

# Searching for the perfect victim

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....when systems and institutions let women  
down.

# Research and Policy Context

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- Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2009-2021
- National Plan to reduce violence against women and their children
- Not Now, Not Ever Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland

# Integrated Response

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“agencies forming shared arrangements at a strategic level, and intensive case management based on shared protocols and data sharing arrangements at the frontline level for frontline workers”

QCOSS 2009, in Not Now, Not Ever 2015

# Cracks in the system: Case studies and common themes

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- Inappropriate police response
- Incident not recorded at all, or recorded incorrectly
- Incorrect or incomplete police response compounded in court
- Identifying the victim as the perpetrator
- Lack of appropriate referral

# Cracks in the system: Case studies and common themes

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- 2/3 women were Aboriginal
- 2/3 women were unemployed or on a pension
- 2/3 women had a previous poor experience with police or courts
- All had a previous history of domestic violence with previous partners

# Integrated Responses: Opportunities and Challenges

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- Common risk assessment tools
- Common definitions for domestic and family violence
- Common training packages

To be applied across services, police and courts as well as across states and territories to work towards addressing the current inconsistent and uneven responses.

# Integrated Responses: Opportunities and Challenges

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- Developing tools and training – whose voices are heard?
- Creating space for change from the bottom up – models and practice tools - valuing lived experience, the consumer movement and models of peer support (or returning to second wave feminist roots)
- Where is it working?

# Conclusion

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*The modern history of family violence is not the story of changing responses to a constant problem but, in large part, of redefinition of the problem itself*

*Linda Gordon 1988, pp. 27-28*