There was a widespread shared view that many young people were entering adulthood poorly equipped with the lifeskills to sustain and enjoy healthy relationships, to resolve issues of relationship tension and violence in their own lives, or to develop positive and healthy approaches to the responsibilities of relationships and family life.

Within the consultations, women stressed the need for effective preparation of young people for forming and sustaining healthy, respectful non-violent gender relations in all areas of life. While women across Queensland wanted stronger measures for reducing and responding to violence against adult women, there was also a powerful consensus for formal education to take a stronger role through school curriculum in violence prevention and positive gender relations skill development.

This concern was expressed in terms of *both boys and girls* needing the knowledge, values and skills for building healthy family relationships, based on equality, non-violence and respect, and a commitment to equitable gender relations in the civic life of the community. These skills were regarded as the foundations of active citizenship, and essential if Queensland is to continue to build strong and resilient communities capable of adapting quickly to the opportunities and risks generated by social, economic and political change.

Participants were also keenly aware of the context of rapidly changing conditions for paid work. They had personal experience of the new pressures being placed on relationships, families, and involvement in community and civic life, pressures sometimes contributing to relationship and family violence.

Women were highly conscious that these pressures impact unevenly on the lives of men and women, and generate new, often unfamiliar, stresses for both, stresses which vary across location and cultures. Emerging work patterns, and discontinuous work participation for both men and women have the potential to be very disruptive for relationships and family routines.

There was widespread recognition that, more than ever, household partners need to be able to negotiate and frequently re-negotiate the sharing of family care and household

management and contribute actively, equitably and conscientiously to building relationships and families that are emotionally healthy and fulfilling for all their members.

All government agencies have responsibilities within the *Women in the Smart State Directions Statement 2003-2008.* The Directions Statement identifies the role of education within this whole of government strategy, and raises no expectation that education alone can achieve the changes necessary to eliminate violence against women and girls, or to ensure greater equity in family, work and civic life. However, understanding what can be achieved through curriculum was seen as a fundamental part of a broader cross-agency plan for achieving substantial changes in community-wide attitudes and practices.

In the context of implementing the Directions Statement, the Office for Women partnered with Education Queensland to conduct a feasibility study for the development and implementation of a curriculum program through Queensland state schools to

- provide students with the knowledges and life skills necessary for enhanced gender relationships in work, family and civic life and
- facilitate respectful, healthy and non-discriminatory relationships between young people in Queensland.

The Office for Women and Education Queensland agreed to engage a project officer to carry out the study. It was agreed that this feasibility study would involve consultation with stakeholders in schools, communities, other government and non-government agencies, in locations across Queensland and would examine the ways other states, nations, and other Australian education systems have addressed the problem.

It is important to note that this project focuses on gender relations, rather than on perceived deficits of either boys or girls as separate populations. This is not to say that implementing a curriculum to enhance healthy, respectful gender relations excludes work with girls or boys in single-sex contexts. Indeed, whilst programs for girls and young women have developed over many years, there are also excellent programs designed for use with boys and young men, aimed particularly at reducing relationship violence[5][6][7][8], some of which are currently being used in Queensland state schools.

This project focused on the role of education in enhancing gender relationships. Concerns about gender relations are manifested in poor relationship maintenance strategies; high rates of relationship and family violence; a reduced capacity to provide safe, healthy environments for children; and the subsequent effective exclusion of many girls and boys, and men and women from productive civic life. These are problems that can severely compromise the government's program to strengthen communities and enhance resilience to changing circumstances.

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[5] Golding, S. and Friedman, B. (1997). *Guys Talk too: Improving Young Men's Sexual Health.* . Kensington SA: Shine.

[6] Friedman, B. (1996). *Boys Talk: A Program for Young Men about Masculinity, Non-Violence and Relationships.* Adelaide: Men Against Sexual Assault.

[7] Friedman, B. (1999). *Relationship Violence: No Way: Young Men & Relationship Violence Prevention Project.* South Australia: Department of Human Services.

[8] Friedman, B. (1998). *Rape Myth-Busters: A Program for Young Men about Rape Prevention.* SA: Sexual Health Information Networking & Education Inc.

This report brings together information gleaned from a range of sources. It reviews, and is informed by, developments in Queensland state education over about fifteen years, specific to the brief of the project. These developments are examined against a background of related national policy and developments. In addition, the report draws on the findings from a small primary research activity carried out specifically for this project which involved interviews with 59 people.

RELEVANT LITERATURE SCAN

This section summarises background information relevant to the context of the project. It includes some statistics about the issue of gendered violence, the rationale for the role of early intervention programs in schools and draws on a scan of documents relating to Education Queensland's history in this area.

The extent of young people's experience of family and relationship violence

Research is increasingly building our knowledge of students' experiences of family and relationship violence. In a 1998-99 survey of 5,000 young people between 12 and 20 years of age, 23% reported at least one act that could be described as physical domestic violence against their mothers or stepmothers[9]. One in three of the almost 70% of young people who had had a boyfriend or girlfriend reported incidences of physical violence in their relationship[10]. Sexual assault by a boyfriend or a date was estimated in 1996 as representing 16.6% of all sexual assaults[11]. Some groups are much more seriously at risk than others. In addition, research is indicating that domestic violence and child abuse co-occur in 30-60 per cent of cases[12].

The cost of family and relationship violence

Statistics illuminating the incidence of relationship and family violence are included in Appendix 1. The costs of this are high, both to the individuals involved and to the economy. In 1993, the cost of domestic violence in Queensland was estimated at $556 million and the cost of rape and sexual assault at $63 million[13]. The total annual cost of domestic violence to the Australian economy in 2002-03 was estimated to be $8.0 billion[14]. The cost of child abuse in Australia has been estimated at $712M[15]. Since witnessing parental domestic violence is the strongest predictor of perpetration of violence in young people's own intimate relationships, these costs will continue to rise unless something is done to address the issue and break the cycle of violence.

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[9] Indemauer, D. (2001). *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195: Young Australians and Domestic Violence.* Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

[10] Indemauer, D. (2001). *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195: Young Australians and Domestic Violence.* Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

[11] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (1996). *Women's Safety Survey.* Retrieved October 1, 2004, from http://www.abs.gov.au/

[12] Edleson, J.L. (1999). The overlap between child maltreatment and women battering, *Violence Against Women.* 5(2), p. 134-154.

[13] Blumel, D.K., Gibb, G.L., Innis, B.N., Justo, D.L., and Wilson, D.W. (1993). *Who Pays? The Economic Costs of Violence Against Women.* Qld*:* Sunshine Coast Interagency Research Group Queensland, Women's Policy Unit.

[14] Access Economics. (2004). *The Cost of Domestic Violence to the Australian Economy*; 25 June 2004, Canberra.

[15] Kovacs, K. and Richardson, N. (2004). *The Economic Costs of Child Abuse*: *Resource Sheet* No 2, June*.* Melbourne: National Child Protection Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

A rationale for the role of schools

Queensland State Education - 2010[16] (*QSE-2010*) emphasises the unique role of schools in providing students with a foundational experience of civic life and human rights, and with the responsibility, together with families, of developing the attributes of responsible citizens. Some schools have explicitly recognised, in their planning processes, that family and relationship violence is a critical factor in low levels of literacy and alienation from community and civic processes, and have developed collaborative strategies with their communities and other agencies to tackle the issue.

Participation in learning can be deeply compromised by students' experience of family or relationship violence. Research provides detailed evidence of the impact of family and relationship violence on young people's development[17]. The impacts include ongoing fear and trauma; health, including mental health, problems; cognitive deficits; aggression; withdrawal; early school leaving; difficulty in forming healthy relationships as children, as well as intimate adult relationships; increased likelihood of drug and alcohol abuse; increased likelihood of criminality; and increased homelessness[18] [19]. Being able to understand the beliefs and attitudes about gender that "permit" high levels of family and relationship violence may be as critical to students' futures as being literate.

A National Australian Partnerships Against Domestic Violence initiative, the meta-evaluation of family and relationship prevention programs for children and young people, emphasised that the school, from the early years onwards, has a critical role to play in any future broad, cross-community, and cross-government programs, and there must be a priority focus on training, resources and support to increase teachers' and support workers' skills, confidence and capacity to take on this role.[20]

Schools' role is not simply one of providing the support to students who are witnesses to or victims of family violence so as to minimise its impacts on their learning and life chances, important as this role is. The role of schools is regarded as pivotal in breaking the cycle of violence by skilling up young people to repudiate such violence in their own lives, and to prevent it happening in their communities.

Understanding the role of schools involves understanding the distinctions between, and the place of, programs that are focused on:

o *Primary prevention* which is designed to educate all students in the knowledge and skills for healthy gender relations – to prevent the experience of family and/or relationship violence before it occurs. This includes general awareness for all young people.

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[16] Education Queensland. (2000). *Queensland State Education – 2010*. Brisbane: Queensland Government.
[17] James, M. (1994). Domestic Violence as a Form of Child Abuse: Identification and Prevention. *Issues in Child Abuse Prevention.* No 2, July. Melbourne: National Child Protection clearinghouse. pp. 3-7.
[18] Browne, K. and Herbert, M. (1997). *Preventing Family Violence.* NY: John Wiley and Sons.
[19] James, M. (1994). Domestic Violence as a Form of Child Abuse: Identification and Prevention. *Issues in Child Abuse Prevention.* No 2, July. Melbourne: National Child Protection clearinghouse.
[20] Strategic Partners. (1999). *Children, Young People and Domestic Violence: Phase 1 Meta-Evaluation Report*. Canberra: Partnerships Against Domestic Violence. p. 114.

- *Secondary prevention* which is designed to prevent the experience of gendered violence in at-risk populations.

- *Tertiary prevention* which involves working intensively with those who have experienced or perpetrated gendered violence.

While education has a role in the three types of prevention of gendered violence (as do other agencies), the strongest role for schools is potentially in primary prevention. Schools can offer curriculum programs which skill students in such aspects as assertiveness, conflict resolution and personal safety. However, uniquely, schools can also offer curriculum which identifies and challenges the structures and inequities in society which can lead to violent relationships. Schools do not just prepare individuals as future citizens; they can act as agents of social change, helping to create a society where the gendered aspect of violence is understood and disrupted. It is one thing for schools to skill students to cope with the status quo; it is quite another to work with students and school communities to change that status quo through eradicating gendered violence. Clearly, this poses greater challenges for schools. Promotion of the role of schools in this type of primary prevention will require high profile leadership and communication strategies that reach across the education community, including parents.

There is international recognition that the school curriculum can play a critical role in preventing gendered violence[21] [22] [23] [24], and the statistics above suggest that any curriculum that is silent on these issues can only exacerbate the sense of abandonment and guilt experienced by children and young people affected by such violence. Many school-aged young people are involved in family and relationship violence, either as perpetrators, victims, or "witnesses". These are not events that affect them only as adults. These young people need to be able to develop the skills for acting positively on the direction of their own lives, as well as being part of strategies to create safe, violence-free communities. When the curriculum is silent on this major social issue, it contributes to the normalisation of gendered violence[25]. Eckersley[26] has pointed out that when schools do not take a stand on, and provide ways of understanding and acting upon the social issues that deeply affect young people, students may develop a sense of abandonment and hopelessness.

Prevention programs and programs with child witnesses and victims are seen to be essential to countering the cultural acceptability of violence. School-based programs, especially when integrated with broader community programs, can contribute significantly

[21] Szirom T., Jaffe, R., Holmes, L., and Ward, B. (2000). *Young People Say DV No Way: Evaluations of National Domestic Violence Prevention Programs for Young People.* Canberra: Strategic Partners.

[22] Indemauer, D., Atkinson, L., and Blagg, H. (1998). Working with adolescents to prevent domestic violence: Rural town model, In *National Campaign Against Violence and Crime, Full Report.* Perth: Crime Research Centre, University of Western Australia.

[23] United Kingdom Government. (2003). *Safety and Justice: The Government's Proposals on Domestic Violence.* Norwich.

[24] World Health Organisation. (2002). *World Report on Violence and Health.* UN.

[25] Stein, N. (2001). Gender Violence in Elementary and Secondary Schools. *Coalition Commentary.* Fall, Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

[26] Eckersley, R. (1998). Redefining progress: shaping the future to human needs. *Family Matters.* Spring/Summer. 51, pp. 6-12.

to decreasing community tolerance of family and relationship violence and promoting resilient communities[27][28].

Education Queensland's history in this area

The historical background, which is detailed in Appendix 2, provides a backdrop against which current opportunities in Education Queensland for, and barriers to, reviving a robust educational impetus for teaching healthy gender relations can be appreciated. An awareness of this history is important for a number of reasons, such as ensuring that future strategies draw on the strengths of what has gone before. But learning from this historical background can also help ensure the engagement of broad support across the community and, especially, across those groups with a strong vested interest in particular directions for gender equity in schools.

Education Queensland currently has a powerfully communicated strategy, *Queensland State Education – 2010*, for preparing students for complex future social and economic challenges; and a renewal of the concept of citizenship. This, together with the high profile *Education and Training Reforms for the Future*, and the frameworks *New Basics, Literate Futures, Productive Pedagogies* and the *Framework for Assessment and Reporting* provide a strong platform for integrating school-based approaches for addressing relationship and family violence. This platform is reinforced by the recommendations of the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study, which did, however, clearly caution that teacher development was critical to these opportunities being realised.

Education has been ascribed roles and responsibilities in whole-of-government strategies on gendered violence since 1992. For many principals and teachers, however, this is still unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory, and there appears to be little awareness across Education Queensland of the responsibilities allocated to formal state school education in the current 4-year state government strategy *Women in the Smart State Directions Statement 2003-2008*.

Over the past decade, Education Queensland's commitment to educating for healthy gender relations has been inconsistent, with periods of strong, explicit support for these issues in teacher and resource development, interspersed with periods when support has been muted. The explicit commitment peaked during the mid-1990s.

Educational developments in the early to mid-1990s supported curriculum and whole-school strategies to enable students to develop deep knowledge about gender relations and the skills for equitable, respectful relations. This occurred in unprecedented ways: through strong policy, effective resourcing, structural supports for networking among teachers, parents and community agencies, staffing procedures, and leadership. These developments were part of a broader focus on social justice in education which included an awareness and a deepening understanding of gender issues in general. Since then, predominant understandings of these social justice issues have changed and these supports are no longer available.

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[27] Szirom T., Jaffe, R., Holmes, L., and Ward, B. (2000). *Young People Say DV No Way: Evaluations of National Domestic Violence Prevention Programs for Young People.* Canberra: Strategic Partners.

[28] Indemauer, D., Atkinson, L., and Blagg, H. (1998). Working with adolescents to prevent domestic violence: Rural town model, In *National Campaign Against Violence and Crime, Full Report.* Perth: Crime Research Centre, University of Western Australia.

The Education Queensland policy most relevant to this project is the *Gender Equity in Education Policy (CS-01).* This policy was first issued in July 1992. While it is still part of the *Department of Education Manual*, it has changed significantly since that time. In three important respects*,* Education Queensland's policy went further than the National Policy of that time*.* It stated that:

- Schooling will encourage the development of attitudes and behaviours in female and male students which promote social responsibility, empathy, and sensitive, equal and non-violent relationships.

- Schooling will assist students to understand the importance of the relationship between public and private responsibilities, including paid and unpaid work in terms of increased equality between men and women.

- Schooling will assist students to understand the construction of sex-role stereotypes, and to explore their own attitudes to gender roles and the implications of these attitudes for their adult futures.

These statements were the heart of Queensland's cutting edge policy, legitimising strategies designed not simply to achieve greater parity in subject and career selection, use of the schools' resources, and educational retention and achievement, but to educate students for gender justice, in all areas of their lives. It is highly significant that this policy was contemporaneous with a strong role for education in whole of government strategies for eliminating violence against women and girls.

This policy was also highly significant in the spectrum of states' gender equity policies, because, in contrast to most other states' policies at that time, it contained critical aspects of policy focussed on *gender relations*, and addressing the needs of boys as well as girls in achieving this.

The *CS-02 Human Relationships Education for Queensland State Schools* (HRE) Policy had its inception in the late 1980s, under the conservative government at the time, initially seeking to formalise and regulate sex education in state schools. The policy was revised in the early 1990s, and is still in the *Department of Education Manual.* It was a crucial companion policy to the *Gender Equity in Education* Policy. Its key policy statement is:

> "Through Human Relationships Education, Education Queensland acknowledges the need for students to have opportunities to develop all aspects of personal identity (intellectual, emotional, physical, social, cultural and spiritual) in ways that empower individuals and groups. Human Relationships Education is part of schooling from Preschool to Year 12 and is fundamental to a school's behaviour management process in managing a supportive school environment."

From the late 1980s to the mid 1990s, considerable resources supported the implementation of this policy. This included significant professional development for HRE officers at district levels, and for responsible officers in schools.

In the early 1990s, officers responsible for this policy area formed strong links across the community, with a number of community agencies, including Family Planning Queensland and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre. During that period, the collaboration with the Domestic Violence Resource Centre resulted in the development of the video and teaching materials, *Prevention of Abuse in Relationships.*

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The HRE policy draws attention to gender, as one of a range of issues to be taken into account in the development of students' self-esteem and confidence in dealing with others; and to sexuality, in the context of enabling students to develop an understanding of the emotional and spiritual changes that occur through life, and how these contribute to an individual's personal identity, sexuality and relationships with others.

Key elements of the policy are: values, self-concept, communication, relationships, and sexuality.

The policy sets out a process for implementation of a school HRE program. The formation of a School Community Collaborative Committee with membership including students, and parent and community representatives, is a crucial element of the process. The role of this committee is to develop, support and review HRE in the school, and in the school's general planning and review process. Queensland's HRE policy was cutting edge in a number of ways: in this participatory approach to developing HRE programs based on a community development paradigm, in its approach to relevant content through the key elements and in its recognition of the importance of the hidden and the extra-curriculum as media through which students learn.

During the 1990s, Education Queensland was responsible for producing quality resources to address violence, such as *Enough's Enough*: *Sexual harassment and violence in the primary school* which won a national award.

Over the past ten years, both Commonwealth and state have "mainstreamed" the social justice agenda for education. Curriculum on healthy gender relations has moved from specific focused projects to being embedded in a range of policy and syllabus developments. The focus on teaching students the skills for healthy, respectful gender relations has been blurred, and sometimes written out of the official agenda, as issues such as testing and benchmarking around aspects of literacy and numeracy, alongside concerns about boys' educational outcomes, have taken centre stage.

> "We used to be able to do domestic and relationship violence issues [in schools] more before the boys' issues took over. Now we talk about healthy relationships, but we are concerned about being part of the move to obscuring the reality."
>> Community worker in a regional Domestic Violence Resource Centre.

Key finding 1

Education has been ascribed roles and responsibilities in whole-of-government strategies on gendered violence since 1992. For many principals and teachers, however, this is still unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory.

Education Queensland's experience in the Australian and international context
In Australia, all state education system responses to issues of relationship and family violence have followed similar historical pathways to Queensland's experience. A common experience is the development of specific programs following the introduction of antidiscrimination legislation, and a blurring of focus over time as such programs have

been integrated into anti-bullying frameworks, safe school frameworks, and child protection frameworks that include generic, rather than gender specific, requirements.

A similar history has been traced in the United States. Stein[29] details the decline of opportunities to teach about gendered violence from a perspective of human rights, as these concerns were overtaken by the testing regime, and the gradual incorporation of gendered violence issues into gender-neutral school safety, anti-bullying or zero tolerance programs. These generic programs are based on beliefs about violence having its roots in individual pathologies, ignoring the data which show that the vast majority of perpetrators of violence are male. They often remove opportunities to teach about these issues from the perspective of human rights which is the perspective that gave rise to anti-discrimination legislation, and the perspective explicitly endorsed in the Queensland Government's Strategic Framework: *Women in the Smart State Directions Statement 2003-2008.*

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The above discussion of the historical context provides a selective snapshot of activity and opportunities in Queensland state schools for teaching the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes for forming healthy, respectful, non-discriminatory gender relations in families, relationships, paid work and civic life.

This next section of the report draws on a small primary research project involving interviews with 59 people. These included, in Education Queensland,
- 6 secondary principals
- 3 primary principals
- 3 Executive Directors (Schools)
- 18 central office staff, including one Assistant Director-General, 6 middle managers and a number of policy officers
- 5 district office staff
- 7 teachers.

Also interviewed were
- a Senior Executive Officer in another state government agency
- 3 officers from other state education systems
- 2 staff from community organisations
- a principal from a non-government school
- 9 teacher educators
- an academic researching domestic violence issues.

Most interviewees were selected on the basis of either a strong interest in and record of achievement in addressing the concerns raised in the brief, or the administrative or policy position they currently occupy, and its relevance to the brief. Their input was examined for what they saw as current factors in their particular context (as pre-service educator, principals, external agency support, etc) which would enable, support or foster the delivery of curriculum for healthy gender relations in Queensland state schools; and current factors inhibiting this.

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[29] Stein, N. (2001). Gender Violence in Elementary and Secondary Schools. *Coalition Commentary.* Fall, Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

In the discussion below, information from the interviews is presented along with relevant information gleaned from the secondary research.

THEMES FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Enabling factors in the current strategic environment in Education Queensland

The *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* (ETRF) sets out a transformational agenda for adjusting schools to the emerging needs of young people, ensuring that schooling provides age-appropriate responses to their academic and social developmental needs; that the range of agencies relevant to the needs of young people are involved; and that para-professionals are provided to connect students to appropriate supports. Although it is early stages for the implementation of these reforms, schools are already reporting the benefits for young people.

Officers working in this area report that the ETRF implementation strategies are designed to enable schools to adapt rapidly and flexibly to student needs. Any programs linked to this strategy need to be equally flexible.

> "At the moment we need to keep moving to find entry points. You have got to be alert to the junctures – what developments are amenable to influence. As the machinery changes, we need to look for new places to influence, and who will pick up that influence at a local level. Having theory and intention is OK, but there need to be contacts on the ground."
>
> Policy Officer, ETRF

The ETRF strategy has emphasised the significance of adolescence as a critical phase. However, there is no consensus in the literature about the most important age group for prioritising educational interventions. Each stage of schooling - early childhood[30]; middle schooling and late adolescence[31] [32] respectively - is considered critical according to various bodies of research. Research has established that the impacts of family and relationship violence are generally manifested in very different ways depending on the age and stage of development of the child, whether they are witnesses, or are physically harmed[33] [34] [35].

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[30] Carter, J. (2003) *Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Youth Violence: Strategies for Prevention and Early Intervention.* San Francisco: Family Violence Prevention Fund. Retrieved October 1, 2004, from http://www.mincava.umn.edu/link/documents/fvpf2.shtml

[31] Szirom T., Jaffe, R., Holmes, L., and Ward, B. (2000). *Young People Say DV No Way: Evaluations of National Domestic Violence Prevention Programs for Young People.* Canberra: Strategic Partners.

[32] Sunderman, M., Jaffe. P., and Hastings, E. (1995). Violence Prevention Programs in Secondary (High) Schools. In Peled, E., Jaffe, P. and Edleston, J. (eds). *Ending the Cycle of Violence.* Thousand Oaks, London: Sage Publications.

[33] Worth, N., and Martin, P. (1997). *Child's Play: Rebuilding Attachment between Mothers and Children following Domestic Violence.*

[34] James, M. (1994). Domestic Violence as a Form of Child Abuse: Identification and Prevention. *Issues in Child Abuse Prevention.* No 2, July, pp. 3-7.

[35] Commonwealth Government. (2002). *Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Annual Report 2001-2002: A Substantial Beginning to a New Commitment.*

Some research indicates that age eight is too late to initiate the development of understandings about gender[36]. Whilst adolescence is clearly significant as the time young people begin relationships, research indicates that early childhood students respond enthusiastically, and in academically challenging contexts, to curriculum that addresses attitudes and beliefs about gender and violence[37]. At the other end of the schooling spectrum, studies in the United States indicate that violence prevention programs with older children that rely on psychotherapy, peer counselling, or intensive social casework, as well as employment/vocational programs without an educational component, are for the most part unsuccessful [38] .

Key finding 2
Curriculum programs for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence may be seen as relevant only to adolescence. However, it is important that they are introduced across the full age range of schooling, from the preschool years to Year 12.

Queensland State Education -2010[39] (*QSE-2010*), the overarching strategy for taking state school education into the future, confirmed a strong role for state schools, embedded in their communities, in developing effective collaborations for overcoming the defeatism that attaches to long-standing, cyclical social pathologies. It called for a renewed commitment to cross-agency collaboration in addressing the complex social factors in students' lives that impact on their learning.

In most cases, schools reported that School Based Youth Health Nurses and Youth Support Coordinators are making an important difference in the way schools respond to student needs. However, concerns exist that the more that critical social issues are handed over to paraprofessionals in the school, the more those issues are marginalised from the main agenda, particularly from the curriculum. Also, these support staff are not seen to be influential in the way the schools address gendered violence in whole-school strategies. This can contribute to greater silence in school life on these issues, rather than actively putting these issues on the schools' human rights agenda.

Interviewees were divided about who is best to work with students on issues of family and relationship violence. Whilst some Principals referred to excellent results from school nurses and chaplains, not only with students, but also in building alliances and networks across the community, others were less enthusiastic. The latter group believed that the relationship between students and teachers is one that is built up over time, and cannot be replaced by someone who comes in for a visit from time to time. As one respondent replied:

> "We need people in schools who can play different roles in the school community, people who don't have to have a bureaucratic hat on, who kids trust, can be teachers or year level coordinators. The most important ones are those who can

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[36] Alloway, N. (1995). Eight's Too Late: Early Childhood Education and Gender Reform. *Unicorn*, 21(4), pp. 19-26.

[37] Alloway, N. (1995). Eight's Too Late: Early Childhood Education and Gender Reform. *Unicorn*, 21(4), pp. 19-26.

[38] Carter, J. (2003) *Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Youth Violence: Strategies for Prevention and Early Intervention.* San Francisco: Family Violence Prevention Fund. Retrieved October 1, 2004, from http://www.mincava.umn.edu/link/documents/fvpf2.shtml

[39] Education Queensland. (2000). *Queensland State Education – 2010*. Brisbane: Queensland Government.

move between the kids and the outside. Sometimes they can support from the edge, and have the ear of the administration. Who is best for this: the teacher? Some other person? This depends on how democratic the school is, how trusting relationships are developed by individuals, no matter where they are from – teachers or others. We need some profound changes – it comes back to the democratisation of the school."

The *Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study[40]* (*QSRLS*) reinforced the philosophy underpinning *QSE-2010*. It provided evidence from 800 observations of Queensland classrooms that students who are given opportunities to develop robust and transformative citizenship skills, with deep knowledge of societal factors involved in issues such as violence, poverty and discrimination, will be those that make the difference in our social futures; students who are able to embrace cultural diversity, as well as advocate against entrenched cultures of injustice and violence and generate and apply creative and effective solutions in real life contexts. A subtext of *QSE-2010*, taken up in the research papers[41] on which it is based, is that state schools are uniquely placed to generate the strong, street-wise, but publicly connected, citizenship practices that can turn around hopelessness and apathy in which many communities are mired.

The *QSRLS* found that such learning would come from teaching that called for depth of understanding; higher order thinking; capacity to problematise entrenched ways of understanding social practices; sustained connectedness to the social world of students; a capacity to understand societal problems in their local, national and global contexts; and learning that integrates school learning with broader community developments. It also found that such pedagogies were critical for students at educational risk.

Key finding 3

When considering who is best to deliver curriculum programs for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence, it may be that the nature of the program (as well as the nature of the school context) is the best determinant. Programs primarily considered to be tertiary in nature, as per the definitions given earlier, may best be delivered by individuals employed by the school specifically in supportive capacities, like guidance officers, counsellors and nurses. Clearly curriculum programs which employ socially critical approaches to identifying and challenging the causes of violence are best delivered by teaching professionals.

Other major system strategies, such as *Literate Futures, New Basics,* and *Productive Pedagogies* have co-evolved within the vision generated by the QSE-2010 and the QSRLS. They all stress the importance of connecting learning to critical issues in students' lives, whilst maintaining a high level of intellectual demand; and developing school learning programs which are congruent with community education and renewal programs.

While QSE-2010, ETRF and QSRLS provide rhetoric supporting a strong commitment to students' capacity for active citizenship on critical social issues, in practice, interviewees indicate that reforms have emphasised vocationalism over capacity to exercise active

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[40] Lingard, R., Ladwig, J., Mills, M., Warry, M., Ailwood, J., Bahr, M., Chant, D., Christie, P., Gore, J., Hayes, D., Luke, A., and Renshaw, P. (2001). *The Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study*. Volume 1 & 2. Brisbane: Education Queensland.

[41] Martinez, L. (2000). *Equity paper: A Research Paper for the Development of the Queensland State Education – 2010 Strategy*. Brisbane: Education Queensland.

citizenship on major social issues. Whilst employability is a critical focus for students' economic futures, evidence suggests that having the skills to reject violence in their own relationships and contribute to broader community strategies to prevent gendered violence, may be just as critical, especially in high risk communities.

There is, however, a close correlation between the school leadership, teacher development, community engagement, pedagogy, and social justice strategies recommended in Education Queensland's strategic environment, and those recommended by evaluations of programs for gendered violence, including prevention of family and relationship violence.

Key finding 4

The platform for developing and delivering a curriculum program for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence clearly already exists in policy in Queensland state schools, and there is a history of successful projects from the 1990s that could be drawn upon. Existing educational agendas like productive pedagogies and ETRF with their emphasis on student engagement and relevant learning also provide an arena for curriculum addressing gendered violence, but it appears that schools are not in general using the opportunities that these offer for this to happen.

Related policies

As mentioned earlier, a number of polices exist on the *Department of Education Manual* that, if mobilised resolutely, would support the development of programs to promote healthy, respectful gender relations. These include

> *CS-02 Human Relationships Education for Queensland State Schools*

> *CS-15 Principles of Inclusive Curriculum*

> *CS-01 Gender Equity in Education*

> *SM-17 Students at Educational Risk*

> *CS-17 Anti-Racism*

> *CS-16 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity*

> *HS-06 HIV/AIDS Education*

> *HS-17 Student Protection.*

It would appear, from the interviews, that apart from the Student Protection Policy, these policies are commonly understood as having been rescinded, or at least, allowed to languish. The Human Relationships Education Policy, which had promoted a strong focus on healthy gender relationships in professional development programs and district support arrangements, is clearly fading from memory in schools:

"The Human Relationships Education Policy? That is dead, isn't it?"
<div align="right">Teacher educator</div>

"The Human Relationships Education Policy. Well, it is still there, but schools don't comply with it. In secondary schools, they sometimes allocate time for it, but that time is used for test practices, or for drug education."
<div align="right">Policy Officer, Central Office</div>

"One school has decided to address the issue [gendered violence] through a "full-blown values program". Another principal has instituted a "puberty program". These decisions reflect a general decline in the Human Relationships Policy, a policy that is now relatively unknown. There's a sense that something needs to be done to replace it."

<div align="right">Executive Director, Schools</div>

Whilst this Executive Director reflects on the way values programs or programs about puberty may now be surrogates for concerns that were central within the Human Relationships Education Program, this may also be reflected in the strong concern that exists within the teaching profession about mental illness, a factor that was raised frequently by interviewees.

The *Framework for Students at Educational Risk*, which was a key strategy in the implementation of *QSE-2010*, and had allocated specific responsibilities and accountabilities to officers at school, district and central level for identifying educational risk factors, including violence, in school communities seemed to be suffering a similar fate:

"The *Framework for Students at Educational Risk* has been withdrawn, I think. I'm not sure."

<div align="right">Policy Officer, Central Office</div>

Key finding 5
Education Queensland personnel interviewed appear to have the perception that the policies which provide a platform for developing and delivering a curriculum program to address gendered violence are no longer operating.

Sexual harassment: a policy deficit

The disappearance of specifically titled sexual harassment programs, procedures and resources has weakened the platform in Education Queensland for engaging with gendered violence in the curriculum, and in school life. Following the introduction of the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, Education Queensland had introduced professional development about sexual harassment and violence for all principals; produced age-appropriate curriculum resources for developing students' understanding and awareness of gendered harassment and violence; trained sexual harassment referral officers (SHROs) in schools; and provided effective processes for students and staff seeking assistance against sexual harassment.

Such programs were regarded in the years following the introduction of the Anti-Discrimination Act as essential to implementing Education Queensland's obligations under the Act. These obligations were seen as having three major components:

➢ all Education Queensland sites would promote Education Queensland's stance prohibiting sexual harassment;

➢ all sites would have well-publicised processes that could be comfortably accessed by every person on that site for complaints about, and for resolving incidences of, sexual harassment; and

> ➢ at all sites, there would be effectively promoted and implemented programs to ensure a level of awareness about sexual harassment consistent with the aim of maintaining harassment and violence free environments.

Curriculum was regarded as having the central role in developing students' understandings about sexual harassment, in the context of understanding the practices that "normalise" gendered violence in many aspects of Australian society. Consultations for this project indicate that many principals and teachers no longer regard this as Education Queensland's stance.

> "Of all programs Education Queensland has introduced, having trained Sexual Harassment Referral Officers (SHRO) in school had the strongest impact. This school still has a SHRO, who also deals with racial harassment, and tells parents about this role in the information booklet."
>
> Principal, primary school.

> "Did it work? Well, Sexual Harassment Referral Officers were a point of contact, so at least one person knew the issues (was "knowledged up"). It has to be somebody's baby, someone has to have a stake, and an 'in' to the local community."
>
> Academic (ex senior officer)

Some teachers and principals said their schools had maintained the SHROs who were trained ten years ago, and had added Bullying Referral Officers.

The incorporation of sexual harassment issues into the Student Protection Policy has had the effect of constructing it as an adult theme, emphasising protective responsibilities rather than public affirmation of student rights, supported by programs for procedural justice. This emphasis provides limited opportunities to engage students in learnings about aspects of power in the relationship between gender and violence.

> "SHROs have fallen off the wagon. There has been no renewal of the training – it now comes under Student Protection –and is everybody's responsibility. Student Protection dis-empowers. It says 'we will do it for you'."
>
> Principal, primary

Whilst there is mandatory training for all teachers under the Student Protection Policy, the direct link between curriculum and responding to legal obligations has been lost. The curriculum programs came to be regarded as "bureaucratic excess" [42]. Yet, the programs developed in the 1990s to meet these obligations had been strongly received by schools and teachers. Some of these programs received Australian Heads of Government awards for Prevention of Violence. Related projects illustrated clearly that students at all levels, P-12, could learn about these issues in ways that had positive impacts on learning and behaviours.

The confidence of students to speak out about gendered violence is connected to the availability of clearly promoted policies renouncing gender-based harassment, and

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[42] Personal Communication. (2004). Executive Director, Strategic Policy, Education Queensland to author.

procedures that are comfortable for students to access.[43] The absence of such policies and procedures can diminish victims' confidence and emotional energy, intensify feelings of shame and isolation[44].

The absence of system stance, obvious to students, parents and staff, on forms of harassment covered in legislation, and accessible procedures for dealing with sexual harassment, diminishes the capacity for internal advocacy for curriculum on critical gender issues.

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Key finding 6

There appears to be a perception that issues of sexual harassment are now located within the child protection arena (and not linked to curriculum) and that the numbers of people with responsibility for these issues and knowledge of the range of ways of addressing them in schools have decreased.

Policy: a catalyst for reform?

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Devolved schools and their communities are suspicious of centralised policy-making, a position that is tacitly authorised by system practices. The use of policy as a catalyst for change would seem to be a careful balancing act.

On the one hand, teachers and principals, and other officers with direct responsibility for social justice issues or at-risk groups, claim that without the authority of policy, they would lose the capacity to advocate for continued attention to, and resourcing of these issues. On the other hand, overwhelmingly, those interviewed had little faith that introducing a capital 'P' policy on healthy respectful gender relations would, in itself, trigger more focused processes for supporting change. Moreover, most believed it would trigger further cynicism.

The *Gender Equity in Education* Policy, along with many other policies, has been simplified through successive revisions over the years. Statements of principle directing attention specifically to teaching of healthy respectful gender relations in relationships, family and civic life have been removed. The policy has, therefore, probably become irrelevant to the capacity of officers in Central Office, District Offices and schools to advocate on concerns about family and relationship violence.

Views from those interviewed were divided about what strategies are necessary to give greater priority to issues of family and relationship violence in the curriculum. Some recommended that the issues should be incorporated into existing frameworks, such as the framework currently in development to promote safe schools, because they perceive that there is a high level of consistency with this and other frameworks. However, others (usually senior officers) are convinced that the issues will not get attention unless they are mandated within system priorities. Many believe action will follow only if dedicated strategies are implemented.

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[43] Alloway, N. (2000). *Just Kidding: Sex-Based Harassment at School*. Sydney: New South Wales
　　　Department of Education and Training.
[44] *Queensland Youth Bureau for the Youth Policy Taskforce of MCEETYA*. (1994).

"To be meaningful, it [a curriculum on family and relationship violence] would need to be mandated, and be accompanied by performance measures, in the same way as literacy or middle schooling. The Safe Schools Framework has the potential to carry this sort of mandate….It needs to be based in legislation. The Education Act really needs to be responsive to the Anti-Discrimination Act. It is very surprising that we haven't had more cases."

<div align="right">Academic, ex-senior officer.</div>

"QSE-2010 still lives: it is the "bible", but these issues need to be in Destination 2005, and in the Learning and Development priorities."

<div align="right">Secondary principal</div>

"You need to make sure that it is a component of whatever is regarded as the core. Otherwise, you end up with programs that shine brightly in some places. Get it included in the accountabilities of all principals. Otherwise the chances of it happening are marginal. It also needs to be publicly promoted."

<div align="right">Senior officer, Central Office</div>

Accountability is a concern closely related to policy. In this respect, interviewees reported that Education Queensland has little capacity to collect and/or analyse qualitative data on students' attitudinal development and related behavioural outcomes in any meaningful way, so does not set targets to leverage improved practices in this regard. One academic and pre-service educator remarked that there was a high degree of acknowledgement that performance demonstrating attitudinal and behavioural development is valued by parents and the community, and needs to be measured.

"Our failure to measure [social outcomes] results in a trade off of 'able to' for 'knowledge of'. If something is important, what is the main thing that schools can do? It seems so obvious that schools should teach about being able to *practise* democratic values. But we get the dominance of abstracted learning about society, rather than the skills to live practically in it."

<div align="right">Academic, teacher educator</div>

Key finding 7
The existence of relevant policies emanating from the Central Office of Education Queensland is not sufficient to ensure that programs are delivered, or how effectively they are delivered. Accountability around implementation of these policies is crucial.

Emerging opportunities for addressing values and ethics

The *QSRLS* research found that, with many of the structural changes in industrialised societies, matters of social justice have dropped off the agenda, and need to be brought back into sharper focus[45]. However, most of those interviewed for this project had a strong position on values and ethics, as distinct from policy, that should drive practice in state schools.

"No we don't get change from policy. It comes from a philosophical perspective of the state school educator. We want from the full diversity of students in state

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[45] Hayes, D., Lingard, B., and Mills, M. (2000). Productive Pedagogies. *Education Links,* 60 (Winter), pp. 10-13.

schools: good citizens. Policy is driven by the corporate impulse – efficiency and effectiveness. Public service has moved away from the "fair go" to economic rationalism…. Change for healthy non-violent relationships will come out of a philosophy: people who believe that quality of life is about relationships and community. Policy is often a barrier, not an enabler."

<div align="right">Principal, secondary</div>

There are indications that there is a resurgence of interest in schools' stance on issues of values and ethics. While the position outlined by the Australian government early this year on values in schools has had little effect to date, it reflects this emergent interest. However, given the powerful connections Queensland syllabuses and learning and development frameworks make to values and ethics, there is strong endorsement that a higher profile be given in Education Queensland communications to the values and ethics underpinning the system's social justice commitments. This is allied to an increase in parental interest in understanding how schools contribute to students' social outcomes.

One policy officer, who was involved in a recent review of a high profile Education Queensland initiative, commented:

"We are beginning to look at how we look at social learning outcomes: *Self and others*: based on ethics, citizenship and interpersonal skills. Parents WANT reports on kids' attitudes. They see their kids moving into a world that is less secure than theirs has been. They understand this better than teachers. They want to know that their kids can do the negotiating, getting on with others, the decision-making that will allow them to function in a less secure world…

Religion is not what it used to be. Parents have a desire for more ethics, values: they want their kids to be strong in this, that they need to understand and practise ethics at personal, work, interpersonal level. So they want to know how their kids interact, and are these learnings pervasive, and affect their attitudes – from the personal to the global…

Parents are looking for feedback about personal and relational skills as well as feedback on the intellectual front. There is tension between the reporting on the academic and the social. Queensland has not really developed the 'self and other' side."

<div align="right">Education Queensland Policy Officer</div>

There has long been recognition across educational research that values are implicit in everything that happens in schools, and that the more explicit and negotiated the school's values stances are, the better the school can examine how it lives up to those values. This position supports the whole-of-school approach on social justice issues. However, schools' value stances are often expressed in nebulous or superficial ways, and do not have the capacity to generate examination of internalised attitudes and beliefs about meaningful, complex issues such as gender and violence.

One of the most useful and contemporary frameworks for incorporating values and ethics into learning about social justice issues is outlined in the *QSRLS* report, in the context of that domain of teaching practice referred to as *recognition of difference.* The authors discuss student performance in three elements: cultural knowledges; responsible

citizenship; and transformative citizenship, and this disaggregation provides a significant framework for curriculum for prevention of family and relationship violence.

The three elements of recognition of difference are demonstrated when students:

- ➤ explicitly value *cultural knowledges*: such things as non-dominant cultures' beliefs, languages, practices and ways of knowing. Cultural groups are distinguished by social characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, economic status or youth

- ➤ display an awareness of *responsible citizenshi*p: the importance of creating positive human relationships and respecting individuals; recognise the impact of individuals on their community and environment and

- ➤ elaborate on the meaning of *transformative citizenship*: that in a democratic society all individuals and groups have the right to participate in all of the democratic practices and institutions of that society; the right to engage in the creation and transformation of that society; the responsibility to ensure that no groups or individuals are excluded from these practices and institutions; and the responsibility to ensure that a broad definition of the political includes all relationships and structures throughout the social arrangement[46].

These elements of the *QSRLS* report are probably those least incorporated into Education Queensland's frameworks and processes for implementing the recommendations of the report. However, these social responsibilities for transforming practices and beliefs that support gendered violence are beginning to be incorporated into some of the programs for learning about family and relationship violence. Focusing on the value of *courage* is one of the characteristics of emerging programs for preventing relationship and family violence. This is discussed further later in this report in the section *What programs help?*

Key finding 8
Recent discussions of the place of values in schools potentially provide renewed opportunities for schools to consider how they explicitly address relationship issues with students.

Leadership

While policy may have "irritant value" only, especially to school staff, some of those interviewed believed that stances on major issues that senior officers cite in their daily practices, and publicly and consistently foreground, are seen to be effective in supporting change.

> "…even without these [gender equity policies], strong consistent system leadership could ensure that the learning outcomes relevant to gender relations continue to be emphasised."
>
> Senior academic.

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[46] Education Queensland. (2000). Queensland State Education – 2010. Brisbane: Queensland Government, p. 21-22.

> "While syllabuses are not significant as a means to help teachers to teach about gender, the system should identify the issues that are important for students to know. That would help."
>
> <div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

There appears to be a deep reluctance at all levels of Education Queensland to take leadership on incorporation of major social issues into the curriculum. In a context where economic policy is ascendant over social policy in education, responses from Education Queensland to proposals arising from public debates on contemporary issues of serious social concern give significantly more weight to consultations with employers, business and industry than consultations, especially with at-risk groups, about major social issues.

Public enquiries or consultations on major social issues, such as the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody; or consultations on youth suicide, juvenile crime or substance abuse; or the consultations with Queensland women that triggered this project, routinely allocate a major role to the school curriculum as part of the solution. Education, just as routinely, regards such recommendations as importing agendas into curriculum that are properly the responsibility of other agencies, and so refracts new demands through the lens of what is already happening. This often takes the form of an allusion to the issue added to an existing framework.

It can be argued that government-initiated community consultations into major social concerns define what is socially relevant, with clear implications for leadership in education, and for curriculum. Committed teachers, as members of the larger community, are painfully aware of the way education systems invoke the pressure of the orthodox outcomes to evade issues that may be of greater social relevance.

> "There is very little professional development outside the enormous focus on reporting mandated outcomes [in New Basics]. If you are committed you try to read "gender" into this somewhere. Gender is not mentioned in the grading masters. The Years 4-6 Personal Health Plan says the opposite of what syllabuses say you should do with kids. It is gender free! Turns the clock back to the 1950s!"
>
> <div align="right">Primary teacher</div>

The issue of leadership was closely associated by interviewees with that of risk. There is a high level of consensus that serious risks are associated with addressing relationship and family violence through curriculum in the current policy environment. From the perspective of these Executive Directors, principals and their representatives, these risks relate primarily to

- ➢ the perceived lack of a clearly articulated role and protocols for Education Queensland in the context of the cross-government strategy

- ➢ uncertainty, about the level of approval and support they might receive from system leaders in the event of complications

- ➢ the vulnerability of students in volatile family and relationship contexts

- ➢ the lack of teacher threshold knowledge about gender issues in general, and about gender and violence issues in particular

- ➢ the psychological readiness and emotional preparedness for teachers to take on such curriculum.

For most of those interviewed, the lack of clarity about the role of education in state schools in issues such as family and relationship violence inhibited forthright action on these issues at every level. Teachers, Principals, and Executive Directors, Schools, were not confident of being supported in addressing issues of family and relationship violence:

> "Why would you take a stand on this when the department retracts its own sexual harassment program? What if you make a mistake in the way you handle it? Look at the report on child abuse – it doesn't have support. We need to know how those who are taking risks now are doing it…
>
> Principals need to be put on the spot about it being their responsibility. But for Principals it is about how they engage with the community on sensitive issues. Principals can be branded for taking risks. The system needs to think about how it supports people who take a stand within their own community and the broader community. Once you get a reputation in EQ you never get rid of it. EQ punishes but doesn't give feedback."
>
> <div align="right">Academic and ex-senior officer.</div>

Teacher leadership is also confounded by the lack of a clear, publicly promoted position for Education Queensland's role in the context of the cross-agency strategy, and this increases the sense of risk involved.

Principals are also concerned that the lack of clarity about the role of education in issues such as family and relationship violence confuses teachers who care deeply for students, and increases their sense of vulnerability.

> "Whose job is this? To open up questions about issues that lead me into places where I don't feel qualified to respond? How does it get into the 2010 indicators? We are driven now more closely by these indicators…
>
> The role of EQ must be clarified. It is now an open book. Good teachers operate from a bottomless font of caring. We need to know what the boundaries are around a teacher's professional responsibilities, and know they can go home knowing they have done their bit, and stop worrying about it. To do this, they need to know how their responsibility fits the responsibilities of other agencies – this is not well understood."
>
> <div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

Key finding 9
It appears that people in schools are not clear about their mandate for dealing with issues like sexual harassment and perceive a lack of systemic support for this. There is a need for a strong stance from leaders at all levels within Education Queensland.

Gender issues

The interviews undertaken for this project reveal that programs in schools operate within a wide spectrum of philosophies and objectives. Schools are clearly more comfortable in implementing gender-neutral programs rather than gender-specific programs i.e. primary prevention focusing on skilling students rather than on challenging the status quo, as

discussed earlier in this report. So programs about *healthy relationships* are prevalent in schools, programs which emphasise prevention of bullying, and provide all students with social skills. These programs may be successful in skilling individual students to cope with specific situations, but they do nothing to challenge the beliefs or norms of society or groups which lead to the violence in the first place.

Less commonly, schools provide programs that aim to develop gender-literate students, with the capacity to understand, withstand and challenge social pressures to conform to standards of masculinity or femininity acceptable to their peers. The best of these programs will also challenge taken-for-granted values and attitudes about disability, sexuality, ethnicity and race, and cultivate practices across the school and community that value diversity.

The preference for gender-neutral programs may relate to issues discussed above: the lack of clarity about gender issues in the strategic context; leadership; perceived risk; and lack of teacher threshold knowledge. It may also reflect sensitivity to parental attitudes.

It was evident from discussions with schools that there are undoubtedly excellent outcomes for individual students from many skills-based gender-neutral programs, in the context of school life. However, intimate relationships within families are dynamically constructed within cultural, historical and popular culture perspectives and traditions where gender is a key dimension. Research about what makes programs effective in preventing family and relationship violence supports the need to address the gendered aspects of violence, especially in the context of families and relationships.

If Education Queensland is to implement effectively its role in the Queensland cross-government strategy on violence against women, system leadership must note that the findings of evaluations indicate that deep understandings of gender are critical to long term success of violence prevention programs. Also, Education Queensland must locate where effective programs exist; acknowledge and celebrate such practices; and involve the leaders, including teachers, parents and community members, in planning for such practices to reach all students in Queensland schools.

School programs are an eclectic mix, with busy teachers borrowing from psychological, sociological, sociocultural, or community development theories. Principals and teachers with widely different perspectives on gender bring their own perspectives and experiences to bear on the organisation of learning. In this context, there are probably as many prevention programs occurring in schools as there are schools addressing the issues.

Developments in schools around gendered violence have been marginal and always precarious. The recognition of family and relationship violence as a public concern rather than a private concern has occurred only in recent history. In Queensland, rape within marriage became a criminal offence in 1989. The Queensland government developed its first cross-government strategy on violence against women only 10 years ago. Since then, government and community-based programs have focused primarily on responses to adult women.

Children were seen as at risk only in a secondary way. Schools, for their part, have been reluctant to take a proactive role in recognising family and relationship violence as being a major civic concern, and have kept their involvement small-scale. The prevailing philosophy in most schools is that these are still private issues. The fact that the language

of government policy remains predominantly adult-centric assists schools to maintain this position.

Additionally, the gender debate in society has been reframed in recent years. A number of interviewees referred to sensitivity about gender programs being perceived as male blaming as one reason for the falling away of any system commitment. Discussions or programs which pit the wellbeing of girls against the wellbeing of boys, or vice versa, are counterproductive. However, gender is a key issue. Violence against women needs to be understood in the context of the ways in which what it is to be male or female in our society are shaped and constructed.

Key finding 10
The gendered aspect of family and relationship violence needs to be discussed in curriculum programs addressing this.

Syllabuses

The syllabuses most frequently cited as enabling curriculum on family and relationship violence are Studies of Society and the Environment, Health and Physical Education and the English syllabus. However, interviewees believed that these opportunities would be recognised and used only by those teachers with a deep commitment to gender justice. All syllabuses are premised upon a strong values stance, and a social justice ethic. However, syllabuses are by nature broad documents, designed to encompass the aspirations of different communities and education systems, including non-government systems, and are not strongly "owned" by teachers.

> "Syllabuses themselves are not as well known to teachers as might be assumed at central level."
>
> Executive Director, Schools

The inclusion in syllabuses of references to gender issues is the outcome of both active lobbies to embed social justice issues about which syllabuses have traditionally been silent, and a move towards mainstreaming gender issues. This was also a strategy for ensuring some longevity for system attention to these issues. From this perspective, the syllabuses offer, in these general references, a wide range of opportunities for teaching about gender relations. However, officers at all levels were disillusioned by the "embedding" processes:

> "Yes, the issues are embedded – that means put to bed."
>
> Executive Director, Schools

> "Probably the main issue for me in terms of enabling conditions for healthy gender relations is that the syllabus does not articulate an affirmative gender justice position to help teachers frame their reading of the core learning outcomes within the SOSE syllabus. We know that teachers' philosophies and understandings about gender are key in shaping their own practice, and of course, students' understandings and practices. Without an affirmative gender justice position, the current essentialist understandings of gender that continue to drive much of the curriculum and pedagogy remain unproblematised. … I think the imperative here is … teachers

engaging with sophisticated research-based 'threshold' knowledges in the area of gender and social construction to enable a critically reflective focus on their practice."

<div align="right">Academic, teacher educator</div>

Particular difficulties arose in discussing the capacity of the Health and Physical Education syllabus to carry a curriculum about family and relationship violence. Teacher educators and principals commented on the reluctance of many Health and Physical Education teachers, whose interest in the area is predominantly about sport and human movement studies, to get involved in those aspects of the curriculum to do with personal development.

"We found that in secondary schools, many teachers indicated that they didn't want to, or couldn't, teach what the syllabus required (this research was based on the national curriculum)…

Teachers don't even see that the syllabus requires an emphasis on healthy non-violent relationships. Middle Years teachers are generalists, but still don't want to touch this stuff. They might ask Life Education people to come in, skim the surface for half an hour. Family Planning also get invited in, but you need to book early – they get booked up pretty quickly! …

The Middle Years teachers don't have a hold on the discipline, so they retreat into what they know, and say "I wouldn't teach that", and "I don't believe in that". We have a problem: how do we get them to move to something else? How do we get them out of the course if they don't want the social justice stuff? It comes back to individuals and their beliefs."

<div align="right">Senior academic and pre-service educator</div>

There appears to be a decline in faith in syllabuses, which, on most social justice issues, are regarded as too nebulous and abstract to direct teachers' practices. Pre-service educators also are concerned that the syllabuses do not assist them in their preparation of student teachers for engaging students critically in issues of gendered violence.

All syllabuses incorporate the Queensland Studies Authority statement on *Lifeskills*, which advises on teaching the skills for personal development; living with and relating to other people; self-management; and citizenship. At all levels, however, interpretations of the term "lifeskills" vary widely.

In secondary school, "lifeskills" refers to what you do with kids who don't have much ability. And it is about things you assume these kids don't learn at home: how to shop, rent a flat, get a bus, write a simple CV. Look at any curriculum that teachers use in this area – it is not academically based.

<div align="right">Guidance Officer, primary and secondary</div>

For most school personnel, "lifeskills" means programs for special education for students with disabilities, and was understood as developing basic functional skills such as getting a bus. There is little knowledge of the QSA paper on Lifeskills, even though these skills are embedded in syllabuses.

<div align="right">Executive Director, Schools</div>

Whatever you do, don't call it "Lifeskills".

<div align="right">Academic, teacher educator, ex-senior officer</div>

Nevertheless, syllabuses are supported by elaborating documents, and are still used as broad maps for curriculum. A number of interviewees raised the need for high profile poster sets that link opportunities for teaching about family and relationship violence with relevant syllabus outcomes statements.

In discussing what models for change have been effective in Education Queensland, one senior academic stated:

> "The best models for change are those which impact on practice, and the profession takes them over. Senior schooling criteria based assessment is probably the best example. Outcomes based education didn't introduce a new assessment model like this. It was very high stakes stuff for teachers – assessment became a major responsibility for teachers, and they had to defend their assessment amongst their peers. It went to the core of teachers' identity and practice. It encouraged social capital building. New Basics should encourage this."

<div align="right">Academic, teacher educator</div>

A model that would place issues of transformative citizenship at the centre of curriculum in ways that go to the heart of teacher identity and raise the stakes on teacher performance and student outcomes in this area is required. Whilst locally relevant measures are necessary, issues of family and relationship violence are global, and the social practices that support such violence are embedded in globalised youth cultures.

Students will gain from taking a broader perspective on issues of gendered violence in a globalised context, and can become active participants in countering such violence through global networks as well as in local communities. Drawing on their membership of the "click and go" generation may be the most relevant way to engage students with the violence prevention strategies that are based in youth cultures across the world, and to develop a comparative perspective on the efficacy of local strategies. For many students, understanding that family and relationship violence is a global pathology, rather than a characteristic inherent in their own family or community, and that young people everywhere are engaged in actions to prevent it, may be empowering.

Most of those interviewed rejected the idea that Education Queensland should endorse a particularised strategy or pre-developed resource or resources on which to base a curriculum about family and relationship violence.

> "A curriculum on healthy gender relationships would have buckley's as a stand-alone. It would require integration with current curriculum programs, and resources to support it, such as modules or workbooks that teachers can use within the outcomes we want."

<div align="right">Principal, Secondary</div>

> "Any program being recommended needs to connect to what is already in place. If we go out and say 'We have this program' there will be cynicism. It might be a case of 'How can we strengthen this approach?'"

<div align="right">Principal, Primary</div>

Rather, Education Queensland should communicate quality information about the purposes and value of particular categories of programs, so that schools can make decisions at a local level with their communities. At the same time, access to developed programs may provide them with ideas from practice that can be incorporated creatively into approaches their communities support.

Most interviewees emphasised that information that enables schools to link learnings about healthy, respectful, non-violent gender relations into and across existing curriculum will be the most useful resource. However, Principals and Executive Directors, Districts, also emphasised the importance of training a core group of staff, a critical mass of teachers who are committed to work in this area, from each school, and to build practice out from that group.

These officers also warn that there will be resistance, and that

> "…even when you have good resources to support teaching, they will not be successfully used by all teachers. There are biased teachers in schools, who will misuse the resources. Nevertheless, teachers need to be able to get hold of ideas for how it is cited in curriculum."
>
> Academic, ex-senior officer

Key finding 11

Syllabus documents provide opportunities for developing and delivering curriculum for enhanced gender relationships and to address gendered violence, though the term 'lifeskills' may not be useful to apply to this. Information about existing approaches may be more useful to schools than specific pre-developed resources.

Human resource issues

The potential of current strategic platforms to support successful implementation of curriculum about gendered violence is predicated upon teachers:

- ➢ having the knowledge and skills about gender to decode the intent of vague or cryptic references to gender in syllabuses or other curriculum support documents

- ➢ having the repertoire of teaching strategies to engage diverse groups of students, especially those at-risk, effectively in learning about gender relations

- ➢ understanding how the concerns can be integrated into curriculum and the civic life of the school rather than being "add-ons"

- ➢ establishing strong, mutually trusting collaborative relationships with diverse elements of their communities, including other government and non-government agencies, to build a broad support base for change.

A number of major research projects suggest that these conditions do not exist[47] [48]. *QSRLS* found that teacher threshold knowledge did not equip them to address social

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[47] Lingard, R., Ladwig, J., Mills, M., Warry, M., Ailwood, J., Bahr, M., Chant, D., Christie, P., Gore, J., Hayes, D., Luke, A., and Renshaw, P. (2001). *The Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study*. Volume 1 & 2. Brisbane: Education Queensland.

[48] Department of Education, Science and Technology (2002). *Addressing the Educational Needs of Boys – Strategies for Schools and Teachers*. Canberra: Australian Government.

justice issues effectively, and strongly recommended that social and equity issues be a priority focus for teachers' professional development. That finding is critical to implementing a curriculum on family and relationship violence. A major Commonwealth report[49] found important links between teacher threshold knowledge about gender, effective pedagogies, and structural reform :

> "Structural reform in the absence of productive pedagogies and requisite teacher threshold knowledge about gender runs the risk of maintaining and even reinforcing particular orientations to learning considered to be the domain of either boys or girls. Moreover, there is the danger that certain gender stereotypes or beliefs about boys' or girls' behaviour can be reinforced, as can the view that girls and boys are homogenous groups. Hence the perceived similarities amongst boys as a group or amongst girls as a group are often what drive the curriculum and pedagogies, rather than taking the opportunity to explore diversity across the categories."

This finding not only reinforces the need for upgrading teachers' knowledge about gender, but indicates that teacher knowledge is equally important in relation to issues of ethnicity, sexuality, poverty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, and disability. This is especially important if any curriculum addressing gendered violence is to have relevance for groups most at risk.

One of the academics interviewed believed that the capacity to deliver curriculum on issues such as gendered violence diminished considerably when Education Queensland ceased to implement the Human Resources practice of including *knowledge and understanding of social justice issues in education* as a selection criterion for employment.

An opportunity to re-establish this criterion exists in the Minister's recently endorsed actions from the Task Force on Inclusive Education (Students with Disabilities). However, the nomenclature of this taskforce reflects the way gender issues have been obscured by departmental discourses. The term *Inclusive Education* purports to include all social justice issues, but is used so frequently and pervasively to refer only to issues of disabilities that this is the only meaning it has to most teachers. Hence, the system is perceived to be silent about other aspects of social justice.

Mention has been made above of the disappearance of SHROs from schools and districts along with the specialised knowledge they had developed. Teachers interviewed for this project cited as a major issue impacting on their own practice the disappearance from Central and District Offices of officers with the responsibility to assist in implementation of gender justice issues in curriculum.

> "We had the Gender Equity Unit [in the 1990s], we had assistance with forming networks, conferences. Even then it was difficult to do if you didn't have the support of the principal. Now we see nobody, never hear about it. The environment isolates teachers."
>
> <div align="right">Primary teacher</div>

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[49] Department of Education, Science and Technology (2002). *Addressing the Educational Needs of Boys – Strategies for Schools and Teachers*. Canberra: Australian Government.

Principals and District Directors expressed concern about professional development opportunities for male teachers in particular:

> "It would be my observation that male teachers in primary schools, at least, do not attach themselves to any distinct professional association. A small number may consider Union meetings meet their needs. Professional teacher networks can attract up to 200 female teachers to a session and often just a solitary male who is then forced to consider his attendance in the future…
>
> So school based in-service in primary schools, conferences on gender issues especially led by males may be more popular. Of course technology is also an attractive learning medium for males....websites, list serves that can be accessed in their own time and space. It is often the choice of the "hook" to get them in that is the biggest challenge."
>
> <div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

The sense of exclusion of male teachers from mainstream professional development on gender issues may be a factor in attracting them to websites or professional development programs on issues about boys, where they see they have a recognised role. These programs may well be valuable professional development opportunities, but may have little to do with healthy gender relations.

> "The lack of male role models – not necessarily as teachers – in the school is a factor that has to be considered, because the kids don't see healthy, non-discriminatory gender relations in practice."
>
> <div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

> "But male teachers can become a boys' club in schools, an incredible force, through the social factor of male bonding. The phenomenon is rife – especially in primary schools – it is not universal – because of the numbers factor. It can be a powerful force for conservatism, for negative messages."
>
> <div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

However, it should be noted that this knowledge can be fostered from within the profession, utilising the formidable experience of teachers, principals and administrators who, in environments that others regard as not particularly supportive, have continued to sustain professional learning communities around gendered violence. As one principal remarked:

> "There is a group of socially conscious teachers who are aware of the problem – a number will have lived the problem. They have a high level of commitment. But the readiness is not across the profession."
>
> <div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

A number of interviewees claimed that teachers also need stronger skills for identifying and supporting students who may be involved in family or relationship violence, and greater awareness of its impacts on social, cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural development. These teachers said that the professional development on gendered violence that was part of programs developed during the 1990s had had a significant and long-lasting impact on the way teachers thought and taught about these issues.

"Many teachers don't know about the student support arrangements in schools, and don't access them. They don't know that multi-disciplinary teams exist. Teachers don't feed well into these processes. This is a matter of having the time to understand the processes and how they can help.

It is not that teachers are unwilling; they just don't know what to do any more. They don't have the confidence."

<div align="right">Support officer, District Office</div>

These comments also highlight the need for teachers to have a range of knowledges and skills relating to whether the program they are implementing could be considered to be primary, secondary or tertiary prevention.

Another aspect of teacher development, raised by a number of interviewees, was the issue of teachers' psychological readiness to address issues of family and relationship violence. This was a concern in terms of time stressors on teachers, the sensitivities that exist in teachers' own life experiences and the lack of learning and development opportunities to help them to understand the personal and social relevance of these issues.

"What can be put in place to increase teachers' resilience? If we don't start with this question, they won't be able to teach anything effectively. Teachers need some self-help strategies."

<div align="right">Principal, primary</div>

Key finding 12

It is felt that knowledge of social justice (including gender) issues has diminished within the profession along with the perceived need for such knowledge. Yet teachers require a range of specialised knowledges and skills for the implementation of curriculum programs for enhancing gender relationships and preventing family and relationship violence.

Evaluated programs

In Australia and internationally, a myriad of family and relationship violence prevention programs for all age groups can be identified. On the Australian Domestic Violence Clearinghouse website, for example, is a database of 112 different programs. Each program is described in brief, and programs can be selected on the bases of population target, theoretical perspective and usefulness in different sites (e.g. schools).

The key question is, however, whether these programs are effective and many have been evaluated. However, these evaluations have used different frameworks, and looked at widely varying program designs, based on different theoretical perspectives. Evaluation summaries are less than definitive about what programs work best, given that programs have different objectives, usually targeting, to varying degrees, improvement in cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal outcomes. Therefore we need to be cautious in accepting findings or in using them to compare the relative effectiveness of different programs. Some researchers have commented that

> "There is a perceived crisis in evaluations due to lack of valid outcome measures, and for this reason doubts will remain about the efficacy of violence prevention programs." [50]

Similar conclusions have been reached by evaluations of programs in the United States. [51] [52]

In a publication for the Australian Domestic Violence Clearing House, Mulroney[53] summaries broad categories of programs as

> - whole-of-school programs
> - curriculum development and integration
> - community development
> - peer education
> - community arts
> - computer and web-based resources
> - recreation-based activities and camps
> - social action and
> - prevention resources.

Mulroney provides examples of programs that correspond to these categories. However, most programs in schools are likely to be hybrids of the above categories when incorporated into the messy social and learning environments of schools. Variables such as teacher threshold knowledge; features of school organisation, values and leadership; socio-economic, geographic and cultural features of the school; and different curriculum focuses will work their own influences on programs.

Programs can also be categorised according to whether they are based on sociocultural or psychological frameworks. Psychological models are more likely to address the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours or experiences of individuals, albeit in the context of their peers or families. Sociocultural models are more likely to address the way groups, including families, peers, communities and media construct gendered attitudes and behaviours. The World Report on Violence and Health[54] found that there is an imbalance in the current focuses of programs: that community and societal strategies are under-emphasised in relation to programs addressing individual and relationship factors. It recommends an "ecological" model that:

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[50] Szirom T., Jaffe, R., Holmes, L., and Ward, B. (2000). *Young People Say DV No Way: Evaluations of National Domestic Violence Prevention Programs for Young People.* Canberra: Strategic Partners.

[51] Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. (1998). *Measuring Violence-Related Attitudes, Beliefs amongst Youths: A Compendium of Assessment Tools.* Atlanta GA: CDC National Centre for Injury Prevention and Control.

[52] Chalk, R. and King, P.A. (1998). *Violence in Families: Assessing Prevention and Treatment Programs.* Washington DC: National Academy Press.

[53] Mulroney, J. (2003). *Australian Prevention Programs for Young People*. Sydney: Australian Domestic Violence Clearing House.

[54] Krug, E.G., Dahlberg, L.L., Mercy, J.A., Zwi, A.B., et al (2002). *The World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva, Switzerland: The World Health Organisation.

- addresses violence on multiple levels and in multiple sectors of the community simultaneously
- links to programs to reduce poverty, and to change social norms in relation to gender, racial or ethnic discrimination and
- recognises major related risk factors, such as substance abuse and alcohol.

Some programs focus on overcoming conflict amongst students, to prevent bullying and to provide all students with social development skills; and have little or no focus on the way relationships and relationship violence are shaped by taken-for-granted values and attitudes about gender, disability, ethnicity and race. Others aim to develop gender-literate students, with the capacity to understand, withstand and challenge social pressures to conform to standards of masculinity or femininity acceptable to their peers which entrench violence or inequality.

The latter programs strongly correspond to the findings of evaluations that deep understandings of gender are critical to long-term success of gendered violence prevention programs. Mulroney notes[55] that prevention programs rarely make explicit the theory base or the understandings about gender underpinning their approach. She finds that unless programs incorporate understandings about gender and power, and provide the opportunity to challenge internalised beliefs supporting the use of violence, little attitudinal change will occur.

Particular critical success factors are commonly noted in evaluations from Australia and the United States. These include:

- comprehensive planning of projects in local contexts
- a clear aim to increase knowledge about family and relationship violence; change the attitudes and beliefs that support it, and enable students to take action in their own and others' lives to prevent it
- multi-faceted programs, taking into account that specific learnings develop from the formal, informal and hidden curriculum, including from the cultures that are, or can be, celebrated in the civic life of the school
- understandings that are sustained across the curriculum
- a high level of integration with community programs and resources
- specific links to school safety and harassment, and community safety and violence issues
- programs that are on-going and integrated rather than being "add-ons"
- programs that focus on high risk groups;
- programs that address risk factors in the community, school, families, peers, and individuals;
- programs that enable intensive interventions
- the involvement of young people, parents and other community agencies in developing the programs;

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[55] Mulroney, J. (2003). *Australian Prevention Programs for Young People*. Sydney: Australian Domestic Violence Clearing House, p. 4.

- based on an understanding that family and relationship violence occur in the broader social contexts that shape attitudes about gender and violence
- draw from students' investigations, in a learning context, about attitudes and beliefs about gender held by their peers.

In the consultations carried out as part of this project, Executive Directors, Schools and Principals emphasised some further factors.

- The well-being of students must always come first.
- Social support is important, but teaching about this issue must not compromise the quality of learning demands placed on students.
- Principals should proceed only when they know the community well.
- Related issues, such as general youth violence, and drugs and alcohol, should also be dealt with.
- Strategies need to be based on understandings of how gender, violence and power are connected.
- The ways young people share information and talk amongst themselves need to be taken into account.
- Approaches which blame the victim, e.g., advising women and girls to restrict activities, should be avoided.
- The focus should be on planning for sustainable changes in behaviours, as well as in attitudes and knowledge.

The issues about comprehensive planning cannot be overstated. This was emphasised by Executive Directors, Schools. One stated firmly:

> "You cannot go mucking around. It needs to be set up thoughtfully. You need to find the layers for dealing with it. It needs to be a multi-pronged strategy. It is a pandora's box, and you need to know where the support is…
>
> Executive Director, Schools

The categorisation and analysis of programs for their effectiveness undertaken by Mulroney as discussed above may be useful in making decisions about strategies relevant for particular age groups and schools. The research discussed in this section indicates factors which help ensure the success of programs to address family and relationship violence.

Key finding 13

Research and evaluations point to the factors which are most likely to ensure the effectiveness of a school's program to address gendered violence. Clearly, simple solutions do not work. Careful planning using the results of research and evaluations is necessary.

Programs for at-risk students

In some schools, relationship violence issues are in your face. In others they are hidden. There is a need to make any action based on local knowledge and

resources. In some places there are no resources. Families can be trapped in these places – they cannot get away to where they can access help."

<div align="right">Executive Director, Schools</div>

There are a number of district officers and many teachers and principals in areas with high risk populations involved in implementing active programs to teach students to understand and repudiate family and relationship violence. These officers frequently claim that it is their relationship with the community that sustains their energy and motivation. In all of these instances, active engagement, and strong supportive relations with the community have been crucial. At all levels, officers refer to this activity as risky, and would be more confident if there was a public and clear stance from system leaders on where the role of schools begins and ends in this area. However, as one primary school Principal said she explains to her teachers:

"… it is past time for caution: they need to be open about it with kids. But you feel quite isolated, that you have little system help. It is very difficult getting protection for the kids from [Department of] Families."

<div align="right">Principal, Primary</div>

One of the primary teachers interviewed argued that breaking the silence on family and relationship violence in primary schools was critical to students' emotional health.

"If kids are from families where there is a lot of yelling, and their teachers also yell, it reinforces the sense that it is their fault. Students may be frightened and in tears when it is not even themselves who are being yelled at. We need to reassure these kids that it's not their fault. How can we do this if we keep the silence? If they are frightened at home and frightened at school, it is harder for them to get help… Doing protective behaviours can just be another way of hiding from the issues."

<div align="right">Primary School Teacher</div>

At this school, students have produced posters about family violence, and the school works at trying to make parents and students feel better about themselves.

The experiences of Principals and teachers who have been engaged with their communities in programs that are working with all students, including students at high levels of risk of family and relationship violence, are a valuable asset to Education Queensland in developing its capacity to enact the role it has in the cross-government strategy on violence against women.

In one school, with a large population of non-English speaking students, a committee has met once a week since 1996 to address racist and gendered violence, building impressive alliances and experience across the community over this time. A number of Indigenous community schools are engaged in innovative programs, grounded in respect for culture, that have implications for all schools. Principals and teachers who have chosen to try to address family and relationship violence in small rural schools can attest to the sensitivities they face, and the strategies that have worked for their students. Such programs are often more along the lines of secondary and tertiary prevention then primary prevention.

Research on programs to address family and relationship violence frequently stresses the importance of targeting young people who are most at risk. Indemauer (2001) in the

context of pointing to the severe impacts on young people of repeated family violence, and the concentration of violence in disadvantaged areas, advises:

> "Most important, rather than a universal approach that may waste resources on young people who are not at risk or who are less at risk, an integrated approach is needed amongst service delivery agencies to identify pockets where risk factors exist and to implement intensive intervention strategies[56]."

Whilst students at high risk of family and relationship violence need to be a priority, extreme caution needs to be taken to avoid further pathologising students in these groups. Also, the urgent challenges for at risk groups are not irrelevant to students whose risk is minimal: the prejudices and assumptions that other students hold about these groups may well be implicated in intensifying their sense of shame and alienation.

It is important that entrenched injustices are challenged in the civic life of the school and in the community if work with students at risk is to succeed. One Principal illustrated how systemic inequalities could be addressed through strategies about healthy relationships. In this school, a *Kids Helpline* peer support program was introduced. This program was based on training student leaders to support other students. In this school, the first group trained as leaders were Indigenous students.

The *QSRLS* provided compelling evidence that responding to needs of at-risk groups in contexts that separate them from their peers can result in goal displacement: that the goals of providing social support and basic skills can displace a commitment to quality learning, and sustaining a high level of academic demand. The study emphasised the need for curriculum that takes diverse life experiences and cultures into account without compromising academic demand, or substituting social support for intellectual quality.

> "Our findings show that there is a high degree of supportiveness for students, but not enough intellectual demandingness, connectedness to the world or recognition of difference. We are hypothesizing that supportiveness is a necessary but not sufficient condition for enhancing the outcomes (both social and academic) of all students. [T]he QSRLS research stresses the importance of providing all students, and especially those from traditionally underachieving backgrounds, with work that requires rigorous intellectual inquiry. Unfortunately, it is students from disadvantaged backgrounds who most often miss out on such work. A number of schools in the QSRLS research have sought to counter this injustice by rejecting deficit constructions of students and parents[57]."

Good teachers are demonstrating that intellectual quality is a component of curriculum about family and relationship violence:

> "There were ample Key Learning Area outcomes that were relevant. Rigour did not have to be sacrificed – and the students respected this curriculum more for this. Their

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[56] Indemauer, D. (2001). *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195: Young Australians and Domestic Violence.* Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

[57] Lingard, R., Ladwig, J., Mills, M., Warry, M., Ailwood, J., Bahr, M., Chant, D., Christie, P., Gore, J., Hayes, D., Luke, A., and Renshaw, P. (2001). *The Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study.* Volume 1 & 2. Brisbane: Education Queensland, p. 146.

learning then took off, to the extent that girls improved from Level 3 to Level 5: their schooling became age appropriate."

<div align="right">Teacher, Indigenous community</div>

This same teacher explained, however, that whilst collaboration with the community, especially with Elders, had been a central element of their curriculum programs, there was insufficient congruence with community level programs to support students being able to take their understandings and skills into their lives in the community.

> "It was like their education in drugs and alcohol: they had the knowledge, but they weren't in control of the way these issues were played out in their community. Or like knowing about healthy nutrition: they know what the healthy foods are, but are unable to get them."

<div align="right">Teacher, Indigenous community</div>

This situation echoes research on self-esteem programs for girls and women that were able to produce changes in behaviour in the context of the group, but were not transferable to broader social contexts where female assertive behaviour was not esteemed, and gendered power relations were not being challenged[58]. This has implications for schools addressing issues about family and relationship violence in school contexts where the power relations that prevail in the broader community are not challenged, and underlines the need for schools to foster an active program of valuing diversity, and challenging injustice. It also underlines the need for curriculum programs to be part of whole school programs with authentic links to community practices.

Most of the centrally-developed Education Queensland initiatives that have specifically addressed issues of gendered violence had limited success in reaching particular at risk populations, or required modification to do so. As one officer working in the disability services area stated, reflecting feedback that was also received from Indigenous groups, and non-English speaking groups:

> "The programs were regarded as being for other kids."

<div align="right">Policy Officer, Central Office</div>

Teachers need to understand the way multiple forms of sexual harassment and violence are experienced by Indigenous students, students with disabilities, non-English speaking students, and gay and lesbian students.

> "You will get kids with disabilities sitting outside the Principal's office –you can find seven kids [with disabilities] outside the Principal's office. The harassment stuff is just phenomenal – and an amount of it is sexualised. It is the most under-reported area for victimisation and bullying. There is a great deal of exploitation of teenage girls with disabilities. And a lot of same-sex violence, horribly sexualised in intent. Schools typically isolate the kids with disabilities [rather than their harassers]. "Disability" becomes the identity."

<div align="right">Officer working with services for students with disabilities</div>

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[58] Kenway, J. and Willis, S. (Eds). (1990). *Hearts and Minds: Self-Esteem and the Schooling of Girls.* London: The Falmer Press.

However, some school and district initiatives addressing family and relationship violence have been more successful. Research points to the need for education strategies and resources to be highly adaptable to local contexts, and in particular to be relevant to high risk groups or communities, especially Indigenous communities, children and young people with disabilities, and young people in areas with high economic and social pressures.

Pitfalls abound in developing programs for students at risk outside of a broader, cross-school and cross-community strategy; a focus on high quality curriculum; and a transformative citizenship approach. Zyngier and Gale (2203) recently presented a strong critique of such programs and offered the following advice

> Successful programs [for students at risk]
>
> ➢ are both mainstream and relevant, reflecting real world problems. They do not focus on remediation or basic skills, nor are they based on withdrawal or separate programs for the chosen few to participate
> ➢ are socially supportive, intellectually challenging and respond to student needs both current and in the long term
> ➢ are, where selecting and training of the participating teachers is crucial, supported by a leadership environment that promotes a professional learning community within the workplace and
> ➢ actively involve and connect to the students' world and the community. [59]:

The authors recommend that programs for at-risk students:

➢ are fully integrated into the mainstream of school activity

➢ include intellectually challenging material for students at risk

➢ focus on teaching practices that better meet the needs of all students but in particular those at risk

➢ are based on action research and professional learning to assist teachers in the production of pedagogies that engage students in learning

➢ take account of why these students may be disengaged from schooling; and consider the interests and involvement of these students in decision-making.

Key finding 14
There are special challenges in supporting students at risk and those who experience multiple forms of discrimination or violence. However, local relevance, working collaboratively with the community and intellectually challenging curriculum are important parts of practices which can transform students' lived experiences.

Action research

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[59] Zyngier, D., and Gale, T. (2003). *Engaging Programs: How are Australian Schools Responding to Low Student Retention?* Presented to the Australian Association of Research in Education International Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.

A program type not included in Mulroney's paper is critical action research, a methodology which many Queensland schools have found to be an exceptionally powerful way of teaching about issues of violence, while at the same time, involving students and their families in using investigative and data analysis research tools that are immensely valuable for their learning.

Action research projects undertaken across Australia as part of the Commonwealth's Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform project of the early to mid 1990s illustrated to students, teachers and their parents, that attitudes about gendered and racist violence and gender and family responsibilities were being formed actively and dynamically in classrooms from pre-school on. This research also made it clear that unless teachers were able to engage in an explicit way with the knowledge about gender being acquired and enacted in these early years, this knowledge and related attitudes were being implicitly endorsed as legitimate ways to interpret their social worlds.

These projects illustrated that, not only was it possible to engage very young students in investigations about gender, but these young people became enthusiastic advocates for social justice. At the same time, the projects brought parents and teachers together in dynamic collaborations about their children's learning and development, enabling them to develop new perspectives on the ways their own actions were a vital part of the ways students learn values and attitudes about gender[60] [61]

The obvious delight that young children took in becoming researchers of their own and their peers' behaviours, and being able to report intelligently on gender and race as an influence on their lives led Alloway to believe that there is a critical role to be played in early childhood education in the prevention of gendered violence[62].

That action research programs are absent from the categories of family and relationship violence prevention programs reflects the relatively late entry of education into cross-government prevention frameworks, and certainly it has never been a lead agency. It also reflects implicit understandings of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention which ignore the crucial and unique role of schools in primary prevention strategies which challenge and disrupt unjust structures in society.

A program with a difference

Whilst there is a vast array of programs for building healthy relationships, it is relatively unusual to find programs based on the principle of building students' capacity to contribute actively to shaping the personal, social and cultural practices for respectful gender relations, a principle that is central to *QSE-2010*. Such programs require that students have the critical capacity to identify, within "normalised" social practices, the ideas and beliefs that support gendered violence. They also require a commitment to the ethics involved in challenging injustice; and the verbal and interpersonal skills to make such commitment practical.

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[60] Alloway, N. (1995). *Foundation Stones: The Construction of Gender in Early Childhood*. Carlton, Victoria: Curriculum Corporation.

[61] Kamler, B., Maclean R., Reid J., and Simpson A. (1994). *Shaping Up Nicely: The Formation of Schoolgirls and Schoolboys in the First Month of School.* AGPS.

[62] Alloway, N. (1995). Eight's Too Late: Early Childhood Education and Gender Reform. *Unicorn*, 21(4), pp.19-26.

With this perspective in mind, the Mentors for Violence Prevention (MVP) high school program, which is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Health, is of interest. Discussion about it was greeted with enthusiasm and interest by interviewees. The MVP program, which has been used in schools across the United States, is a response to gendered violence in adolescent interpersonal relationships. It is a peer leadership program located at Northeastern University's Centre for Study of Sport in Society. It was clear from the interviewees that there is widespread support in Education Queensland schools for programs based on peer leadership or peer mentoring, and many were keen to understand how such models could be applied to take on issues of family or relationship violence.

Whilst most interviewees were also averse to the introduction of any pre-developed program (and this might especially apply to those from other cultures), interviewees responded positively to its strengths-based, or positive civic action component, as many programs take a victim/perpetrator or boys/girls competing disadvantage approach. A number of interviewees had referred to sensitivity about gender programs being perceived as male blaming as one reason for the falling away of any system commitment in recent years.

The MVP program focuses on the role of the empowered bystanders, in a philosophical context aligned to that promoted in *QSE-2010* and in the QSRLS recommendations about transformational citizenship. The role of the empowered bystander acknowledges that, given the prevalence of relationship and family violence, most people will, at some stage in their lives, be close to others who are affected by such violence, and that, with appropriate understandings of gendered violence, they can confront and prevent such violence.

Peer leaders are trained in the knowledge, language and courage to work with their peers. The program began by training elite male athletes as peer leaders, but has since expanded the leadership groups: facilitators are now mixed gender, multi-racial, and include athletes and non-athletes. The program is unusual in recognising both the relationship between masculinity and violence, as well as the way young men can be involved as leaders in positive changes to eliminate gendered violence. There are parallels between this program and a number of programs developed for young men in Australia[63].

As a peer program, it optimises use of the pattern of disclosure most prevalent amongst young people: they talk to each other, rather than to adults. Peer leaders are trained to understand gender issues and to communicate effectively with their peers. The program avoids the stereotypes of male predator and helpless female victim. It is not a perpetrators' program or a victims' program. It is not a program for girls or a program for boys.

The rationale for this approach is that in the United States between 20% and 50% of all reported rapes happen to adolescents. While "date violence" is not as familiar a term in Australia as it is in the United States, statistics in Australia reflect a similar pattern[64].

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[63] Friedman, B. (1996). *Boys Talk: A Program for Young Men about Masculinity, Non-Violence and Relationships.* Adelaide: Men Against Sexual Assault.

[64] Indemauer, D. (2001). *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195: Young Australians and Domestic Violence.* Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

As Queensland teachers and principals are immensely skilled at adapting ideas and strategies to local needs this program offers enormous possibilities for exploring an optimistic and positive approach to Education Queensland's responsibilities under the *Women in the Smart State Directions Statement 2003-2004*. It has been intensively evaluated. Further information can be found on www.sportinsociety.org/mvp.html.

Engagement with the community

Education Queensland's major strategies and frameworks emphasise that schools need to connect students' learning to authentic community problems, and provide them with opportunities to generate ways of acting positively on the conditions of their own lives, and to contribute to building resilience and strength in communities. Ensuring that the skills being learned in schools in relation to repudiating family and relationship violence can be enacted in their relationships outside the school is critical to sustaining this learning over time. The experience of the teacher in an Indigenous community quoted earlier illustrates the critical importance of ensuring that school programs and community programs are congruent, and that all groups across the community are involved in prevention programs in ways that generate supportive networks across groups.

Many principals and Executive Directors, Schools invest considerable time in getting to know their communities, form partnerships with other agencies and build alliances. This allows them to find out what community activities are in place or possible to address issues of relationship and family violence, and when they are confident of community support, curriculum programs congruent with other activities in the community are introduced. As noted above, Principals and Executive Directors in districts have stressed that this kind of preparation is critical.

The time and energy invested by Executive Directors; Schools, staff in District Offices; and many Principals has paid off in terms of effective collaborative strategies with agencies and community groups, providing a platform of carefully crafted alliances for assisting schools to work with their communities. Whilst they emphasised the importance of working closely with the Queensland Police Service and Department of Child Safety, Executive Directors also pointed to the need to go beyond collaboration just with other government agencies:

> "Whatever we do, it needs to be done in partnerships, and that is with community groups, not even necessarily other agencies, but with the community groups, e.g., Smith Family, Abused Child Trust, youth networks. These are the people with the commitment and knowledge."
>
> Executive Director (Schools)

Executive Directors and most Principals interviewed had approached the task of building community collaboration with great thoroughness, forming alliances with individuals from groups such as local governments' antiviolence and anti-crime programs; with officers from the regional Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission offices, Queensland AIDS Council, Queensland Police Service, Health Department, Sex Workers, Red Cross, religious outreach groups, Kids Helpline, and representatives of gay and lesbian groups. These Executive Directors and Principals indicated that they were in this for the long haul, committed to sustainable changes in broad community attitudes and social practices.

"Education Queensland is involved in contributing to a non-violence supporting environment, but it is not interested in one-off stuff or add-ons, it needs to be embedded. The anti-violence committee helped with planning units of work…

It also needs to be understood that relations with community cannot be built quickly – it needs to happen over time. And there are some schools you just cannot get into…

We need District-wide planning for this stuff. There are some places with deep experience, others are blind spots. We have to find local solutions."

<div align="right">Executive Director (Schools)</div>

All Executive Directors interviewed for this project indicated that some principals were taking on the issues of family and relationship violence, and doing so in locations where the issues were highly sensitive. It is critical that Education Queensland draws on the experience of these principals, and the teachers who are involved.

"The system needs to think about how it supports people who take a stand within their own community and the broader community… We need to know how those who are taking risks now are doing it."

<div align="right">Teacher educator, ex-senior officer</div>

Key finding 15

The learnings from programs developed in the past and/or in other locations should not be ignored. In particular, the experiences of those principals and school communities – government and non-government agencies and key individuals – who are already working together to address family and relationship violence need to be recognised and drawn on in the development of programs in the future.

CONCLUSION

The evidence gathered and analysed for this report indicates that it is feasible to develop and deliver, in Education Queensland schools, curriculum programs that facilitate positive, healthy, respectful gender relationships between young people. This is indicated by the fact that such programs are already being implemented in schools in diverse locations, amongst a range of populations and groups, in primary and secondary schools, and are also being implemented in other Australian states and overseas.

The resurgence of interest in values and ethics education, and a recognition that effective values education requires attention to the formal, informal and hidden curriculum operating in schools, will support the implementation of such curriculum. The value of active citizenship, expressed through a capacity to engage in shaping community life within a shared democratic culture, is central to Education Queensland's curriculum programs, strongly positioning Education Queensland to support curriculum for enhanced gender relationships and the prevention of gendered violence.

Current syllabus documents take up the gender issues identified in the Office for Women's *Mapping the Future: a discussion paper for Queensland Women and Girls* consultations in ways that are too abstract or decontextualised to provide teachers with clear directions for promoting healthy, respectful gender relations. However, it is feasible to develop

resources for teachers and school communities which draw together the messages in curriculum and learning frameworks so as to illustrate how such curriculum could be developed in the context of current curriculum requirements and initiatives. This report has identified the factors which contribute to the effectiveness of such programs and these factors should be taken into consideration in their development and implementation.

Schools can offer primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs, as can other institutions. Indeed, many schools already offer curriculum programs which skill students to deal with conflict, clearly primary prevention. But schools are unique in that through programs which give students agency to explore understandings of gendered violence, they can confront and prevent such violence thus helping to create a less violent society. The potential for schools to do this is not always being realised, for a range of reasons which have been identified in this report.

Existing policies in Education Queensland lack sufficient specificity regarding concerns about healthy, non-violent gender relations to enable strong internal advocacy for gendered violence prevention curriculum. Additionally, there appears to be a perception amongst those interviewed for this project at least, that many of these policies are no longer in force. Reinvigorating policy that promotes the teaching of healthy, respectful, non-violent gender relations in relationships, families, work and civil life; and on sexual harassment and other forms of discriminatory harassment is critical. The perspective endorsed within the Queensland Government policy and strategic statement, *Women in the Smart State Directions Statement 2003-2008,* needs to be part of such frameworks.

Implementing effective gender relations programs across Education Queensland schools will not be feasible unless there is a considerable commitment to, and resourcing of, teacher learning and development to enhance teachers' threshold knowledge about gender and social justice issues; and build their confidence for engaging with community practices for prevention of gendered violence. The teacher learning and development programs could include a celebration of, and draw leadership from, current effective practices in districts and schools. It appears that there is also a need for further leadership density in this area within Central and District Office and for specific strategies to rebuild in-depth knowledge around social justice issues including gender.

For this to happen, public promotion of a robust role for schools in fostering healthy, respectful, non-violent gender relations will be necessary. A high profile communications strategy could encourage all staff to understand, and explore opportunities for implementing, the role and responsibilities ascribed to Education Queensland in Queensland's cross-government strategy.

It will also require clarifying this role in the context of the roles of other agencies. It is critical that the communications strategy be clear about the priority that Education Queensland accords the issue. A place for the issue within the system priorities included in strategic planning, accountability and reporting frameworks, for both schools and school support services, will ensure credibility.

APPENDIX 1.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

Child witnesses

Witnessing parental domestic violence is the strongest predictor of perpetration of violence in young people's own intimate relationships. This represents probability, not fate. The majority do not go on to perpetrate violence.

23% of young people between 12 to 20 years of age reported at least one act that could be described as domestic violence against their mothers or stepmothers.

The witnessing of male to female parental violence ranged from 14% for those young people living with both parents to 41 % for those living with "mum and her partner".

Young people of lower socio-economic status were about 1.5 times more likely to be aware of violence towards their mothers or fathers than those from upper socio-economic households.

42% of young Indigenous people had experienced male to female violence amongst their parents or parent's partners – compared to 23% for all young people.

33% of young Indigenous people had experienced female to male violence amongst their parents or parent's partners – compared to 22% for all young people.

(Source: Indermaur, D. 2001. *Young Australians and Domestic Violence,* Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra).

Young people's involvement in physical violence in relationship of family contexts

Young people have the highest incidence of domestic violence of any group.
(Source: Women's Safety Survey ABS 1996)

One in 10 young people live in households where a male carer has hit them for other than bad behaviour.

One in 3 of the almost 70% of young people who had had a boyfriend or girlfriend reported incidences of physical violence in their relationship.

42% of both male and female 19-20 year old young people had experienced some form of physical violence from their partner. 30% of the females had been frightened or hurt by one or more instances of violence, whereas only 12% of the males reported the same.

Girls are at least 4 times as likely as boys to have been frightened by an episode of intimate aggression.

14% of females, compared to 3% of males, indicated that they had been sexually assaulted. 20% of 19-20 year old females had been sexually assaulted.

While boys and girls may perpetrate the same amount of violence in their relationships, much more serious forms of violence were perpetrated by males on females.

The effects of male to female violence are twice as severe when measured by:
  ➢ the rate of relationship break-up
  ➢ hospitalization
  ➢ missing school.

(Source: Indermaur, D. 2001. *Young Australians and Domestic Violence,* Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra).

51.4% of women who experienced violence from a previous partner had ended that relationship because of the violence or because of threats against their children

Aggressive and violent responses are established prior to the age of 12.

Adolescence is the stage at which most young people form their first intimate relationships.

1 in 12 women married or in a de facto relationship experienced violence from their current partner.

7 in 10 women who reported violence from a previous partner also reported they had children in their care during the relationship, and 46% of these said children had witnessed the violence.

Of women experiencing violence from their current partner, 4 in ten reported the children had witnessed the violence.

The number of Australian young people being made homeless by domestic violence is increasing. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare states that 54,000 children used homelessness services in 2002-2003, an increase of 3000 over the previous year. It found that most of these children were using emergency accommodation as a direct result of domestic violence.

(Source: The World Today (ABC program) accessed 13/8/04 http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2004/s1134111.htm

It is estimated that the proportion of sexual assaults actually reported to the police is around 33% (up from around 25% in the mid 1990s). (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2004. *Recorded Crime – Victims 2003*. Cat. No. 4510.0. Canberra.)

At 30 June 2002, 13.2% of Queensland's prisoners had been sentenced for sexual assault. (Source: Department of Corrective Services, 2003, *Annual Report 2001–2002*. Brisbane: The State of Queensland).

Of the 21 incidences of murder of women in Queensland in 2002, 71.4% were killed by members of their own family. (Source: ABS, 2004. Cat. No. 4510.0. *Recorded Crime, Australia*)

High risk groups

52% of young people with disabilities have experienced 10 or more episodes of abuse.

67% of young people 12 and under had experienced episodes of abuse.

(Source:WWILD website, quoting D.Sobsey, 1994, *Violence and abuse in the lives of people with disabilities*. Pp.74 and 79).

United States research indicates that

> ➢ most people with disabilities will experience some form of sexual assault or abuse during their lifetime (Sobsey and Varnhagen, 1989);
>
> ➢ those who have some level of intellectual impairment are at the highest risk of sexual violence (Sobsey and Doe, 1991); and
>
> ➢ of all alleged crimes against people with disabilities, 90% are sexual offences (Carmody, 1991);
>
> ➢ 78% of females with disabilities experience sexual violence, compared to 21% of males with disabilities (Sobsey 1994);
>
> ➢ 39%- 68% of girls with a developmental disability are sexually abused before the age of 18 (Senn 1988).

(Source: Website of The ARC of Maryland, Inc. http://www.thearcmd.org/Programs/GenderViolence/gender_violence.htm)

Young people of lower socio-economic status were about 1.5 times more likely to be aware of violence towards their mothers or fathers than those from upper socio-economic households.

42% of young Indigenous people had experienced male to female violence amongst their parents or parent's partners – compared to 23% for all young people.

33% of young Indigenous people had experienced female to male violence amongst their parents or parent's partners – compared to 22% for all young people.

(Source: Indermaur, D. 2001. *Young Australians and Domestic Violence,* Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra).

Relationship violence

Date rape is a type of sexual assault where there is or has been a personal social relationship between the victim and the offender.

Date rape may involve the use of drugs or alcohol, reducing the capacity of the victim to resist sexual advances. However, the impact on the victim may be more destructive and humiliating.

The normalization of sexual coercion in intimate relationships is one of the main reasons date rape is not recognized as a serious problem.

(These conclusions from Australian Institute of Criminology trends and issues in crime and criminal justice paper No 157 *Date Rape: A Hidden Crime*. Laura Russo. June 2000. Australian Institute of Criminology Canberra.

Intimate partner violence has wide ranging and persistent effects on women's physical and mental health. It is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15-44. Direct health consequences for women exposed to violence include depression, anxiety and phobias, suicide attempts, chronic pain syndromes, psychosomatic disorders, physical injury, gastrointestinal disorders, irritable bowel syndrome and a variety of reproductive consequences.

The economic consequences of violence against women are also increasingly recognized with Australian businesses losing at least $500 million per year because of the effects of family violence on their employees.
    (From www.vichealth.vic.gov.au. Accessed: 17.8.04).

Pregnancy is a time of vulnerability for women: 20% experienced violence for the first time while they were pregnant. [1] ABS, 2002. Cat. No. 1301.0. *Australia Now. Crime and Justice. Violence Against Women*

Child abuse

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found that in Australia during 2002-2003, there were 198,355 reports of suspected cases of child abuse made to state authorities.

This is a significant rise from 91,734 reported in 1995-1996.

In the period 1999-2003, 40,416 were substantiated. Of these, 28% were physical abuse; 10% sexual abuse; 34% emotional abuse; and neglect 28%.

Girls were approximately 3 times more likely than boys to be the subject of substantiated sexual abuse.

Boys were more likely than girls to be the subject of substantiated physical abuse.

According to the Productivity Commission's 2003 Report on Government Services 2002, $712 million was spent across Australia directly on providing services to children who had experienced, or who were at risk of experiencing, child abuse and neglect.

Domestic violence and child abuse co-occur in 30-60 per cent of cases (Source: Edleson, J. L. 1999. *The Overlap between child maltreatment and woman battering* in *Violence Against Women, Vol 5, No 2, pp 134-154*).

The cycle of violence

Young people from homes where there has been couple violence were more likely to be victims or perpetrators of violence in their intimate relationships. They were twice as likely to have been forced to have sex and four times as likely to have admitted forcing their partner to have sex.

Factors associated with young people holding attitudes supportive of violence are low socio-economic status; age (younger); gender (males) and being Indigenous. The two demographics most consistently linked to pro-violence attitudes are young males and Indigenous youth.

(Source: Indermaur, D. 2001. *Young Australians and Domestic Violence,* Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice: No.195, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra).

BACKGROUND HISTORY

Policies and practices in the 1980s - 1990s	Gender policy through the 1980s focussed on perceived deficits in the participation, achievement, retention or career outcomes for either boys or girls, and encouraged teachers to address these deficits in their practices. Education Queensland adopted a significantly different policy in the early 1990s, one which addressed the way boys and girls would learn the knowledge and skills to build a gender equitable society, while retaining a focus on the gendered patterns of educational participation and outcomes.
Gender Equity in Education Policy	*The Gender Equity in Education Policy: that was then…*
	The policy most relevant to this project is the Gender Equity in Education Policy. This policy was introduced in 1991, and has changed significantly since that time. The original policy embraced the National Policy for the Education of Girls (see next).
National Policy for the Education of Girls	Significant quotations: "Schooling will prepare female students for their rights to personal respect and safety, to economic and social independence, and to participation in and influence over decisions which affect their lives."
	"Schools should educate girls and boys for satisfying, responsible and productive living, including work inside and outside the home."
Policy statements specific to relationship skills	However, *in three important respects, Education Queensland's policy went further than the National Policy.* It stated that:
	- Schooling will encourage the development of attitudes and behaviours in female and male students which promote social responsibility, empathy, and sensitive, equal and non-violent relationships. - Schooling will assist students to understand the importance of the relationship between public and private responsibilities, including paid and unpaid work in terms of increased equality between men and women. - Schooling will assist students to understand the construction of sex-role stereotypes, and to explore their own attitudes to gender roles and the implications of these attitudes for their adult futures.
	These statements were the heart of Queensland's policy, legitimating strategies designed to achieve, not simply greater parity in subject and career selection, use of the schools' resources, and educational retention and achievement, but to educate students for gender justice, in all areas of their lives. It is highly significant that this policy was contemporaneous with a strong role for education in whole of government strategies for eliminating violence against women and girls.
	This policy was also highly significant in the spectrum of states' gender equity policies, because, in contrast to most other states' policies at that time, it contained critical aspects of policy focussed on *gender relations*, and addressing the needs of boys in achieving this.
Gender Equity in Education Policy: social and cultural contexts	Reflecting the national policy, Queensland's policy also endorsed the need for schools and communities to understand that in the lives of many girls sexism and racism have a common face, and that understandings of gender vary across cultures. The policy drew attention to the need for educators to take account of indigenous cultures in positive ways, and of the diversity of life experiences in the female student population.
Policies supporting	Education Queensland followed up the introduction of this general policy with a number of

specific elements of the Gender Equity Policy	policies enabling schools to achieve the intent of the policy. These policies included: • The Gender Equity in School **Sport** Policy (banning unlawful discrimination in school sport) • The School **Dress Code** (ensuring that girls' uniforms enabled uninhibited participation in all school activities) • **Sexual harassment** Guidelines and Training Procedures (providing for the training of all principals in issues pertaining to sexual harassment, the appointment of trained referral officers in schools, and procedures for handing sexual harassment issues).
Key curriculum resources supporting the Gender Equity in Education Policy	Another policy initiated in 1991, but not introduced until 1999 was the **Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy**. (An interesting reflection on the changes in sensitivity to gender issues over time). The Gender Equity Policy was also supported by number of key curriculum developments: • *Says Who: Sexual Harassment in the Secondary School*: a video and teachers' handbook supporting curriculum on gender and harassment; • *Enough's Enough*: *Sexual harassment and violence in the primary school.* (Research report, teachers' guide with lesson modules, school behaviour management strategies, and video) • *Piecing it Together*: Professional Development modules for understanding the social and cultural construction of gender. • *Gender up Front*: Teaching about gender in the curriculum (a collaboration between EQ and the Association of Women Educators).
Generic social justice developments in Education Queensland in the 1990s	Generic social justice policies supporting gender equity: • Policy on Principles of Inclusive Curriculum • Social Justice Strategy • Human Relationships Education Policy • Managing Behaviour in a Supportive School Environment.
Principles of Inclusive Curriculum	The resources described above were made available to schools in the context of a broader policy: Principles of Inclusive Curriculum, a policy that is still in place. The policy statement is that: Education Queensland is committed to providing an inclusive curriculum, which meets the needs of students and society. Curriculum is inclusive when participants in the learning process: • identify and address barriers that limit students' opportunities, participation and benefits from schooling; • include, value and use as a basis for learning, the perspectives, contributions and experiences of the full range of social and cultural groups, by acknowledging diversity both within and among these groups; • develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and processes necessary to – question how disadvantage has developed and exists within social structures; – challenge rather than accept social injustice; and – empower people to participate as equals.

Human Relationships Education for Queensland State Schools Policy	The Human Relationships Education Policy, had its inception in the late 1980s, under the conservative government at the time, initially seeking to formalise and regulate sex education in state schools. The policy was revised in the early 1990s, *and still exists.* It was a crucial companion policy to the Gender Equity in Education Policy. Its key policy statement is:
	Through Human Relationships Education, Education Queensland acknowledges the need for students to have opportunities to develop all aspects of personal identity (intellectual, emotional, physical, social, cultural and spiritual) in ways that empower individuals and groups. Human Relationships Education is part of schooling from Preschool to Year 12 and is fundamental to a school's behaviour management process in managing a supportive school environment. DOEM CS-02.
	This policy requires the Principal to initiate and coordinate Human Relationships Education (HRE) in the school according to the procedures.
	The introduction to the Rationale of this policy states:
	• The Social Justice Strategy of Education Queensland provides the framework for Human Relationships Education in Queensland state schools. A major purpose of schools is to provide access for all students to learning situations that promote personal growth and encourage active participation in a culturally diverse society.
	It is important to note here that the Social Justice Strategy (see discussion below) was never formally endorsed by Education Queensland . However, it is also important to note that, despite this, the HRE policy has survived the ravages of time, which indicates that it has been of enduring to the system and schools. From the late 1980s to the mid 1990s, considerable resources supported the implementation of this policy. This included significant professional development for HRE officers at district levels, and for responsible officers in schools.
	In the early 1990s, officers responsible for this policy area formed strong links across the community, with a number of community agencies, including the Family Planning Association and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre,. During that period, the collaboration with the Domestic Violence Resource Centre resulted in the development of the video and teaching materials, *Prevention of Abuse in Relationships.*
	The policy draws attention to gender, as one of a range of issues to be taken into account in the development of students' self-esteem and confidence in dealing with others; and to sexuality, in the context of enabling students to develop an understanding of the emotional and spiritual changes that occur through life, and how these contribute to an individual's personal identity, sexuality and relationships with others.
	The policy defines *sexuality* and *gender identity* thus:
	• *Sexuality* is part of an individual's personality and is expressed in attitudes and behaviours. It is an outcom3e of the dynamics between genetic inheritance, personal experience and gender.
	• *Gender identity* is a culturally defined pattern of behaviour an social interaction, ascribed on a sex basis, and is related to societal connotations of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. Pl8 of policy.
	Key elements of the policy are values, self-concept, communication, relationships, and sexuality.
	The policy sets out a process for implementation of a school HRE program. The formation of a School Community Collaborative Committee is a crucial element of the process. The role of this committee is to develop, support and review HRE in the school, and in the school's general planning and review process. It recommends that this committee initiates strategies to achieve a full range of opinions on issues such as sexuality, disability, and cultural diversity.
Social Justice	An overarching framework for these activities was the Social Justice Strategy. This strategy

Strategy	began early in 1992 as a framework across workforce issues and studies issues, but by 1994, it had come to focus more directly on school practices. While the Social Justice Strategy 1994-1998 was not endorsed officially at system level, it was, and continues to be used in pre-service training and in many schools. It demonstrated how educational practices targeting Indigenous education, cultural (including ESL) and gender equity, poverty, and locational issues, could be mutually reinforcing and coherent. The Board of Teacher Education and the universities collaborated with Education Queensland in providing widespread professional development for teachers, based on this strategy and its components.
	The Social Justice Strategy reflected the infrastructural arrangements for development and delivery of social justice initiatives, including the operation of 5 units within the Social Justice Branch of the Studies Directorate: Gender Equity, Cultural Equity, Indigenous Education, Commonwealth Target Groups; and Behaviour Management (Supportive School Environments). Regional Offices were staffed to support policies in this area, and provided the basis for strong state networks supporting policy and project developments in these areas.
Employment policies	It is relevant to note that employment practices in Education Queensland from the early 1990s until 1995 required that employees could demonstrate their knowledge of and commitment to social justice in education.
Social Justice Review	In 1996, the then Quality Assurance Directorate in Education Queensland conducted a comprehensive review of strategies for social justice in Education Queensland. An attachment summarises the extent of implementation of various initiatives, indicating that implementation of curriculum on issues of racism and sexism were the least well implemented of Education Queensland's social justice programs. The Quality Assurance Directorate was restructured soon after this review and no action was taken to remedy deficiencies identified by the review.
State-level developments	These policies and programs claimed the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act as their policy source. This state legislation, alongside the provision of a Gender Equity policy development unit in Central Office, networked to district-based gender equity support officers available to schools; extensive professional development for teachers; the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Committee on Gender Equity; generated a logic of delivery across the state into schools and classrooms, supported by funding from both State and commonwealth sources.
Anti-Discrimination Act	Because these developments had their policy source in the introduction of the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, they resonated with cross-government and community activities supporting the introduction of this legislation. They also occurred against a backdrop of widespread teacher and parent activism against sexism in education. There had been strong interest from Queensland parents and teachers in developments in other states over 15 years (since the Commonwealth Schools Commission's *Girls in Schools* report of 1975), and the Queensland-bred Association of Women Educators had taken a blueprint for reform to the first Minister for Education in the Goss Labour government.
	This community voice was being heard across government departments. Queensland women were demanding changes they had anticipated for decades. A significant body of legislation was being introduced, including changes to the criminal code to outlaw rape in marriage. Changes in education drew strength from this broader agenda.
Queensland Government Statement of Policy: Stop Violence against Women	A key government development in this period was the 1992 *Queensland Government Statement of Policy: Stop Violence Against Women*. This policy acknowledged, among a range of issues, • that male violence against women needs to be understood in the context of the social and economic structures and conditions and in the unequal power relationships they create between men and women; • the need for active cultural change to create a society which no longer condones and remains silent on violence against women and which works for the elimination of

	violence against women;
	• that society cannot afford the human and economic costs of violence against women and its destructive legacy from one generation to the next; and
	• that male violence against women is experienced across all ages, socio-economic groups and ethnic and cultural communities.
Role of EQ in the Stop Violence Against Women Policy	This policy acknowledged explicitly the then Gender Equity Unit, Education Queensland, as a key unit in the cross-government strategy to stop violence against women. It also endorsed the Gender Equity in Education Policy as part of the state anti-violence apparatus, stating that this policy recognised:
	the need to challenge and counteract the development of those attitudes in boys which view women and girls as less than equals and violence, particularly violence against women and girls, as acceptable behaviour.
	The policy endorsed
	the significant role of education, from childhood to tertiary, in ensuring that violent behaviour is recognised as unacceptable and a crime, and in ensuring that boys and girls grow into adulthood regarding each other as equals with a range of effective interpersonal skills.
	Specifically, the Stop Violence Against Women Policy called for education to
	• support the activities of guidance and counselling personnel in schools, and school-based parent and community awareness programs;
	• develop policy and curriculum guidelines to assist school staff in addressing issues of violence against women and girls; and
	• develop and implement non-violence and non-harassment policies in schools.
Audit of State Policy: Stop Violence against Women	These activities were audited by the then Women's Policy Unit of the Office of the Cabinet, in the context of the review of the women's budget.
	This policy was a breakthrough in recognising the fundamental role of formal education, *vis-à-vis* other government departments, in counteracting gendered violence, often lost in the crisis-oriented responses of government that see such issues as adult themes. It acknowledged that adult-centric policies on gendered violence simply ignore the critical function of schools in educating against gendered violence, of developing a citizenry cognisant about the history, causes, and human rights issues underlying gendered violence, and able to recognise the cultural practices that "normalise" violence. This recognition effectively ended an era that sanctioned the view that regarded sexual harassment as part of a de-politicised behaviour management agenda in schools.
	But Education Queensland's response was then able to go beyond a negatively constructed agenda of stamping out sexual harassment and violence in schools: the state policy signalled the need for students to learn about these issues in ways that would enable them to repudiate violence in their own relationships and families, and to participate in collective action to eradicate it from communities. The resources for schools, *Says Who?* and *Enough's Enough,* for secondary and primary school respectively, provided teachers and administrators with the means through which to engage students, as a curriculum issue, in an active investigation of the significance of gender and violence in their schools and their lives.
	By the mid-1990s, sexual harassment and violence, along with racism were beginning to be understood as de-privatised, there was growing recognition, both at state and national level, that learning about these issues was an essential part of the citizenship curriculum, having a place in the Studies of Society and Environment learning area, and in the Health and Physical

	Education learning area.
Research on rape-supportive attitudes among Year 9 Boys	**Some key developments in the period 1992** **A landmark study: *Boys will be….: A report on the Survey of Year Nine Males and their Attitudes to Forced Sex*** This report was undertaken by Donna-Maree O'Connor for the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Brisbane, in September 1992. It found that: • One in three boys believed that it was "ok for a boy to hold a girl down and force her to have sexual intercourse" if she had led him on. • Only 55% of boys believed that it was unacceptable to force a girls to have sex if she gets him sexually excited. Of the remaining 45% of boys, 27% thought it was okay and 18% were unsure • Where a couple had dated for a long time, 15% of boys believed it was acceptable to force a girl to have sex and a further 15% were unsure. • In none of 9 circumstances presented to the boys did all respondents indicate a negative attitude to the acceptability of rape. This was the case in each of the four schools involved. • A small percentage of girls held attitudes to rape being acceptable, reflecting those of boys. This disturbing study evoked little response from Education Queensland, and was explained away, at least in the context of the Studies Executive, in terms of methodology and interpretation. It was followed up in 1994 by a more tightly conceived study by Dr Jane Fowler and K Wilson of Griffith University, sponsored by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre. This study indicated very similar results to the initial study, but added new and concerning dimensions, in that the authors drew from numerous studies identifying a positive correlation between adolescent males' attitudes to women, and the subsequent likelihood that males holding traditional beliefs regarding gender rights and roles (e.g., Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy; In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions.), will be more apt to commit a sexually violent crime towards women. The study involved 151 Brisbane year 10 students – 74 boys and 77 girls[65]. When the results of these studies were made public, the then Director of the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Ms Karen Struthers, strongly urged education systems (both state and non-government schools were involved in the study) to develop strong, effective and coordinated strategies within the curriculum to address these issues.
Queensland Youth Bureau report: Strategies to Address Violence Against Young Women	The then Queensland Youth Bureau strongly supported this position, after undertaking its own research of violence against young women in Queensland. It described the programs operating at that time in Education Queensland as vital initiatives. However, it claimed that such violence could only be addressed when education, in its preventative role, engaged with other agencies, including agencies representing youth, to consult, plan and coordinate activities, and in the context of overarching community education and training. In its 1994 report[66], it claimed that 88% of respondents to their research said that children were present in domestic violence incidents, and 90% of these witnessed the violence; and that it was children who called the police in 11% of cases. They referred to international studies that indicated that in 35-50% of cases, spouse abusers are also child abusers.

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[65] Fowler, J. and Wilson, K. 1994 *Adolescents Attitudes Toward Women and forced Sexual Intercourse.* Unpiublished. Griffith University Brisbane.

[66] Queenlsand Youth Bureau for the Youth Policy Taskforce, MCEETYA April 1994.

National developments	National developments in the early to mid 90s generated a coherence supporting broad cultural change on issues of gender, relationships and discrimination. Five activities were pivotal:
	• the publication of one of the research papers commissioned for the review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls, the *Listening to Girls*[67] report;
	• the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project; and the introduction of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools 1993-1997;
	• The development of *No Fear* kit, in the context of the National Strategy on Violence Against women;
	• The introduction of the *Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools.*
Listening to Girls report	The *Listening to Girls* report
	This report was published after an intensive research study that involved discussions with 800 schoolgirls in a very wide diversity of schools and locations across Australia. This report was commissioned as part of the review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls in Australian Schools (1987). The substance of the report altered the face of gender policies in formal education in Australia, and enabled the first national strategy that drew directly from the voices of students themselves.
	While it is simplistic to summarise this study in a few sentences, a few major elements of girls' experience of schooling were exposed by these studies:
	• Girls' experience of harassment and violence was widespread in Australian schools, and was the most important factor impacting on their educational choices and learning outcomes – especially for girls in the marginalised groups;
	• Girls' expectations for their futures were mediated by their expectations (based on their own experiences of families) that their future male partners would not share equally in responsibilities for family and household maintenance, and while girls anticipated having children with excitement, they were confused about how they would manage family responsibilities with careers. They subsequently adapted their career aspirations, and, in conjunction with this, their selection of subjects, to these concerns, selecting, for example, careers that would enable flexibility for care of family and children; and
	• Girls wanted boys to be part of schools' programs for gender equity.
	There was widespread media publicity about these findings. While investigative journalism produced a number of television documentaries endorsing the findings, there was also strong backlash against the "blame the boys" potential of the report. Polarisation on the issues was intensified, between those who believed that concerns for boys' educational outcomes were being ignored, and those who believed that widespread sexual harassment and violence in schools legitimated a continued policy focus on the education of girls, together with an uncompromising response in schools to dysfunctional masculinity.
The National Action Plan for the Education of	The concerns raised in this project directly influenced the subsequent *National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993-1997*[68].
	The review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls occurred against a backdrop of an emerging contest about whether policy in this area would remain on a separatist footing –

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[67] See Milligan S. and Thompson, K. 1992 *Listening to Girls.* Report for the Department o9f Employment and Training. Curriculum corporation: Melbourne.

[68] Australian Education Council 1993 *National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993-1997.* Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne.

Girls 1993-1997 (NAPEG)	essentially about girls – or whether the agenda should be broadened. At this stage, Queensland policy was moving beyond a primary emphasis on girls' experiences of and outcomes from education, to an analysis of the role of schools in promoting greater equality in gender relations, in schools and in society. A dissonance was developing between the way the national agenda was expressed, and the development of programs in the Queensland education system. This dissonance is evident in the document that ensued from the review of the National Policy for the Education of Girls – *the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls 1993-1997*. Whilst this plan carried forward a separate focus on girls in its title, most of the actions required of systems and schools within it focused clearly on educations' role in generating a more gender-just society. This is quite evident in the Key Strategies and Questions for Schools in a number of the Priority Action Areas, especially those with direct relevance to the OFW/EQ project. These Action Areas are: • Examining the Construction of Gender • Eliminating Sex-based Harassment, and • Broadening Work Education. The excerpts below, from the National Action Plan, illustrate this. The following are extracts only from the Key Strategies and Key Questions from three of the seven priority action areas of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls for each of these areas follow. They are selected because they illustrate also how far the intent of gender equity policy had come towards supporting programs for healthy, respectful, non-violent gender relations.

NAPEG: Examining the Construction of Gender	*Examining the Construction of Gender: Priority Action Area from the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls*
	
	Key Strategies
	
	In schools and systems:
	
	• develop policy and implement professional development programs which provide school staff with an understanding of construction of gender;
	
	• develop, for all year levels, curriculum that increases students' awareness of how gender is constructed, with particular reference to
	
	    – the role of language;
	
	    – the abuse of power in relationships;
	
	    – the part that violence plays in the establishment of power;
	
	    – an examination of body images for girls and boys as presented in the media, and the relationships between body image and disorders such as bulimia and anorexia;
	
	    – the role of popular cultural texts including videos, computer games, toys, films, music, magazines;
	
	    – the influence of family, peers, community, media in the construction of gender.
	
	• develop processes which teach that aggression and violence are unacceptable behaviours;
	
	• engage parents and the community in the development of programs and materials, which develop awareness of the impacts of gender construction.

Eliminating Sex-based Harassment	*Eliminating Sex-based Harassment* In schools and systems: • develop programs which teach girls and boys effective communication and conflict resolution skills, and to value positive relationships; • develop curriculum and policies at system and school level which provide opportunities for girls and boys from Kindergarten to Year 12 to understand sex-based harassment and related issues, and learn that sex-based harassment is unacceptable behaviour; • develop and implement professional development programs to reduce sex-based harassment; • provide programs and materials which inform school and wider communities about the underlying causes of sex-based harassment and the impact it has on the education of girls. In schools: • implement policies and associated procedures for dealing with sex-based harassment, including information to parents on how they can assist the implementation of the strategies. In systems: • include the issues of sex-based harassment in the National Collaborative Curriculum Statements and Profiles, particularly in *Studies of Society and Environment* and *Health.*
NAPEG: Broadening Work Education	*Broadening Work Education* Key Strategies In schools and systems • develop, for all year levels, curriculum which critically examines the gender distribution of work in families, households, and paid work, and the relative values attributed to these different kinds of work by society. The National Action Plan did not require states' annual reporting, as was required by the arrangements that followed states' endorsement of the National Policy for the Education of Girls. Its implementation varied from state to state, and commitment to it was distracted by the growing strength of the lobby for attention to boys' outcomes from education. Unfortunately, these were seen as competing, rather than as complementary agendas. In the ensuing debates, the clarity of the findings from the Listening to Girls report, especially in relation to the prevalence of sexual harassment and violence, and to the need for far-reaching reform of work education programs, was lost.
Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project (GECR)	The Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform Project In order to achieve gender equity in the National Collaborative Curriculum documents, the Australian Education Council appointed a gender consultant to each of the committees involved in developing the eight curriculum areas. This project was less than successful, and, in response to the perceived marginalisation of issues of gender in the committee work, each of the consultants subsequently developed a position paper on the significance of gender within each of the curriculum areas. Policy officers in Queensland were intensively involved in the development of these papers, which were never published, and belong to the Commonwealth government, but the drafts have been used informally in professional development contexts with Education Queensland teachers.

	The second part of the Gender Equity and Curriculum Reform project involved the development of over 20 high profile, cross-state or cross system research projects, almost all of them action research projects, involving teachers and administrators, university researchers, parents and students. Queensland coordinated three of these projects, and was involved in many others. Two that are still directly relevant to this project, and coordinated by the Queensland Gender Equity Unit, were :
	• Understanding the Construction of Gender P-3 (with James Cook University and the NSW Department of Education); and
	• Gender Equity in Work and Family Education (with the Townsville Catholic Education Office).
	These projects provided exemplars of curriculum strategies for involving students, parents and teachers, in investigations of gender relations in work, family and civic life, and in understanding gendered violence in their own lives, and in their communities.
GECR project: Understanding the Construction of Gender P-3	The project on Understanding the Construction of Gender P-3 formed the basis for a Curriculum Corporation publication, by Professor Nola Alloway of James Cook University, called *Foundation Stones: The Construction of Gender in Early Childhood*[69]. This project demonstrated the feasibility and effectiveness of working through the curriculum with very young students on sensitive issues involving higher order learning, appreciation of difference, connectedness, and understanding the problematic nature of knowledge.
Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform project: Work and Family Education	The second project, on issues of Work and Family Education, involved administrators, teachers and parents in action research projects to develop curriculum that breaks through the edifice that persistently excludes issues pertaining to the impact *on gender relations and gender justice* of ascribed gender roles in paid work, family life and civic participation. This project was rated by many of the principals, teachers and parents involved as life-changing, not only improving the quality of curriculum that they could offer to students, but enabling them to mature in their teacher and/or parent identity, and in their understanding of family care and household management as intrinsic to the practice of citizenship.
	This project was not published, arriving at completion at a time when funds were being re-allocated to other projects. However, although now somewhat dated, it provides a rare exemplar of both primary and secondary curriculum, across a range of subject areas, and approaches to professional development, that challenges dominant ways of distorting curriculum to exclude girls' and women's perspectives on their futures in careers, families and the social, economic and political life of the community. Researchers, Professor Lyn Yates and Professor Jane Kenway have referred to this as the "evaded curriculum".
***No Fear* Resource**	The *No Fear kit*
	Another national project in which Queensland policy advisors and teachers actively participated, and which was the response of education systems to the National Strategy on Violence Against Women, was the development of a kit to address gendered violence: *No Fear*[70]. The kit includes professional development materials for use with teachers and communities, and curriculum materials for both primary and secondary schools.
	NB. It is relevant to note, in the context of a feasibility report, that all the materials noted above, without exception, were developed in conjunction with classroom teachers and school administrators, and trialled in a diverse range of schools.

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[69]   Alloway, N. (1995) *Foundation Stones: The Construction of Gender in Early Childhood.* Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne.

[70]   DEETYA. (1996) *No Fear: A kit addressing gender based violence.* Print material and video. Social Change Media, Canberra.

National level: <u>The introduction of the *Gender Equity: A Framework for Australian Schools*</u>	**Evaluation of strategies developed in the early to mid-1990s.** In response to widespread concern about boys' participation from and outcomes from education, the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Education of Girls was effectively interrupted by a national conference convened in 1995 by the Gender Equity Taskforce of MCEETYA. The conference was a pivotal in putting issues for boys on the agenda, not, as had been the case previously, in a submerged context, but in their own right. Together with the National Collaborative Curriculum process, the conference also marked a point where gender equity issues were being mainstreamed, or as Kenway puts it, (p33), both mainstreamed and marginalised.
EQ Position Paper on Gender and violence	**The Education Queensland Position Paper on Gender and Violence 1997: the end of an era** The Education Queensland Position Paper on Gender and Violence was released in 1997, setting out principles for action, based on whole-school change, and reforms to curriculum, teaching and learning practices, school policies, resources, organisational practices, and school culture.
School Based Management	In the period from 1995-1997, the key structural change in education was a strong promotion of school-based management. In this climate, system policy became increasingly subordinate to locally developed priorities within schools, and the focus on social justice that had been part of the cultural change of the early to mid 1990s lost ground to an emerging discourse of managerialism. Policies, including the Gender Equity in Education Policy, were abbreviated and some, including the departmental position on implementation of sexual harassment prevention initiatives were rescinded. The Social Justice Strategy was abandoned. Rescinded policies sometimes found very muted expression in new policies, such as the Generic Management of School-based Complaints procedures, which is where issues of sexual harassment resided temporarily. Kenway had noted at the 1995 Promoting Gender Equity Conference that gender equity policies had, in Australian education systems, been driven from the centre, and were always at risk in restructural devolutions of policy towards the local.
The Queensland Schools Curriculum Council	While that National Collaborative Curriculum process collapsed before completion, states, including Queensland, continued work towards the development of syllabuses for the key learning areas. The then Queensland Schools Curriculum Council was generally supportive of the position papers on the key learning areas developed through the Gender Equity in Curriculum Reform project, and incorporated some of the elements of those positions into its curriculum documents.
Revised Gender Equity in Education Policy	*The Gender Equity in Education Policy: this is now…* The current version of the Gender Equity in Education Policy is brief and minimalist. It withdraws the values statements common to both the original National Policy for the Education of Girls, and Education Queensland's original Gender Equity in Education Policy. Importantly, it does not contain those statements about the role of schooling that previously differentiated Queensland's position from the National Policy. The policy statement itself is reduced to one statement, that Education Queensland is committed to: ensuring that any aspect of schooling which leads to differential educational outcomes for male and female students is identified and addressed to guarantee that no student in Queensland's state school system is disadvantaged on the basis of gender.

	It is the responsibility of Education Queensland (through its personnel in Central and District Offices) to ensure

equal and fair access to, participation in, and outcomes from, the education provided for male and female students, on the understanding that differential provision may be required.

It does require, however, that principals, among other accountabilities relevant to achieving fair and equitable educational processes and outcomes:

- take appropriate steps to ensure a learning environment which discourages all forms of sexual harassment and violence; and

- provide opportunities for all students to critically examine the construction of gender and its impacts on gender relations and life pathways through curriculum processes.

This is the point at which current Education Queensland policy is most specific regarding preparing students for healthy, respectful, non-discriminatory relationships. However, the language here is, compared to the previous policy, obscure, and excludes the clear reference to the necessity for students to understand relationships, family, work and civic life in terms of greater equity. Moreover, the context of a robust cross-government policy on violence against women, locating the role of education in eliminating this violence, is no longer present in the public way that it was in the early 1990s. |
| **Partnerships Against Domestic Violence: SAVVY Schools** | Eighteen Queensland schools participated in the development of this kit, which is designed to support students affected by domestic and family violence. Published in 2000, it was an initiative of the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Strategy, a joint Commonwealth-State program. The kit provides a concise discussion of the rationale for education's involvement in broader strategies to reduce domestic and family violence, and practical ways for schools to be involved with their communities, in breaking the silence on these issues.

A significant inclusion in this resource is a summary of ways young peoples' (from infants to adolescents) social and educational development may be affected by the impact of family violence. Many of the behaviours likely to be exhibited by these students are those that could have them labelled as trouble-makers in schools, and uninformed teacher responses could compound the negative impacts of family violence. They are also behaviours that, without intervention, could seriously hold back their social and academic development.

The checklist on curriculum is simple and to the point, as follows:

Within the curriculum, the school

- addresses power and gender issues

- models and teaches relationship skills

- deals with family violence and related issues.

However, the resource also sets out actions that should be taken by schools to promote an understanding of family violence; plan for and provide emotionally and physically safe school environments; publicly reject violence; promote and celebrate diversity; promote an understanding of family violence that acknowledges power and gender issues; empower students; ensure that staff are able to identify students at risk of family violence; and support key staff to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to deal with family violence issues effectively. |

	QSE-2010 purported to outline the social, economic, and political forces for change impacting on education in new times: complexity, uncertainty and diversity. High profile researchers provided background papers to inform the strategy, which included a paper on social issues by Don Edgar, previously Director of the Institute for Family Studies.
	This strategy acknowledges the turbulent nature of many families, and the need for educators to take account of the fact that the "nurturing family of recent decades has melted away" (p4), and that youth anxiety, depression and aggression are an indicator of this factor. It put on the agenda the new pressures on schools and teachers to provide children with high levels of social support, and the need for parenting education.
	It underlines the need for schools to be safe and disciplined environments, and for schools to engage in authentic ways with all groups in their communities to find ways to support the learning of students in these contexts.
	It calls on schools to enact the principles of civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity as keystones of the curriculum. It promoted strongly greater cross-government coordination of services and building community trust and social capital. It outlines a vision for transforming schools to meet new demands, by becoming embedded in communities, local and global, in new ways that would enable students the complexity of contemporary life. It commits to providing teachers with the range of skills and aptitudes for these challenges through state-of-the-art pedagogies.
Policy and Strategy for new times: The Queensland State Education – 2010 (QSE-2010)	Within an identified purpose of education, citizenship was to be the central organising idea:
	Citizenship as part of a shared democratic culture, which emphasises participatory political involvement and which strives to avoid social disadvantage that denies full participation in society. Education will lead the development of free, active, equal Australian citizens who have the capacities to choose their identities, entitlements and duties within the prevailing political and legal framework.
	This strategy also provides for a new deal on equity for Indigenous students, students with a disability, and for other at-risk groups, and calls for the explicit embedding of social outcomes in curriculum frameworks.
	It commits to increasing the range of professionals and para-professionals working in schools with teachers, and to increasing family support and parenting education offered by schools. It envisages that schools with a high proportion of students needing special support would be encouraged to develop as community hubs or full-service schools, providing a focus for community service delivery and community development. Schools would become centres for learning communities and community developments in partnerships with parents, business, other government agencies and their communities.
Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study	A critical piece of the background to QSE-2010 was the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study, a study commissioned in 1997, against a background of claims that school-based management was linked directly to improved learning outcomes, a claim that was discredited by the research. The study, which involved observations of 975 classroom lessons looked for evidence of 20 elements of "productive pedagogies" across four domains: intellectual quality, connectedness, supportive classroom environment, and recognition of difference. Of these four domains, intellectual quality and recognition of difference were the lowest scoring in the classrooms which they observed.
	Recognition of difference, for the purposes of the research, includes
	• cultural knowledges
	• representative participation,
	• narrative,

- group identity, and

- citizenship.

It was in this context that the authors looked for teaching about gender, and related issues. In their commentary about pedagogical performance around these issues, the authors stated:

> The problem does not appear to be a lack of commitment. Most of the teachers interviewed were readily able to identify the particular issues and problems they faced regarding gender, linguistic and cultural differences, and students with special needs in the mainstream. But the classroom data indicated that they were struggling to find population-specific pedagogical strategies that are appropriate for and effective at improving these students' performance. Hence, any proactive professional development and innovation in this area must be very strongly focused on the expansion of mainstream teachers' pedagogical repertoires for dealing with diversity. It appears that it is easier for some schools to recognise difference within whole-school culture than in actual classroom practices. Both are needed. (Executive summary p xv).

Interestingly, the study found that those teachers who were able to recognise difference in their pedagogical repertoires, were also scoring highly on academic demand.

The authors looked for evidence of recognition of difference in students' performance through three elements:

- *Cultural knowledges* are valued when students explicitly value such things as non-dominant cultures' beliefs, languages, practices and ways of knowing. Cultural groups are distinguished by social characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, economic status and youth. Thus their valuing means students legitimate these cultures through the inclusion, recognition and transmission of this cultural knowledge. The valuing of all cultural knowledges requires more than one culture being present and given status within the student performance. Knowledge which is constructed and framed within a common set of cultural definitions, symbols, values, views and qualities, thus attributing some higher status to it, stands in contrast to this.

- *Responsible citizenship* is demonstrated when students display an awareness of the importance of creating positive human relationships and of respecting individuals. Responsible citizenship may also involve recognising the impact of individuals on their community and environment. It involves students accepting that a harmonious and 'good' society relies on its members respecting and exercising individual rights and responsibilities.

- *Transformative citizenship* occurs when students acknowledge that in a democratic society all individuals and groups have the right to participate in all of the democratic practices of institutions within that society; the right to engage in the creation and transformation of that democratic society; the responsibility to ensure that no groups or individuals are excluded from these practices and institutions; and the responsibility to ensure that a broad definition of the political includes all relationships and structures throughout the social arrangement. Transformative citizenship is present in any assessment item in any subject domain when the student elaborates upon the meaning of such citizenship.

The QSRLS recommendations are being implemented in the department through a range of strategies, one of them being the Productive Pedagogies initiative.

Framework for Students at Educational Risk

The Framework for Students at Educational Risk is the enactment of the new deal on equity. It consists of

- a set of key assurances which constitute the compact with the Queensland community, pertaining to the steps that will be taken in all schools to increase school completion,

	improve achievement levels and prevent school failure, especially by students at educational risk;
	• a policy setting out objectives, principles and accountabilities at school, district and central level;
	• guidelines, defining educational risk and setting out the structure of responsibilities; and
	• an explanatory brochure, placing the framework in the context of the QSE-2010.
	The policy notes that education alone cannot overcome social and economic exclusion, but sets out clear and specific requirements for principals and district directors and senior leaders at central level to be active in creating the conditions for schools to form the alliances with other government agencies and community organisations as a platform for cohesive services to students at educational risk. It recognises that the failure of many students is related to factors such as poverty, health, family pressures including violence, and housing, and highlights the need for interagency collaboration at all levels.
	It should be noted that the policy rests on the capacity of schools to identify both the nature of educational risk in their communities, and also the strengths that reside within their communities in terms of social, economic, cultural services and organisations, and local traditions and practices.
Partners for Success	This strategy to improve educational experiences and outcomes for Indigenous students, reflects elements of the Framework for Students at Educational Risk.
Community Access Schools	This project, funded the Community Renewal Program, an initiative of the State Crime Prevention Strategy, enacted those commitments in QSE-2010 regarding community-connected schooling. Education Queensland funded 11 schools over 4 years to develop strong connections with community agencies, parents, business and industry and other government departments. Many of these schools demonstrated (albeit in the context of significant funding) the dramatic difference that such strategies can make in the civic life of a school, in valuing the diversity of its students, addressing the complexity of barriers to achievement that they face (e.g., health, housing, family violence), and *in their levels of participation in learning, retention, and achievement on standardised test programs.*
	A number of these schools addressed directly issues of family and relationship violence as a major factor in educational failure. However, the lessons of the Community Access Schools project, which could have made a major contribution to professional development for staff in Queensland schools, were not taken up in any organised way after funding through the Community Renewal Program dried up. This does not mean that these schools have abandoned their commitments, or that other schools not funded through the Community Renewal Program did not achieve similar outcomes. What is noted here is the professional experience and learning of staff in the Community Access Schools is an untapped learning resource for Education Queensland.
Values education	The Australian Government is committed to making values a core part of schooling. The *Values Education Study*, published by the Australian Government in November 2003, showed that while many schools in all sectors are doing good work in this area, comprehensive values education is still at an early stage in Australian schools.
	As a result of this study, the Department of Education Science and Training (DEST) have developed a National Framework for Values Education in consultation with all the states and territories. Funding has been provided to enable each jurisdiction to support schools to conduct values forums to develop their own approaches to values education in partnership with their local school communities.
	The framework acknowledges that education is about building character, that it can strengthen self-esteem, optimism and commitment to personal fulfilment, and help students exercise

ethical judgment and social responsibility, and notes that this is what parents expect. The draft framework states that good practice is characterised by articulated values in schools' mission or ethos; development of students' civic and social skills and resilience; and the incorporation of values in key learning areas.

Values are described in the framework, (after Halstead and Taylor 2000) as

> The principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable.

Values education is described as

> Any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students so they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community.

It refers to a set of nine common values that are "consistent with Australia's democratic traditions ". These nine Values for *Australian Schooling* have been identified for the *National Framework*. They have emerged from Australian school communities and from the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*. They are presented in alphabetical order and not in any rank order of importance:

1. **Care and Compassion** (Caring for self and others).

2. **Doing Your Best** (Seeking to accomplish something worthy and admirable, trying hard, pursuing excellence).

3. **Fair Go** (Pursuing and protecting the common good where all people are treated fairly and equitably – for a just society).

4. **Freedom** (Enjoying all the rights and privileges of citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and standing up for the rights of others).

5. **Honesty and Trustworthiness** (Being truthful and sincere, seeking to find truth).

6. **Integrity** (Having the disposition to act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensuring consistency between words and deeds).

7. **Respect** (Treating others with consideration and regard; respecting another person's point of view).

8. **Responsibility** – personal, social, civic and environmental (Being accountable for one's own actions, resolving differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways; contributing to society and to civic life, taking care of the environment).

9. **Understanding/Tolerance/Inclusion** (Being aware of others and their cultures, accepting diversity within democratic society, being included and including others).

QSA/QSCC	Syllabuses All syllabuses acknowledge that students have a broad range of knowledge and experience, shaped by their gender, socio-economic status and geographical local, and by other aspects of their background, which form part of their learning environment; and that learning • occurs through particular social and cultural contexts; • is most effective when it involves active partnerships, focusing on students, with collaboration and negotiation between parents and carers, teachers, school and

	community members;
	• should acknowledge social justice principles by being inclusive and supportive and by celebrating diversity;
	requires active construction of meaning and is most effective when it is developed in meaningful contexts and accommodates, acknowledges and builds on prior knowledge; that investigative and learner centred strategies are most effective in enabling learners to make informed choices and to take actions that support their own and others' health and wellbeing. (QSA website).
QSA cross-curriculum positions: Lifeskills	The Queensland Schools Curriculum Council (now, alongside other agencies, incorporated into the Queensland Schools Authority) has produced position papers on four "integrative elements" to be addressed in each of the 8 key learning areas that make up the common curriculum for all schools in Queensland. These are:
	• literacy;
	• numeracy;
	• futures; and
	• lifeskills.
	The paper states that its audience is primarily curriculum developers, and secondarily, teachers in schools and universities. The paper assumes that there are four fundamental life roles: growing and developing as an individual; living with and relating to other people; managing resources; and receiving from and contributing to local, state, national and global communities.
	The paper is wary of stating outright the values or virtues that these roles require, but nevertheless, organises the practical and reflective performance of the skills required into personal development skills, social skills, self-management skills, and citizenship skills.
	It claims that there are "a number of views" on issues such as caring and family and community relationships; cultural and multicultural understanding and experiences; social justice and human rights; and ethical decision-making and action. It regards the lifeskills involved in these four life roles as "innumerable and infinitely variable". However, it states that value judgments about appropriate and inappropriate expressions of lifeskills have to be made, and that values may be used as objects of study in themselves.
	The paper advises that lifeskills, as an integrative element of the core curriculum, is based on the educational, democratic and ethical values reflected in the Queensland School Curriculum Council's Vision Statement, involving respect for life, reasoning, fairness, the welfare of others, diversity, peaceful resolution of conflict, justice, responsibility, freedom, honesty, integrity and ecologically sustainable development.
	The stance of the position paper on gender is nowhere clear. Gender does get a mention, but the context leaves interpretations wide open:
	References in [QSSC's] Vision Statement to 'living out concern for social justice and human rights' and involving students in 'actions to promote personal health and well-being' *suggest that personal development skills must include, among other things*, an understanding of how one's own and other people's personal identities, and other aspects of growth and development are shaped, by factors such as gender, disability, race, culture, religion, economic status and ethnic background.
	It is significant here that the Lifeskills Position Paper has to draw on reference to another paper, higher up in the policy hierarchy, the QSCC Vision Statement, to draw out a context for gender issues, and then only when couched in terms that avoid taking an authoritative stance. Even this reference can only provide a *suggestion* that gender should be taken into account.

	The elaborations on the skills to be developed within the curriculum are equally tentative. These lists of skills contain skills critical to this project e.g.,
	• developing an ethically sensitive and healthy approach to sexuality and sexual orientations
	• identifying, critically reflecting on and managing ways in which cultural, racial, gender, economic status and other factors shape personal identities, life chances and opportunities;
	• displaying imaginative, creative, responsible, and practical expressions of caring, sympathetic and empathetic relationships with other people;
	• acting ethically by recognising the rights, needs, and viewpoints of others ; identifying, critically reflecting on and managing ways in which cultural, racial, gender, economic status and other factors help shape community values, standards of behaviour, paid and unpaid work practices, welfare policies and practices.
	However, the paper states that these are "examples" of skills that curriculum developers "may draw on".
State Government Policy framework: *Coordinating efforts to address violence against women: The CEAVAW Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2002-2005*	This framework includes a policy statement; protocols setting out the roles and responsibilities of all nominated state government agencies' roles and responsibilities in relation to violence against women, and actions that each agency will take in relation to communication and coordination; best practice; and policy, planning and service development. The framework requires all agencies nominated to report on an annual basis. The statement was produced by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in 2002. The roles and responsibilities of Education Queensland are captured in the summary statement:
	The Department has a key responsibility in education for non-violent relationships and communities and in meeting the needs of students who may be at educational risk due to experiences of domestic violence.
	In the elaborations of this statement, the document states that Education Queensland:
	Provides educational programs, as part of mainstream curriculum for all students, that contribute to the prevention of violence against women and challenge attitudes to gender which support violence.
	This document constitutes state government policy on violence against women and girls. It has had little publicity across Education Queensland schools. It purports to have an audit capacity.
National Safe Schools Framework	This Framework, recently endorsed by MCEETYA, establishes an agreed national approach to help schools and their communities address issues of bullying, harassment, violence, and child abuse and neglect. The aim of the framework is to assist all school communities in building safe and supportive schools where:
	• bullying, harassment and violence are minimised;
	• students receive support on issues related to child abuse and neglect.
	It promotes a shared vision of physical and emotional safety, recognising the need for approaches that include an appreciation of the ways in which social attitudes, and values impact on the behaviour of students in our school communities.
	The guiding principles reflect those of many gender equity and cultural diversity policies, inasfar as they call for processes that engage the whole community; strong leadership; statements of roles and responsibilities that are explicit, clearly understood and disseminated; recognise the critical importance of pre-service and professional development; the provision of opportunities for students to learn through the formal curriculum knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for positive relationships; and a focus on policies that are proactive and

oriented towards prevention and intervention.

A significant addition to this list, not as familiar as those noted above, is the call for taking action to protect children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

The framework sets out key elements of a school strategy for prevention of, and responding to bullying, harassment and violence. These elements take account of the abuse of power, and preventative education. Importantly, the elements refer to implementation of effective curricula, programmes and pedagogy that enable students to make use of empowering processes that increase safety and provide students with the means to solve their own problems and learn important lifelong relationship and citizenship skills.

Students are explicitly encouraged to:

- value diversity;

- contribute positively to the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others;

- act independently, justly, cooperatively and responsibly in school, work, civic and family relationships;

- contribute to the implementation of appropriate strategies that create and maintain a safe and supportive learning environment.

The framework has the potential to support education for healthy gender relationships, in that it emphasises the need for

- establishing active, trusting relations among teachers, parents, students and community;

- programs empowering students to participate in a positive inclusive school culture;

- agreed definitions, related to consequences of bullying, harassment and violence;

- an explicit aim of eliminating child abuse;

- dissemination of policies, programmes and procedures across the whole school;

- sensitivities in all activities to the diversity of students, parents and community;

- targeted programs for students at risk;

- pre-service and in-service training for all staff on identification of discrimination as they relate to gender, race, sexuality, disability and other factors, including the effects of harassment, and understanding of the methods required to eliminate harassment and bullying; recognition of indicators of child abuse and neglect;

- effective curricula, programmes and pedagogy to enable students to make use of empowering processes that increase safety and provide students with the means to solve their own problems and learn important lifelong relationship and citizenship skills.

The document is important in that it draws from a wide range of programs and reviews to distil the essential components of successful programs for building healthy, non-violent relationships. It is also highly significant in that it acknowledge the need for students to understand the use of power in relationships, a concept that is a fundamental underpinning of most legislation and policy on gendered violence.

The framework notes the need for age-appropriate curriculum content and pedagogy relating to bullying, harassment, and violence, enabling students to learn, for example the skills for forming and maintaining positive, non-coercive relationships. This includes how to identify and address prejudice and discrimination as they relate to gender, race, sexuality, disability and other factors.

It needs to be noted, however, that the above list constitutes *suggested* elements of a successful program. Two supporting documents, an implementation manual, and a resource

	pack, support the above elements by including them in a professional development introduction to the framework, and providing the planning tools for implementation of the framework in schools.
Bullying No Way	This website, developed and managed by EQ on behalf of the MCEETYA Student Learning and Support Services Taskforce, is an important support for counteracting bullying and harassment, and for developing healthy relations. Gender issues are dealt with in a range of contexts, accessible by students, parents and teachers. The significance of this resource may increase with the introduction of the National Safe Schools Framework.
Programs at local school level	It is difficult to find comprehensive information about how individual schools are addressing the issue of healthy gender relations. However, school-community level projects noted in the national review of Partnerships Against Domestic Violence include summaries of projects in Townsville, Logan and Toowoomba.
Townsville project.	In Townsville, the North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service (NQDVRS) worked with young people to develop a resource to assist agencies in violence prevention work. Project workers enlisted young people at Townsville State High School, Northern Beaches State High School, Bwgcolman Community School (Palm Island), and the Open Youth Project to explore the concepts of non-violence through film. The film was produced as *Non-violence: What's it all about?* It deals with issues of healthy relationships, definitions of domestic violence and non-violence, culture, choices, lifestyle and the effects of violence. The subsequent resource kit is composed of a video and discussion guide for use with children and youth from age twelve, to introduce them to ways of discussing a topic about which school is generally silent. The materials include diverse cultural perspectives, with large components contributed by Indigenous young people.
Logan Beaudesert Project	In the Logan Beaudesert area, a project involving Youth and Family Services (Logan City), and the Logan River Valley Integrated Community Response network of organisations worked with a group of 10-14 year old boys who had witnessed domestic violence in their family. Facilitators worked with seven groups of 4-8 boys over an 8-week program. The project processes drew from the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence report *Kids and DV* by Leslie Gevers. The project dealt with issues such as the boys' sense of guilt, and their need to connect with other young people with similar experiences of family violence. The products of these workshops have been incorporated into training programs for community workers.
Toowoomba Project	In Toowoomba, the Kids Help Kids project involved an alliance in 2000-2001 between schools and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre (DVRC) to raise money for camps for families affected by domestic violence. The children raised money through a free dress day, and the DVRC provided workshops for students and staff during Domestic Violence Week.