



Submission to the  
Senate Standing Committees on  
Finance and Public  
Administration's Inquiry into  
*Domestic violence in Australia*



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# Submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration's Inquiry into *Domestic violence in Australia*

## ABOUT THE ONE IN THREE CAMPAIGN

One in Three is a diverse group of male and female professionals – academics, researchers, social workers, psychologists, counsellors and trainers. The Campaign aims to raise public awareness of the existence and needs of male victims of family violence and abuse; to work with government and non-government services alike to provide assistance to male victims; and to reduce the incidence and impacts of family violence on Australian men, women and children.

## INTRODUCTION

We welcome this opportunity to provide input into the Senate Standing Committees on Finance and Public Administration's Inquiry into *Domestic violence in Australia*.

Domestic violence is a serious and deeply entrenched problem in Australia. It has significant impacts upon the lives of men, women and children. It knows no boundaries of gender, geography, socio-economic status, age, ability, sexual preference, culture, race or religion. Thankfully reducing family violence against women and children has been firmly on the agendas of government for many years. Now is the time to move to the next, more sophisticated stage of tackling the problem: recognising men as victims as well.

## Executive summary

1. At least one in three victims of family violence and abuse is male. There are few services available to assist them.
2. Male victims of intimate partner abuse and their children suffer a range of consequences, such as psychological distress, suicide ideation, impaired self-concept and loss of work.
3. The existence of male victims and female perpetrators needs to be acknowledged by government legislation, policy and programs.
4. 'Patriarchy' is not a factor contributing to present levels of family violence.

**"She reduced me to a state of total powerlessness. I couldn't function as a husband, as a father. I did everything she wanted and got abused for it. The more I gave in to her the more she destroyed me. I became like a little man just towing the line. I had to ask permission to go and see a friend. I was just her slave in the relationship."**

**Nigel**



5. Differences often claimed between the male and female experience of family violence aren't based upon evidence.
6. The provision of perpetrator programs needs to be Australia-wide. Community health counselling services are the logical provider.
7. The psychosocial counselling needs of perpetrators must be met. This is rarely the case in groups based on the Duluth model.
8. Domestic and family violence policy needs to recognise all victims and perpetrators, including children, carers and extended family members.
9. We recommend this inquiry seriously consider adopting many of the recommendations of the recent NSW Government Domestic Violence Inquiry as pertains to male victims of family violence.
10. Current and previous partners are the least frequent perpetrators of violence against women.
11. Gender-profiling of offenders and victims in legislation must be removed.
12. Domestic violence screening tools should be expanded to include men as well as women.
13. Gay males are being discriminated against because of the lack of services for male victims of family violence.

**“I’ve put myself in my own prison because I don’t want to have any interaction with society any more. I feel too vile, too dirty, because the mainstream of society says this kind of behaviour from a woman is OK”**

**Kevin**

## Definitions

This submission uses the term *family violence* where appropriate instead of the term *domestic violence* for the following reasons:

- (a) Much contemporary state and federal policy and legislation prefers the term *family violence*
- (b) The term *family violence* captures many relevant forms of interpersonal violence in the home that are excluded by the term *domestic violence*, such as child abuse, carer violence, violence between siblings, violence by children against their parents, and violence between other extended family members.
- (c) It would be discriminatory to deny protection from violence in the home to certain persons just because their relationship with the perpetrator of the violence is not one of intimate partner.

## Male victims of family violence

The rationale for government funding being directed to services for male perpetrators and women and children victims of violence is often given as, “men make up such a small percentage of victims of family violence that services should focus on the majority of clients: women and children.”

One of our colleagues works as an Occupational Therapist at a NSW Local Area Health Service. She attended a compulsory training session for all NSW Health workers covering the use of a NSW Health domestic violence screening tool. The following is a direct transcription from the presentation:

*Presenter:* “Well, you will encounter gender issues, obviously, throughout the whole of society. But around domestic violence, because, well as you know, because over 90 per cent, something like 98 or 97 per cent of perpetrators are male in our society, NSW Health decided to focus their Domestic Violence Policy on women, because we only have so much time and resources.”



Firstly, it should be noted here that a NSW Government employee is giving staff misinformation about the gender breakdown of domestic violence. There is absolutely no evidence showing that “something like 98 or 97 per cent of perpetrators are male.” The most conservative recent estimates<sup>1</sup> (from police reports, which do not cover the vast majority of male victims who never report their assaults<sup>2</sup>) show that 82 per cent of offenders in NSW between 2001 and 2010 were male, while 30.8 per cent (almost one in three) victims of domestic assault were male.

Secondly, this rationale is never presented when talking about services for any other sub-population. For example, gay and lesbian (GLBTI) or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of family violence aren't ignored because they make up a small minority of victims. To the contrary: there are specialist services available for these sub-groups precisely because they are in the minority and need services tailored to their specific needs and circumstances. The same is true of male victims of family violence. It doesn't matter whether males make up 5 per cent, 15 per cent, 35 per cent or 50 per cent of victims of family violence, the fact is that there are few services currently available to assist them. This flies in the face of our international human rights and equal opportunity obligations.

The following statistics demonstrate that at least one in three victims of family violence is male (perhaps as many as one in two). This figure includes assaults by both male and female perpetrators, and includes family members as well as intimate partners. When reading these quantitative statistics it should be remembered that family violence is extremely complex and doesn't just boil down to 'who does what to whom and how badly.' The context of the violence and abuse is extremely important. Serious abuse can occur without the use or threat of physical violence. Please refer to [oneinthree.com.au/faqs](http://oneinthree.com.au/faqs) or read the Fact Sheet appendices for a more detailed and nuanced analysis of family violence and abuse.

“I was petrified to come home from work and would see her car in the drive and have to drive away and sit for an hour or so by myself to prepare for the likely barrage to come. I lived in terror walking on eggshells around her for nigh on 20 years. I attempted suicide a number of times.”

**Dan**

<sup>1</sup> Grech, K. and Burgess, M. (2011). Trends and patterns in domestic violence assaults: 2001 to 2010. NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney. Retrieved 6th September 2011 from [http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll\\_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar\\_mr\\_bb61](http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar_mr_bb61)

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013, Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2012, cat no 4906.0, ABS, Canberra. <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4906.0>. Also Dal Grande, E., Woollacott, T., Taylor, A., Starr, G., Anastassiadis, K., Ben-Tovim, D., et al. (2001). Interpersonal violence and abuse survey, september 1999 . Adelaide: Epidemiology Branch, Dept. of Human Services. Retrieved September 21, 2009, from <http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pros/portals/0/interpersonal-violence-survey.pdf>. Also Statistics Canada (2009, October). Family violence in canada: A statistical profile 2009. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Ministry of Industry. Retrieved August 29, 2010, from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2009000-eng.pdf>. Also MacLeod, P., Kinver, A., Page, L., & Iliasov, A. (2009, December). 2008-09 scottish crime and justice survey: Partner abuse. Edinburgh: The Scottish Government. Retrieved January 15, 2010, from <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/296149/0092065.pdf>.



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### ***a. The prevalence and impact of domestic violence in Australia as it affects all Australians***

#### **Recent statistics showing the prevalence of family violence in Australia as it affects male victims**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 4906.0 - Personal Safety, Australia, 2012 (2013)<sup>3</sup> is the largest and most recent survey of violence in Australia. It found that:

- one in three victims of current partner violence during the last 12 months (33.3%) and since the age of 15 (33.5%) were male
- more than one in three victims of emotional abuse by a partner during the last 12 months (37.1%) and since the age of 15 (36.3%) were male. Around half of these men experienced anxiety or fear due to the abuse
- at least one in three victims of stalking during the last 12 months (34.2%) were male
- around one in three victims of physical violence by a boyfriend/girlfriend or date since the age of 15 (32.1%) were male
- more than one in three victims of physical and/or sexual abuse before the age of 15 (39.0%) were male
- the rate of men reporting current partner violence since the age of 15 almost doubled (a rise of 175%) since 2005 (an estimated 119,600 men reported such violence in 2012)
- the rate of men reporting dating violence since the age of 15 also rose by 140% since the 2005 survey
- the rate of men reporting current partner violence in the 12 months prior to interview quadrupled (a rise of 394%), however these estimates are considered too unreliable for general use because of the small number of men interviewed for the 2005 survey (the ABS surveyed 11,800 females but only 4,500 males in 2005 - a sampling gender bias that worsened in the 2012 survey, where only 22% of respondents were male)
- the vast majority of perpetrators of dating and partner violence against men were female - only 6 or 7% of incidents involved same-sex violence
- men were less than half as likely as women to have told anybody about partner violence, to have sought advice or support, or to have contacted the police.

“Poor dad. I had seen him walking naked in the back yard at night all upset and embarrassed; and I had seen him crawling under the bed to escape her vicious attacks, and I have seen him nursing his fresh wounds in the toilet, and he would say no word against her.”

**Son talking about parents**

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013, Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2012, cat no 4906.0, ABS, Canberra.

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4906.0>. Significant problems with this survey include, (a) only female interviewers were used, and (b) a much smaller sample of male informants was used compared to female informants.



The previous edition of this survey, 4906.0 - Personal Safety, Australia, 2005 (Reissue) (2006) also found that<sup>4</sup>:

- 28 per cent (around one in three) people who experienced physical assault by an intimate partner (current partner, previous partner, boyfriend, girlfriend or date) in the last 12 months were male
- 29.8 per cent (almost one in three) victims of current partner violence since the age of 15 were male
- 24.4 per cent (almost one in four) victims of previous partner violence since the age of 15 were male
- There were no statistically significant differences in the prevalence rates between women and men experiencing physical assault by known perpetrators in the last 12 months (2.6% or 198,500 women and 2.7% or 213,100 men).

The SA Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Survey (1999)<sup>5</sup> found that 32.3 per cent (almost one in three) victims of reported domestic violence by a current or ex-partner (including both physical and emotional violence and abuse) were male.

The Crime Prevention Survey (2001)<sup>6</sup> surveyed young people aged 12 to 20 and found that:

- while 23 per cent of young people were aware of physical domestic violence against their mothers or step-mothers by their fathers or step-fathers, an almost identical proportion (22 per cent) of young people were aware of physical domestic violence against their fathers or step-fathers by their mothers or step-mothers
- Much more common and damaging than either male-to-female or female-to-male unilateral violence was mutual (or reciprocal) couple violence. When looking at the effects of young people witnessing domestic violence, the survey was unequivocal: “the most severe disruption on all available indicators occurred in households where couple violence was reported” (i.e. two-way couple violence).
- Considering physical violence only, nearly a third (31.2%) of young people had witnessed one of the following: a male carer being violent towards his female partner; a female carer being violent to her male partner; or both carers being violent.
- 14.4% of young people reported that this violence was perpetrated both by the male against the female and the female against the male. 9.0% reported that violence was perpetrated against their mother by her male partner but that she was not violent towards him. 7.8% reported that violence was perpetrated against their father by his female partner but that he was not violent towards her.
- Witnessing parental domestic violence had a significant effect on young people’s attitudes and experiences. Witnessing was also the strongest predictor of subsequent perpetration by young people. The best predictor of perpetration was witnessing certain types of *female to male* violence, whilst the best predictor of victimisation in personal relationships was having witnessed *male to female* violence<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Graphs of this data can be viewed at [http://menshealthaustralia.net/files/PSS\\_Charts\\_v2.0.pdf](http://menshealthaustralia.net/files/PSS_Charts_v2.0.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Dal Grande, E., Woollacott, T., Taylor, A., Starr, G., Anastassiadis, K., Ben-Tovim, D., et al. (2001). Interpersonal violence and abuse survey, September 1999. Adelaide: Epidemiology Branch, Dept. of Human Services. Retrieved September 21, 2009, from <http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pros/portals/0/interpersonal-violence-survey.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> National Crime Prevention (2001). Young people and domestic violence: national research on young people's attitudes to and experiences of domestic violence. Barton: Attorney-General's Dept. Retrieved September 21, 2009, from <http://www.crimeprevention.gov.au/agd/WWW/ncphome.nsf/Page/Publications>

<sup>7</sup> In order to break the cycle of violence we must work to prevent female to male family and domestic violence in order that young people don't grow up to perpetrate violence themselves in their adult relationships.



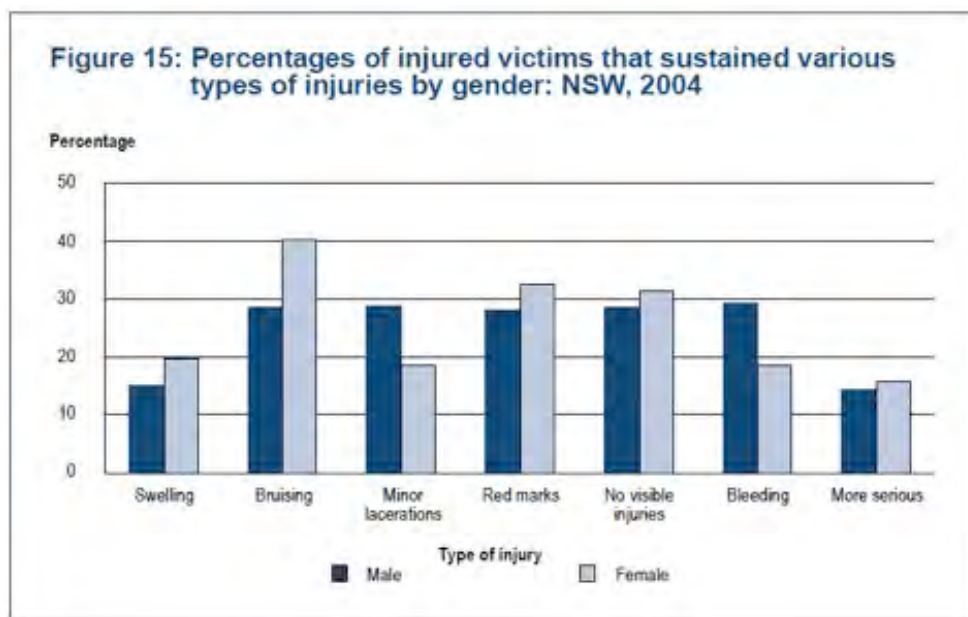


- An almost identical proportion of young females (16 per cent) and young males (15 per cent) answered “yes” to the statement “I’ve experienced domestic violence”
- many forms of conflict/violence - including many at the severe end of the spectrum - were experienced at similar rates by young males and females (e.g. ‘threw something at you’, ‘kicked, bit or hit you’, ‘hit, or tried to hit you with something’, ‘beat you up’, ‘threatened you with a knife or gun’, ‘used a knife or fired a gun’, and ‘physically forced you to have sex’).
- young people were more likely to say a woman is right to, or has good reason to, respond to a situation by hitting (68%), than a man in the same situation (49%)
- while males hitting females was seen, by virtually all young people surveyed, to be unacceptable, it appeared to be quite acceptable for a girl to hit a boy. 25 per cent of young people agreed with the statement “When girl hits a guy, it’s really not a big deal”.

“Almost everything I did that wasn’t done with her constituted a threat to her. By the end of the relationship I had no friends. I had no outside activities. I had nothing, because everything that I was interested in, every friendship I had, threatened her. She would make things so difficult for my friends that they just drifted away.”

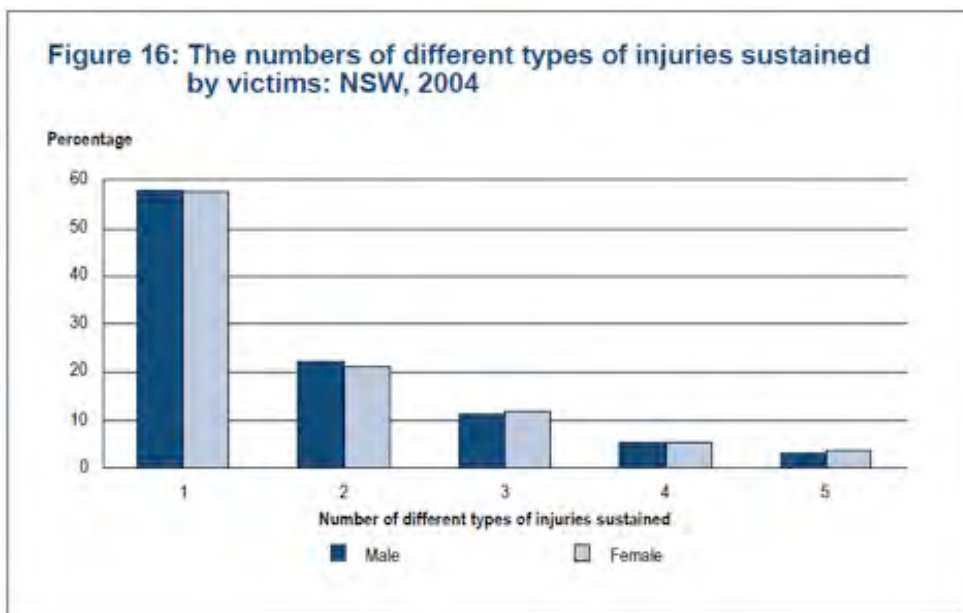
Scott

The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR, 2005)<sup>8</sup> found that between 1997 and 2004, 28.9 per cent (almost one in three) victims of domestic assault in NSW were male. Men and women suffered similar percentages of injuries and similar injury types as illustrated below. The latest (2010)<sup>9</sup> figures show that 30.8% (almost one in three) victims of assault - domestic violence related offences recorded by NSW Police were male.



<sup>8</sup> People, J. (2005). Trends and patterns in domestic violence assaults. Crime and Justice Bulletin, 89. Retrieved September 21, 2009, from [http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll\\_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar\\_mr\\_cjb89](http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar_mr_cjb89)

<sup>9</sup> Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2010). NSW Recorded Crime Statistics 2010 (Excel spreadsheet). Retrieved April 20, 2011, from [http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll\\_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/NewSouthWales.xls/\\$file/NewSouthWales.xls](http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/NewSouthWales.xls/$file/NewSouthWales.xls).



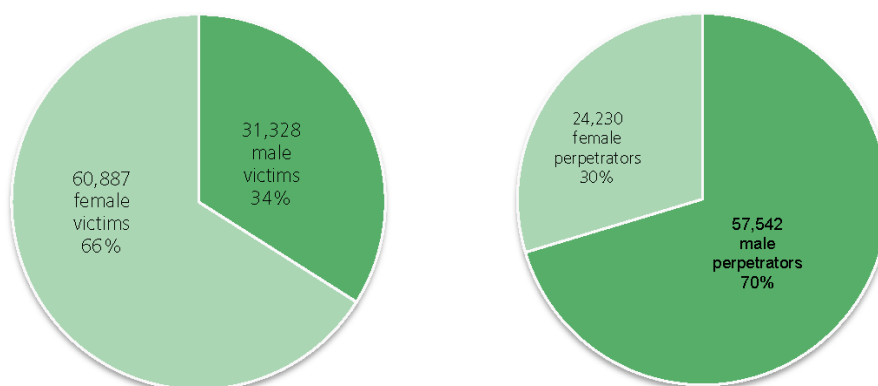
BOCSAR also examined trends and characteristics of domestic homicides in NSW over the period January 2003 to June 2008<sup>10</sup>. During this time, there were 215 victims of domestic homicide; 115 females and 100 males (almost one in two victims were male). Intimate partners were responsible for 43 per cent of domestic homicide victims (70 females and 23 males - one in four were male).

The NSW Auditor General<sup>11</sup> found that 34% (more than one in three) domestic and family violence incidents recorded by Police in 2010 involved male victims and 30% (almost one in three) involved female perpetrators.

**“Her sexual violation of my reluctant body had no name. Her demands were not simply an occasional inconsiderate insistence. This was a remorseless and frightening menace.”**

**Alan**

**Exhibit 1: Gender and domestic and family violence incidents recorded by Police in 2010**



Source: NSW Police Force 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Weatherburn, D. (2011). Domestic homicide in NSW, January 2003 – June 2008 (media release). NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney. Retrieved 6th September 2011 from [http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll\\_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar\\_mr\\_bb42](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar_mr_bb42)

<sup>11</sup> Audit Office of New South Wales (2011). New South Wales Auditor-General's Report: Responding to Domestic and Family Violence, Performance Audit. Retrieved May 17, 2013, from [http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/143/Responding\\_to\\_Domestic\\_Family\\_Violence\\_Full\\_Report.pdf.aspx](http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/143/Responding_to_Domestic_Family_Violence_Full_Report.pdf.aspx).



The Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (2005)<sup>12</sup> found that 32.6 per cent (almost one in three) victims of family violence reported to police were male.

The Australian Institute of Criminology (2013)<sup>13</sup> found that 39% (two in five) victims of domestic homicide and 27% (almost one in three) victims of intimate partner homicide between 2008-2010 were male.

The Victorian Victims Support Agency (2012)<sup>14</sup> found that in 2009-10, 36% (more than one in three) persons admitted to Victorian Public Hospitals for family violence injuries were male.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2012)<sup>15</sup> found that 45.4% (more than one in two) victims of hospitalised family violence (from a spouse or domestic partner, parent or other family member) in Australia from 2002-03 to 2004-05 were male.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (1999)<sup>16</sup> observed that, post-separation, fairly similar proportions of men (55 per cent) and women (62 per cent) reported experiencing physical violence including threats by their former spouse. Emotional abuse was reported by 84 per cent of women and 75 per cent of men.

A University of Melbourne / La Trobe University study (1999)<sup>17</sup> found that men were just as likely to report being physically assaulted by their partners as women. Further, women and men were about equally likely to admit being violent themselves. Men and women also reported experiencing about the same levels of pain and need for medical attention resulting from domestic violence.

An extensive study of dominance and symmetry in partner violence by male and female university students in 32 nations by Murray Straus (2008)<sup>18</sup> found that, in Australia, 14 per cent of physical violence between dating partners during the previous 12 months was perpetrated by males only, 21 per cent by females only and 64.9 per cent was mutual violence (where both partners used violence against each other).

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<sup>12</sup> Crime and Misconduct Commission (2005, March). Policing domestic violence in Queensland: meeting the challenges. Brisbane: Crime and Misconduct Commission. Retrieved October 14, 2009, from <http://www.cmc.qld.gov.au/data/portal/00000005/content/73653001131400781353.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Chan, A., & Payne, J. (2013). Homicide in Australia: 2008-09 to 2009-10 National Homicide Monitoring Program annual report. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. Retrieved March 3, 2013, from [http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/mr/21-40/mr21/04\\_homicide.html](http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/mr/21-40/mr21/04_homicide.html)

<sup>14</sup> Victims Support Agency (2012). Victorian Family Violence Database Volume 5: Eleven-year Trend Report. Melbourne: Victorian Government Department of Justice. Retrieved September 17, 2012, from <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/crime/research+and+statistics/victorian+family+violence+database+volume+5+eleven-year+trend+analysis+1999-2010>

<sup>15</sup> Pointer, S. & Kreisfeld, R. (2012). Hospitalised interpersonal violence and perpetrator coding, Australia, 2002-05. Injury research and statistics series no. 77. Cat. no. INJCAT 153. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Retrieved May 17, 2013, from <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=60129542324>

<sup>16</sup> Wolcott, I., & Hughes, J. (1999). Towards understanding the reasons for divorce. Australian Institute of Family Studies, Working Paper, 20. Retrieved November 1, 2009, from <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/wolcott6.html>

<sup>17</sup> Headey, B., Scott, D., & de Vaus, D. (1999). Domestic violence in Australia: are women and men equally violent? Australian Monitor, 2(3). Retrieved November 7, 2009, from <http://www.mensrights.com.au/page13y.htm>

<sup>18</sup> Straus, M. A. (2008). Dominance and symmetry in partner violence by male and female university students in 32 nations. Children and Youth Services Review, 30, 252-275. Retrieved November 7, 2009, from <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2/ID41-PR41-Dominance-symmetry-In-Press-07.pdf>



The Queensland Government Department of Communities (2009)<sup>19</sup> reported that 40 per cent of domestic and family violence protection orders issued by the Magistrate Court were issued to protect males.

A study of risk factors for recent domestic physical assault in patients presenting to the emergency department of Adelaide hospitals (2004)<sup>20</sup> found that 7 per cent of male patients and 10 per cent of female patients had experienced domestic physical assault. This finding shows that over one in three victims were male (39.7 per cent).

The Australian Institute of Family Studies' evaluation of the 2006 family law reforms (2009)<sup>21</sup> found that 39 per cent (more than one in three) victims of physical hurt before separation were male; and 48 per cent (almost one in two) victims of emotional abuse before or during separation were male.

A study of relationship aggression, violence and self-regulation in Australian newlywed couples by researchers at the University of Queensland (2010)<sup>22</sup> found that female violence was more common than male violence, with 76 women (20 per cent) and 34 men (9 per cent) reporting to have been violent. In violent couples the most common pattern was for only the woman to be violent (n=48/82 or 59 per cent of violent couples), next most common was violence by both partners (n=28, 34 per cent), and least common was male-only violence (n=6, 7 per cent).

Halford et al conducted Australian research in 2011<sup>23</sup> on intimate partner violence (IPV) in couples seeking relationship education for the transition to parenthood and found that in 19% of couples both partners perpetrated IPV, in 12% only the woman had perpetrated IPV, and in 3% only the man had perpetrated IPV.

“So I've ended up on a disability pension, a \$400 car, a couple of boxes of books and sleeping on a friend's couch in a small one-bedroom flat. At 61 it's all over”

Robin

## Recent research showing the *impact* of intimate partner abuse in Australia as it affects male victims

The most recent qualitative study of the impact of intimate partner abuse on male victims was conducted in 2010 by Emily Tilbrook, Alfred Allan and Greg Dear from the Psychology Department at Edith Cowan University. Titled *Intimate Partner Abuse of Men*, the full study can be accessed at [www.oneinthree.com.au/storage/pdfs/ECU\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.oneinthree.com.au/storage/pdfs/ECU_Final_Report.pdf). Here is the executive summary:

### **INTIMATE PARTNER ABUSE OF MEN: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In this research we sought to explore men's experiences as victims of intimate partner abuse (IPA). Our main objective was to gather data to guide policy makers and service providers in improving services to male victims of intimate partner

<sup>19</sup> Queensland Government Department of Communities (2009, October 9). Domestic and family violence orders: number and type of order by gender, Queensland, 2004-05 to 2008-09. [Letter]. Retrieved October 31, 2009, from [http://www.menshealthaustralia.net/files/Magistrates\\_Court\\_data\\_on\\_QLD\\_DVOs.pdf](http://www.menshealthaustralia.net/files/Magistrates_Court_data_on_QLD_DVOs.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Stuart, P. (2004). Risk factors for recent domestic physical assault in patients presenting to the emergency department. *Emergency Medicine Australasia*, 16(3), 216-224.

<sup>21</sup> Kaspiew, R., Gray, M., Weston, R., Moloney, L., Hand, K., & Qu, L. (2009, December). Evaluation of the 2006 family law reforms. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies. Retrieved July 5, 2010, from <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/file/evaluationreport.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Halford, W. K., Farrugia, C., Lizzio, A., & Wilson, K. (2010). Relationship aggression, violence and self-regulation in Australian newlywed couples. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 62(2), 82-92.

<sup>23</sup> Halford, W. K., Petch, J., Creedy, D. K., & Gamble, J. (2011). Intimate partner violence in couples seeking relationship education for the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy*, 10(2), 152-168.



abuse. A secondary aim was to guide researchers in how to facilitate men's disclosure of intimate partner abuse experiences in large-scale epidemiological studies.

The research was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved a qualitative exploration of male victims' experiences, focussing on factors that influence deciding whether or not to disclose the abuse. The second stage involved a survey of 198 service providers across a range of health, welfare, and justice fields.

In Stage One, data were collected from three populations: men who reported that they were abused by their partners (n=15); significant persons in the lives of such men (n=5); and individuals who provide services to such men (n=8). A major limitation of this stage was that we failed to engage men younger than 33, Aboriginal men, gay men, and men from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Nonetheless, the data collected are rich in what they reveal about Anglo-Australian male victims of intimate partner abuse where the perpetrator is female.

We employed a grounded theory approach in order to set aside pre-existing theoretical and philosophical assumptions about men's experiences of abuse and to allow a conceptual framework to emerge from our data.

The categories of abuse reported by Stage One participants were consistent with those found in the family violence literature. However, we also identified one form of abuse that has not been researched before. We labelled this legal-administrative abuse. Legal-administrative abuse involves a person using legitimate services in a way that abuses the rights of others. Spiritual abuse was mentioned by one participant but did not emerge as a reportable theme in Stage One.

The data suggest that women who reportedly abuse their intimate male partners are likely to abuse other people as well (e.g., their children friends of their partners) and the abuse is sometimes part of a wider pattern of antisocial behaviour.

It is impossible to draw conclusions about the aetiology of the reported abuse, but factors that were mentioned by participants as leading to or causing the abuse were: female abusers' use of substances, female abusers' mental health problems, the female abuser having grown up in a dysfunctional family, learning that abusive behaviour is rewarding, the female abuser having a history of psychological trauma, and the female abuser having a high need for control. Participants also speculated that males who are victims of such abuse might be vulnerable to becoming involved in abusive relationships due to their personality, upbringing or physical condition. We emphasise that these are the speculations of our participants, and that much research is needed before we can state a clear position on the causes of female to male intimate partner abuse.

The data suggest that male victims of intimate partner abuse and their children suffer a range of consequences, such as psychological distress (including psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety disorders), suicidal ideation, impaired self-concept (in particular around one's sense of masculinity), and loss of work.

Despite those impacts, participants reported that men are reluctant to disclose what is happening to them or to seek help. The reasons for this are complex. The major factors appear to be men's denial of what is happening; their fear that they will not be believed, and their fear that even if they are believed they will not be assisted or will be blamed for the abuse. Participants believed that men would find it easier to seek help and disclose the abuse if there were greater public acknowledgement that males can also be victims of abuse, if there were appropriate services for men, and if they were confident that they will be given effective help.

In Stage Two we sought to clarify and extend the data gathered in Stage One by conducting a structured (set questions) survey of service providers from a range of services (health, welfare, counselling, police, legal, pastoral, etc.). Due to the

**“She not only destroyed me when we were together, but stopping me from seeing the kids - my life was not worth living then”**

**Steve**



absence of men under 30, men in same sex relationships, Indigenous Australian men, and men from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups in Stage One, the survey instrument did not contain questions specifically relevant to these groups.

There were seven main findings of note from Stage Two. First, a high proportion of service providers (81%) reported that in the previous 12 months they had provided services to at least one man who reported being a victim of intimate partner abuse. Second, service providers indicated moderate agreement with the definitions of different categories of abuse that we provided, with the main addition to those definitions being that power and control and fear and intimidation should be explicit within them. In short, different categories of abuse should not only be defined by the actions involved in that form of abuse but also by the intimidation that is caused or intended by those actions and by the control that the abuser attempts to exert over the victim.

The third major finding is that service providers reported that the types of barriers to disclosure that we identified in Stage One were, to varying degrees, relevant to the men who they had worked with. Over 80% of service providers reported observing in their work barriers such as a sense of shame, fear of not being believed, and an expectation of gender-bias. These are the most critical factors that service providers and agencies need to remove in order to assist male victims to disclose their abuse.

Fourth, participants identified some additional barriers to those that we identified in Stage One, such as the psychological health of the victim, when the victim is both perpetrator and victim, and a perceived heterosexist bias among service providers. Fifth, a high proportion of participants reported having observed the facilitating factors identified in Stage One operating in the lives of the men they had seen.

The sixth major finding is that participants rated themselves and their agencies as only moderately effective in (1) overcoming the barriers to men disclosing and (2) harnessing the factors that facilitate disclosure. This is an issue that needs further exploration. If participants' perceptions on this issue are accurate, then there is a lot of work needed in terms of training and service design if agencies are to be effective in assisting men to disclose abuse. In relation to this matter, participants suggested that more public education and health promotion campaigns would be an important part of addressing some of the barriers to men disclosing the abuse they have suffered. The limited degree of acknowledgement that men can be victims of intimate partner abuse was a major problem that participants identified within both the health and welfare service fields and within the general community.

The seventh major finding from Stage Two is that a similar range of services that are currently available to women (although many would argue are insufficiently available) were identified by participants as being required for an effective service response to the needs of men. These include, counselling and support services, gender-sensitive services (services specifically for men), accommodation services, help-lines and crisis response, community education and prevention programmes, and specialist family violence services for diverse sections of the male population (e.g., men in same sex relationships, Aboriginal men).

**“I thought of my options...  
Leave? I could not  
abandon my kids. I would  
rather have died, and  
thought of it”**

**Alan**

Based on our findings we make the following recommendations:

1. That government funded public awareness campaigns be conducted to raise awareness of intimate partner violence against men. Such campaigns need to be very carefully designed so as to complement campaigns about family violence against women and children and not to damage the effectiveness of those campaigns.
2. Consideration should be given to providing publicly-funded services specifically for male victims of IPA.





3. Consideration should be given to how services for male victims of IPA can be integrated with services for female victims and general services for victims of family violence in all its forms. It is likely that some types of service can be effectively integrated while others will need to be gender- specific.

4. Workers in the broader health and welfare fields should be provided with training to assist them to respond effectively to male victims of IPA. In particular, these workers need training in how to dismantle the barriers (identified in our research) to men disclosing their abuse and strengthening the factors that facilitate men's disclosure of their abuse.

We at One in Three strongly concur with the above recommendations, and offer them for consideration by the members of this Inquiry.

## **d. The factors contributing to the present levels of domestic violence**

### **'Patriarchy' is not a factor**

The vast majority of family violence services and programs are based upon the premise that family violence is motivated by 'Patriarchal Control'. This idea is sometimes referred to as the Duluth Model and is the cornerstone of feminist theories about family violence. It stipulates that family violence is committed exclusively by men against women for the purpose of controlling and oppressing them. Family violence researchers call this pattern of behaviour 'intimate terrorism'. The [evidence](#)<sup>24</sup> is overwhelmingly against this idea. Only a very small percentage of family violence is found to be motivated by control, and studies find that it is a motive for women as well as for men in equal proportions.

Most family violence is called 'common couple violence' in which the violence is committed by both people and is motivated by feelings of revenge, frustration and anger. The real causes of family violence are well researched and understood. Low socioeconomic status, poor educational attainment, poor psychological development, a history of trauma and abuse, mental health issues, addictions and witnessing family violence as a child are all significant contributors to the likelihood of adult family violence perpetration. Gender is not.

**"Being totally defeated and too frightened to leave my son alone with this monster, I remained and capitulated"**

**Peter**

### **Challenging claims about 'gendered violence'**

As the statistics provided in our introduction show, males make up at least one in three victims of family violence in Australia. Some will argue that, while this may be the case, there are differences between the male and female experience of family violence, specifically that:

- (a) Men's perpetration of intimate partner violence is more severe, and more likely to inflict severe injury
- (b) Women's perpetration of intimate partner violence is more likely to be in self-defence or a pre-emptive strike against a violent male partner
- (c) Men's violence towards women is most often an attempt to control, coerce, humiliate or dominate by generating fear and intimidation, while women's intimate partner violence is more often an expression of frustration in response to their dependence or stress, or their refusal to accept a less powerful position

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<sup>24</sup> See [http://www.domesticviolenceresearch.org/pages/61\\_overview10.html](http://www.domesticviolenceresearch.org/pages/61_overview10.html)



- (d) Men who are violent in intimate relationships typically underreport their violence
- (e) Male victims of intimate partner violence are far less likely to be afraid or intimidated than female victims.

These claims are not supported by reliable data. We have attached four fully referenced Fact Sheets as Appendices B, C, D and E that examine these claims more closely. To summarise:

- Overall, women are injured more than men, but men are injured too, and often seriously
- The overall physical and psychological effects of intimate partner violence are similar for men and women
- Women and men who use intimate partner violence hurt their partners in similar ways (kicking, biting, punching, choking, stabbing, burning, etc), however men are as likely or significantly more likely than women to experience assaults using a weapon
- Men and women bear similar intentions when using intimate partner violence, leading to similar results when their average differences in physical strength are taken into account (such as when weapons are used)
- Children witnessing intimate partner violence by either their fathers or their mothers are more likely to grow up to use violence themselves
- Self-defence is cited by women as the reason for their use of intimate partner violence (including severe violence such as homicide) in a small minority of cases (from 5 to 20 per cent)
- In a study where self-defence was given as a reason for women's use of intimate partner violence in a large number of cases (42 per cent), it was cited as a reason for men's intimate partner violence more often (56 per cent)
- Reciprocal partner violence (which makes up approximately 50 per cent of all intimate partner violence and is the most injurious to women) does not appear to be only comprised of self-defensive acts of violence
- Men and women initiate intimate partner violence (both minor and severe) at around the same rates and women are equally likely or more likely to perpetrate violence against a non-violent partner
- Dominance by either partner is a risk factor for intimate partner violence (both minor & severe). It is the injustices and power struggles that are associated with inequality in relationships that give rise to violence, not just the inequality of male dominance
- Both husbands and wives who are controlling are more likely to produce injury and engage in repeated violence
- Coercion (control and domination) is a frequently cited reason by women for their own use of intimate partner violence, and by male victims for their partner's use of intimate partner violence
- Even in research samples selected for high rates of male aggression (such as shelter samples), women sometimes report using comparative frequencies of controlling behaviour
- In a large recent Canadian study, victimisation by repeated, severe, fear-inducing, instrumental violence (often called intimate terrorism) was reported by 2.6 per cent of men and 4.2 per cent of women in the last five years. Equivalent

**“In my relationship with Deborah, I didn't like to admit that I was scared - in fact it took me a long time to admit that I felt scared and was affected by her abuse. That admission was challenging to my own identity as a male. I could not even admit to my close and supportive friends how much her behaviour was hurting me.”**

**Mervyn**





injuries, use of medical services, and fear of the abuser were also discovered, regardless of the gender of the perpetrator and the victim

- Both sexes tend to over-report minor acts of violence they commit, under-report serious acts they commit, and over-report serious acts they suffer
- The same results are obtained regarding the relative frequency of men's and women's violence regardless of whether men or women are the ones being questioned
- Males are taught by sex-role conditioning not to admit fear, making it appear that women are more fearful simply because they report fear more freely than men
- Women and men have different perceptions of danger and use fear-scales quite differently. Women are twice as likely as men to fear death from a partner, when the actual probability of being killed is the same. Women may over-react to objective threat, while men probably under-react
- Men have rarely had their fear of female violence assessed. One of the few studies to do this found that a substantial minority of male victims of intimate partner violence feared their partner's violence and were stalked. Over half the men were fearful that their partners would cause them serious injury if they found out that he had called the domestic violence helpline.

### ***e. The adequacy of policy and community responses to domestic violence***

#### **Whether existing penalties are adequate**

The existing penalties for family violence are already harsh and sufficient. Magistrates appear to feel they are too harsh, as the full penalties aren't often applied. The main problem as we see it is that magistrates lack the appropriate perpetrator programs to refer defendants on to.

#### **Resources and education**

We would recommend the widespread adoption of Breach Diaries and Wallet Breach Cards (produced by Women's Legal Services NSW) across Australia (see Appendix A), with amendments to make the language gender-neutral.

Many violence orders are breached by the protected person(s). We would recommend compulsory education of protected person(s) as to the meaning and severity of violence orders so that they don't inadvertently or intentionally cause breaches by inviting contact with the defendant. We would also recommend that consideration be given to applying penalties to protected person(s) who intentionally invite contact with the defendant with the intention of causing a breach of the violence order.

#### **Perpetrator programs**

Most existing perpetrator programs based (loosely) on the Duluth Model of male patriarchal power and control don't acknowledge the lived experience of many male perpetrators or any female perpetrators, and are therefore largely ineffective at preventing future violence. The Duluth Model also fails victims because its definition of family violence as 'male and

**"I have to say how deeply insulted I am when I see these advertisements on TV... I literally feel sick in the stomach and if my boys are in the room, they get angry, because they have all been hurt by an abusive woman"**

**Peter**



patriarchal' provides no assistance to enable female victims to recognise potentially violent men in the future. Clear evidence of success for Duluth-based perpetrator programs is limited.

We would recommend the trialling of evidence-based perpetrator programs for both sexes based on other models. The work of Mo Yee Lee, Adriana Uken and John Sebold<sup>25</sup> in the United States is giving excellent results. They offer a solution-focused treatment program for family violence offenders. Building on a strengths perspective, their solution-focused approach holds a person accountable for solutions instead of focusing on problems. Their outcome study was a 1-group pre- and post-test design with a 6-month follow-up to evaluate the effectiveness of a solution-focused group treatment program for 90 family violence offenders who were ordered by the court to receive treatment. Findings of the outcome study indicated a recidivism rate of just 16.7 per cent of program participants as based on official records over a 6-year period. There was a significant improvement in participants' relational skills in intimate relationships as evaluated by their spouses or partners and a significant increase in their self-esteem based on self-reports.

Our concerns about the use of perpetrator programs based on the Duluth Model are as follows:

1. *The Duluth Model is about blaming and shaming men, more than giving them the insights and support to help them stop their abusive behavior.* It preaches that men who batter don't have a personal problem, but are simply reflecting "a culture that teaches men to dominate." Because blaming is one of the major strategies used by offenders to intimidate victims and to justify their abusive acts, using confrontation and assigning blame in treatment may re-represent a similar and unhelpful dynamic in abusive relationships.
2. *It's based on ideology, not science.* The model was developed, not by a team of psychologists and research scientists, but in consultation with "a small group of activists in the battered women's movement," and "more than 200 battered women in Duluth." The model rejects treatment through insight models, family systems theory or cognitive-behavioural models in favour of what supporters call a "sociopolitical model": a "radical feminist re-education camp," where battery is equated with masculinity.
3. *It ignores drugs and alcohol, Borderline Personality Disorder and other serious psychological problems.*
4. *It says there is only one cause for domestic violence, and only one solution.* This approach rejects joint therapy in all cases, even when the woman feels safe and wants to keep the marriage together. It treats women as if they are unable to make their own choices.
5. *There's no real evidence it works.*
6. *It ignores female perpetrators and male victims of domestic violence, both straight and gay*

**"My wife hits me... tries running me down in our car, smashes the house up... We have an 8-month old daughter that has seen the lot. Two days ago I was holding my daughter while she was punching me, just missing the baby"**

**James**

The alternative programs that we have suggested have the following features:

1. Well-designed programs have a firm and explicit theoretical basis which is supported by empirical research
2. Programs are based on accurate assessment of the 'risk', 'needs' and 'responsivity' of offenders

<sup>25</sup> Lee, M., Uken, A., & Sebold, J. (2004). Accountability for Change: Solution-Focused Treatment with Domestic Violence Offenders. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 85(4), 463-476. Also Lee, M. Y., Uken, A., & Sebold, J. (2007). Role of Self-Determined Goals in Predicting Recidivism in Domestic Violence Offenders. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 17(1), 30.



3. There is strategic targeting of such risk and need factors through program features
4. Programs are delivered to consistently high standards, using treatment responsivity
5. There is inclusion of skills-oriented, cognitive-behavioural approaches in the program, and most importantly...
6. Only programs which are well-matched to, or modified to meet the needs of the offender and demonstrate treatment or program efficacy have integrity.

[The above six points are criteria for perpetrator programs taken from UK researcher Nicola Graham-Kevan's article *Domestic violence: Research and implications for batterer programmes in Europe*<sup>26</sup>].

We would add the following list of criteria to assess alternative perpetrator programs:

1. They should be open to both male and female perpetrators (either combined in the same program or in separate streams for men and women)
2. They should be offered initially as alternatives to prison (thereby allowing the perpetrator to continue to work and support their family while on probation), with incarceration to follow if the perpetrator reoffends.
3. As with child and elder abuse, programs should operate at multiple levels, addressing those contextual and personal factors that research consistently identifies as being implicated, e.g. drug and alcohol abuse, mental health issues and inadequate conflict management and affect regulation skills.
4. They should offer couples counselling and family therapy where there exists the expressed wish to maintain a relationship.
5. Rather than blaming and shaming, they should focus on and emphasise solutions, competencies, and strengths in offenders, but never equate this with a minimisation of the destructiveness of their violent behaviours.
6. The effectiveness of a solution-focused treatment program is contingent on the support of the legal system that provides a strong sanction against violent behaviours.

The indigenous *Ending Family Violence Program* in Woorabinda QLD for male and female perpetrators is an excellent example of the kind of program that we would like to see run (obviously modified as appropriate for non-indigenous perpetrators). Appendix H of this submission gives further details of the program.

## Female-perpetrated violence

The 2001 *Young People and Domestic Violence* study<sup>27</sup> found that

“Witnessing parental domestic violence had a significant effect on young people’s attitudes and experiences. Witnessing was also the strongest predictor of subsequent perpetration by young people. **The best predictor of perpetration was witnessing certain types of female to male violence**, whilst the best predictor of victimisation in personal relationships was having witnessed male to female violence.”

If we are serious about reducing the prevalence of family violence, we must start sending the message to the Australian Community that female-perpetrated violence as well as male-perpetrated violence is wrong, is a crime, must be taken

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<sup>26</sup> Graham-Kevan, N (2007). Domestic Violence: Research and Implications for Batterer Programmes in Europe. *European Journal of Criminal Policy Research* (2007) 13:213–225.

<sup>27</sup> National Crime Prevention (2001). *Young people and domestic violence: National research on young people's attitudes to and experiences of domestic violence*. Barton: Attorney-General's Dept.



seriously, and must be reported to the authorities. And not only because stopping young people witnessing female perpetrated violence in the home will reduce levels of perpetration when those young people grow up. Reducing women's use of violence will reduce women's rates of injury from violence because a woman's perpetration of intimate partner violence is the strongest predictor of her being a victim<sup>28</sup>.

## Community Health Counselling Services

We would recommend that community health counselling services be provided with training to enable them to work effectively with perpetrators or potential perpetrators of family violence of both genders.

Community health counselling services are the ideal providers of perpetrator programs because:

- (a) They are statewide providers
- (b) There are no fees for clients
- (c) Community health counselling has existing links to other services such as community nursing, aged care assessment teams (ACAT), local hospitals, chronic health services, GPs and Divisions of General Practice, police, legal aid, Department of Community Services and local family violence support services
- (d) Clients can self-refer.

We would also recommend that Government policy be changed so that community health counselling services are *allowed* to work with perpetrators or potential perpetrators of family violence. Perpetrator programs would obviously need to take place at different locations to the venues used for counselling victims of family violence. The risk of victims and perpetrators meeting must be minimised for reasons of safety.

We would recommend that Police refer perpetrators or potential perpetrator of family violence on to their local community health counselling service at the first signs of conflict in a family.

It may be the case that some community health counselling services might be unable to provide perpetrator counselling services. In this case, tenders should be put out to NGO's in the area to provide the services instead.

## Services for all victims of family violence

We would recommend that family violence services be made available to all perpetrators and victims of violence in the home, no matter what their gender or sexuality, i.e. intimate partners, persons involved in child abuse, carer violence, violence between siblings, violence by children against their parents, and violence between other extended family members. For example, a social worker colleague recently dealt with three cases where teenage girls were regularly assaulting their mothers, but had no services to refer these clients on to. Neglect, psychological abuse and financial abuse of the elderly should be considered forms of family violence under the law.

If local Domestic Violence Committees are not prepared to support male victims and/or female perpetrators then we would recommend that a percentage of family violence funding be distributed to services that are prepared to do so.

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<sup>28</sup> While this may sound like 'victim-blaming', it is simply stating the research evidence finding that women who perpetrate violence suffer greater injuries than those who do not. If a woman hits her partner who then hits her back and injures her, both people are responsible for their own use of violence. Perpetrating violence is a risk factor for women's injury. See Kelly, L. (2002). Disabusing the definition of domestic abuse: How women batter men and the role of the feminist state. *Florida State University Law Review*, 30, 791. Also Whitaker, D. J., Hailleyesus, T., Swahn, M., & Saltzman, L. S. (2007). Differences in frequency of violence and reported injury between relationships with reciprocal and nonreciprocal intimate partner violence. *Am J Public Health*, 97(5), 941-7.



Currently almost all professional development programs for workers in the Family Violence Sector cover issues faced by women and children victims of family violence. There is just one training program run by Men's Health Services called *Working with Men affected by Violence* that is offered to health/welfare/community workers to provide information and strategies for working with men who are affected by violence in their relationships. We would recommend that programs like this be funded and run for all workers in the sector.

We would recommend that the exemption from the Sex Discrimination Act obtained by family violence services and sexual assault services allowing only female employees be repealed so that male counsellors can be employed in these services where appropriate and qualified.

We would recommend that 'Women's Safe Rooms' at courthouses be renamed 'Victim's Safe Rooms' or simply just 'Safe Rooms' and be made available to all victims regardless of their gender. Currently male victims are denied access to these services and as such are often left in close proximity to the perpetrator of the violence (see the example of the gay male victim later on page 23 of this submission).

## NSW Government Domestic Violence Inquiry Findings

In August 2012, the NSW Government Legislative Council's [Standing Committee on Social Issues](#) released their [report](#) on domestic violence trends and issues in NSW: the first ever to acknowledge the existence, needs, barriers to reporting and barriers to accessing support faced by male victims of family violence. According to the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#), more than 100,000 men in NSW have experienced violence from their partner.

This courageous report heralded a new era of gender equity by the NSW Government by finally acknowledging the forgotten one-third of victims of family violence: men and boys.

The findings of the report included:

- "There was a broad recognition among inquiry participants that women offenders and male victims do exist" (p.218). "Of [reported] victims of domestic assault in 2010, 69.2% were female, while 30.8% were male." (p.28)
- "Male victims have been much less visible and able to access supports than should be the case" (p.xxiv)
- "The experience of [males]... is equally as bad as that of other victims" (p.xxxii)
- Recognising "the gap in services for male victims and [encouraging] the government to examine how services can most appropriately be provided to male victims of domestic violence" (p.xxxii)
- Identifying males as "in need of special consideration with regard to domestic violence," along with Aboriginal people, older people, people with disability, and several other population groups (p.89)

One in Three was especially pleased that the Committee recommended that the entire system for preventing and responding to family violence needed to take account of, and be effective for, all victims and perpetrators: not just women and children victims and male perpetrators as had previously been the case.

The Committee also advised the Government that legislation and policy should be written in gender neutral terms – something we have been advocating for some time. They also strongly recommended that male victims and female perpetrators be addressed in the NSW Government's forthcoming Domestic and Family Violence Framework.

We would strongly recommend that members of this Inquiry read the NSW Report and consider making similar recommendations at a Federal level.



## ***g. How the Federal Government can best support, contribute to and drive the social, cultural and behavioural shifts required to eliminate violence against women and their children***

### **Getting the facts right about violence against women**

The vast majority of policies and programs in Australia with the aim of reducing violence against women have a focus upon domestic violence, as it is regularly claimed that violence from current and previous partners makes up the vast majority of violence against women. As previously stated, the Australian Bureau of Statistics 4906.0 - Personal Safety, Australia, 2012 (2013)<sup>29</sup> is the largest and most recent survey of violence in Australia.

Table 3 from the survey, "EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS, Relationship to perpetrator" gives the following perpetrator types in order of prevalence for females who had experienced violence:

	<b>Perpetrator category</b>	<b>n ('000)</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1</b>	Other known person	170.8	2
<b>2</b>	Stranger	148.8	1.7
<b>3</b>	Boyfriend/girlfriend or date	68.7	0.8
<b>4</b>	Previous partner	66.3	0.8
<b>5</b>	Current partner	66.2	0.8

You will note that current and previous partners are at the bottom of the table in terms of prevalence rates - far more violence against women is perpetrated by other known persons, strangers, and boyfriends, girlfriends or dates.

If the Australian Government is serious about preventing violence against women, it should put far more attention and resources into preventing violence perpetrated by other known persons, strangers, and boyfriends, girlfriends or dates. Current and previous partners are the *least frequent perpetrators* of violence against women.

## ***h. Any other related matters***

### **Gender-profiling of offenders and victims**

We are extremely concerned that much State Family Violence legislation gender-profiles offenders and victims. For example, the Key Objects of the NSW Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 state that "domestic violence is predominantly perpetrated by men against women and children". As you have seen from the statistics tabled in this submission, this statement is clearly not supported by the available data with regard to adult victims of family violence. And as far as children go, **the main perpetrators of child abuse, neglect and homicide are not men, but women**<sup>30</sup>.

We are particularly concerned about what amounts to gender-profiling of offenders and victims in family violence legislation. As we are sure you would be aware, gender or racial profiling of offenders in legislation violates Australia's international human rights obligations since it creates a bias in the minds of judges and magistrates that a particular class of defendants is more likely to be guilty by reason of his/her gender or race than would be the case if he/she were of a different gender or race (and likewise the other gender more likely to be innocent). A society that condones family violence conditional upon the gender or ethnicity of the victim is not the kind of society that we want our children to grow up in.

<sup>29</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013, Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2012, cat no 4906.0, ABS, Canberra.  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4906.0>.

<sup>30</sup> See [http://menshealthaustralia.net/files/Child\\_Abuse\\_in\\_Australia.pdf](http://menshealthaustralia.net/files/Child_Abuse_in_Australia.pdf)



To make a protection (i.e. freedom from violence) through government law dependent on the victim's gender could be construed as violating some of the most fundamental and cherished principles of international human rights law. Articles 2, 4 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Australia became a party in 1980, and which in turn reflect the rights set out in Articles 2, 7, and 16 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are quite explicit and uncompromising in prohibiting discrimination based on sex. Article 26 of the ICCPR, in particular, guarantees "to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as, inter alia, sex".

## Domestic violence screening tools

Many State Health Departments have implemented domestic violence screening tools for women but not for men. For example, NSW Health uses a compulsory domestic violence screening tool (see Appendix F) across their clinical services with all female clients aged 16 and over. This tool is extremely valuable in a number of regards: it provides data on the number of females using NSW Health services that are experiencing domestic violence, and more importantly it enables them to be referred on to appropriate services.

Regrettably this screening tool is not used with male clients. These men and boys need a screening tool just as women and girls do.

One of our colleagues is a worker for a NSW Area Health Service. The following is her experience with using the NSW Health screening tool:

"I work with young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who have emerging mental health problems. I have to undertake compulsory domestic violence screening on all young women aged 16 and above. The majority of young people I work with are male so I began using this screening tool on males out of curiosity. To mine and my colleagues' surprise, many of the young men were admitting to being victims of domestic and family violence and abuse. Interestingly, the tool has promoted discussion and highlighted the many forms of violence these young men may suffer such as physical and emotional violence from family members, 'gay-bashing' and violence in pubs. These experiences of violence have deeply affected these young men and it concerns me that we don't inquire about their experiences of violence as a matter of course as we do with women. Of greater worry is that these young men don't have any services available to help them should they require support."

We would recommend at the very least a limited trial of domestic violence screening tools with male clients who present at casualty departments of public hospitals – especially young males. We would recommend that the tool also be expanded – for both males and females – to cover all forms of family violence and abuse (from parents, siblings and other family members), not just intimate partner violence as is currently the case.

## Discrimination

Gay males are being discriminated against because of the lack of services for male victims of family violence. One of our colleagues, a counsellor of family violence victims, told us of a recent case where a gay male victim of intimate partner violence was denied support by a rural domestic violence support service because of his gender. This meant that at the time of the court hearing about his assault he was forced to sit outside a small rural courthouse in close proximity to the perpetrator. He was denied access to the 'women's safe room' because of his gender. He was also denied the support of the domestic violence support worker at the court. The court process and lack of services re-victimised this man, causing him immense distress and compounded the quite significant post-traumatic stress disorder he was already suffering.

The recent launch of the NSW GLBTI strategy is laudable. However, male gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex victims of family violence in areas without access to ACON services are currently denied access to domestic violence support services because of their gender.



## Recent media coverage

We include as Appendix G a transcript of a recent talkback session on Triple J national youth radio which clearly illustrates that male victims of family violence exist, that the impacts of violence on them are severe, and that they lack services and support.

## CONCLUSION

On behalf of all male victims of family violence and abuse, we hope that you will give serious consideration to this submission. We believe our recommendations, if implemented, will go a long way towards preventing all family violence, and creating a fairer and more just system for all victims and perpetrators of family violence and their children.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide input into this inquiry.

Greg Andresen  
Senior Researcher  
30th July 2014

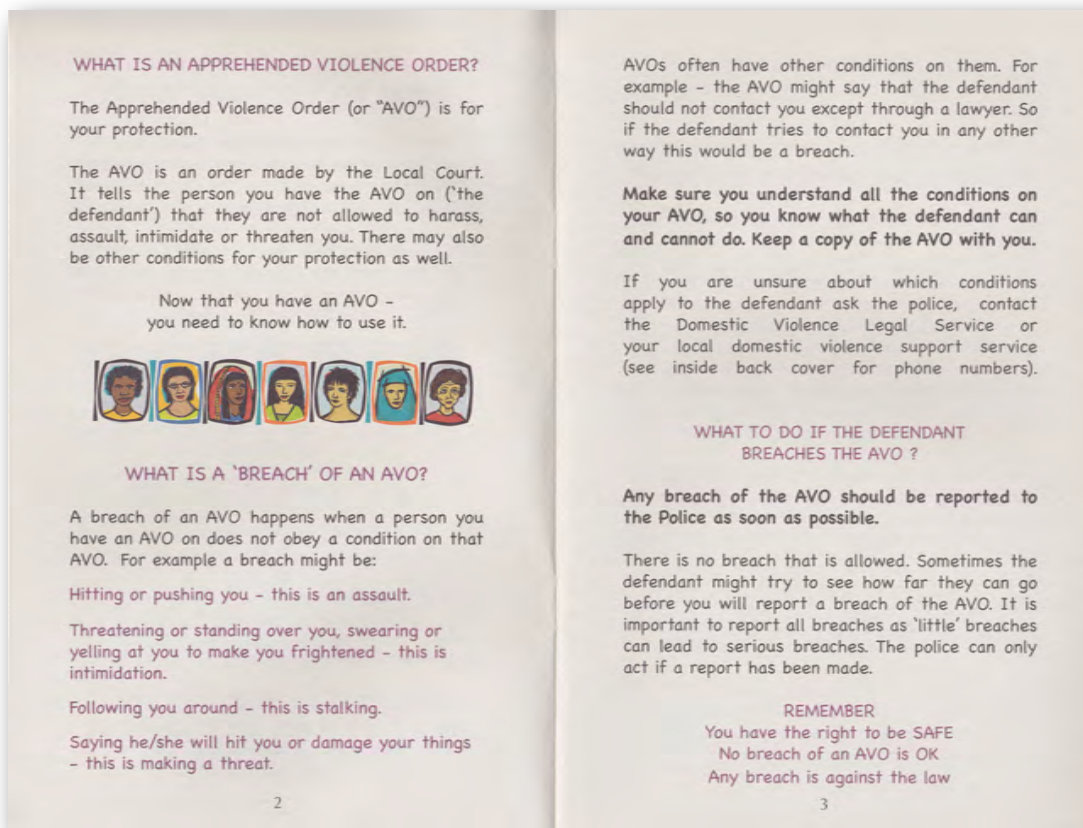
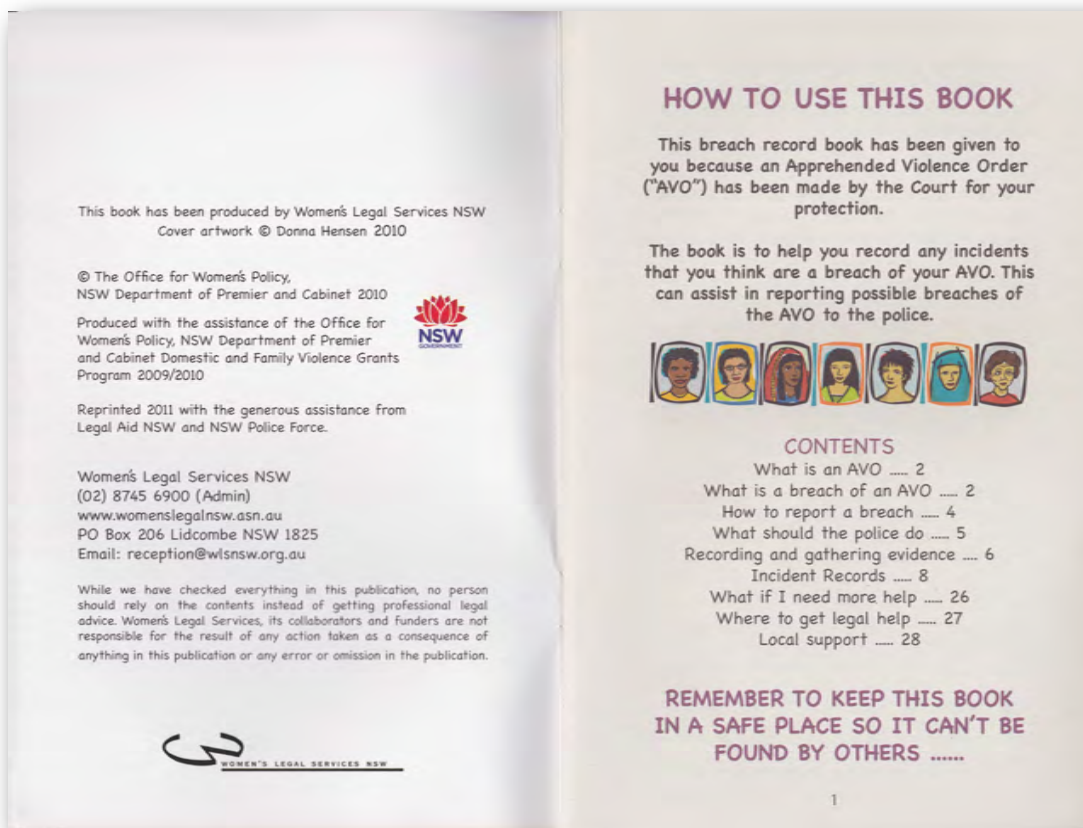




## Appendix A: Wallet Breach Cards and Breach Diaries

<p><b>REMEMBER</b></p> <p><b>No Breach is OK. Any Breach is Against the Law. You have the right to feel safe.</b></p> <p>Keep a copy of your AVO with you at all times.</p> <p>Use your Breach Diary to record full details of any breaches.</p> <p><b>If you need help, you can contact:</b></p> <p>Call <b>000</b> in an Emergency Call <b>112</b> if you have no network coverage on your mobile</p> <p>Your Local Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service:</p> <p>Your Local Police:</p> <p>Your Support Worker:</p>	<p><b>Women's Legal Services NSW</b> <b>Indigenous Women's Legal Contact Line 1800 639 784</b> Sydney: <b>02 8745 6977</b> Monday, Tuesday, Thursday (10 am - 12:30 pm)</p> <p><b>Domestic Violence Legal Advice Line 1800 810 784</b> Sydney: <b>02 8745 6999</b> Monday and Thursday (1:30 pm - 4:30 pm) Tuesday and Friday (9:30 am - 12:30 pm)</p>  <p><b>Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Contact Line 1800 686 587</b> Sydney: <b>02 9569 3847</b> Web: <a href="http://www.wirringabaiya.org.au">www.wirringabaiya.org.au</a></p> <p><b>NSW Rape Crisis (24hrs) 1800 424 017</b> Phone counselling and referral for victims of sexual assault.</p> <p><b>Salvation Army 24hr Care Line 1300 363 622</b> They will help you find safe accommodation, counselling, vouchers for food, electricity, gas and phone.</p>	 <p><b>YOUR RIGHTS ... YOUR AVO</b></p> <p><b>REPORTING BREACHES</b></p> <p>Women's Legal Services NSW</p> 
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<p><b>What is a BREACH?</b> When the person you have an AVO on refuses to obey any of the conditions on the AVO.</p> <p>This might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hitting or pushing you. This is assault.</li> <li>Threatening or standing over you. This is intimidation</li> <li>Swearing, yelling or screaming at you. This is harrasment.</li> <li>Following you and/or your new partner around and making you frightened. This is stalking.</li> <li>Saying he will hit you or he will damage your things. This is making a threat.</li> <li>Even if he lives with you, he still has to obey the conditions on the AVO.</li> <li>There may be other conditions on your AVO. Check your AVO for all conditions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>REPORT AND RECORD ALL BREACHES</b></p> <p>When you make a report, the police have to give you an "Event Number" and they have to write down your report</p>		
	Date and time of incident	Date reported to police	Event Number and Police Station reported to







#### HOW TO REPORT A BREACH ?

You can report a breach by:

1. Going to the police station and making a report.
2. Phoning the local police and making a report.
3. If it is an emergency ring 000 (or 112 from a mobile phone) and ask the police to attend.

The police should make a record of your report. It is good for the police to take your statement as it can help the police investigate and take action. The police will ask you to sign your statement.

The police should give you an 'event number' for your report and the name of the investigating officer. The police should also make sure you are safe.

If you need to, you can ask to speak with the Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) or the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer (ACLO) for help.

However in some areas there is not a fulltime DVLO or ACLO available. You can ask for the DVLO or ACLO to contact you later if you need them.

You can also take a friend or a support person with you when you report. If you need to you can talk to a local domestic violence worker or support service for help with reporting.

4

#### WHAT SHOULD THE POLICE DO ?

The police should investigate all reported breaches of an AVO.

The police have to follow their own guidelines which say that they are meant to:

- Get as much information as possible from you when you make a report.
- Make sure you (and your children) are safe.
- Gather any evidence available and interview the offender.

The police will then decide whether there is enough evidence to charge the defendant. If the police decide not to charge the defendant, they must make an official record of the reasons for their decision.

If the police take the defendant to court for a breach you may have to give evidence in court. There are services that will help you at court (see the local contacts inside the back cover).

If the police cannot take the defendant to court for the breach because there is not enough evidence, it is still important to report the breach to have a record of what happened.

See page 26 for hints on what to do if you are still feeling unsafe or you are unhappy with the police response.

5

#### RECORDING AND GATHERING EVIDENCE

It is important to provide as much information about the breach as possible to the police. Evidence of the breach could include your story about what happened, the story of any witnesses that saw or heard what happened, phone messages, emails, text messages, photographs of damage or injuries, or evidence of phone calls.

You can use this book to help you record information to provide to the police.

**Report all breaches as soon as possible.**

##### What to record:

###### Date, time and place

Note down the date and time of the incident and where it happened.

###### What happened

Write down what happened. This includes what was actually done by the defendant and what exact words were used by the defendant. This is very important if threats were made or the defendant was being intimidating.

###### Answering machine messages, voicemails or text messages

If there are frightening messages left on an answering machine or voicemail, or if the defendant is not allowed to contact you and leaves messages, make sure you don't delete them.

6

With voicemail make sure your phone provider does not delete them before the police have recorded them. If you receive text messages on your phone, save them to show to the police.

###### Email or facebook harassment

If you receive emails that are harassing or threatening save them and print them out to show to the police. If you are harassed through facebook or other social networking sites, print the website page to show the police.

###### Record any injuries

If you have been injured in any way go to a doctor, hospital or medical service and have a record made of the injuries. If injuries are showing it is also good to photograph them. Tell the police that you have done this. Show the police injuries that come up in the time after the report.

###### Other witnesses

Did anyone else see or hear what happened (including children)? Write down their names and tell the police.

###### Getting other people to frighten you

If you think the defendant is doing this, record and report these incidents as well.

It is important to keep a record of all incidents as it can show a pattern of behaviour by the defendant that may be a breach of the AVO.

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES CAN BE USED TO RECORD INCIDENTS**

7



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INCIDENT RECORD</b></p> <p>Date of incident: _____ Time: _____</p> <p>What happened: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Names and contact details of any witnesses:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Did you seek medical help for injuries (Hospital, GP, Medical Centre, Medical Service?)</p> <p>Where: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Where: _____ Date: _____</p> <p><b>Report made to Police:</b> Yes No</p> <p>If Yes, date report made: _____</p> <p>Police Station: _____</p> <p><b>Event number:</b> <u>  E  </u> _____</p> <p>Name of police officer: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WHAT IF I NEED MORE HELP</b></p> <p>If you are unsure about how the police are responding to your report(s), you can take the following steps. If you need to you can get help from a local domestic violence support service or the local Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service.</p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> You can contact the Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) for your area. She / he should be able to find out and explain what is happening. DVLOs are there to assist victims of domestic or family violence.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> If you are not happy with the response you can contact the Duty Officer or Officer-in-Charge at the police station.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> If you are still not satisfied, you can make a complaint. Complaints can be made by contacting the NSW Police Customer Assistance Unit on 131 444 or by writing to them at: PO Box 3427 Tuggerah NSW 2259 or email: customerassistance@police.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>You can also contact the NSW Ombudsman's Office for advice and help with complaints about police on (02) 9286 1000. For information about making complaints about police see <a href="http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au">www.ombo.nsw.gov.au</a>.</p> <p>You can also contact one of the following legal services for advice and assistance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">26</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WHERE TO GET LEGAL HELP</b></p> <p><b>Women's Legal Services NSW</b></p> <p><b>Domestic Violence Legal Service</b> (02) 8745 6999 or 1800 810 784 (rural freecall) Monday &amp; Thursday 1.30pm to 4.30pm Tuesday &amp; Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm</p> <p><b>Indigenous Women's Legal Contact Line</b> (02) 8745 6977 or 1800 639 784 (rural freecall) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10am to 12.30pm</p> <p><b>Women's Legal Contact Line</b> (02) 8745 6988 or 1800 801 501 (rural freecall) Monday &amp; Thursday 9.30am to 12.30pm Tuesday 1.30pm to 4.30pm Website: <a href="http://www.womenslegalnsw.asn.au">www.womenslegalnsw.asn.au</a></p> <p><b>Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre</b> Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Contact Line 1800 686 587 or (02) 9569 3847 Website: <a href="http://www.wirringabaiya.org.au">www.wirringabaiya.org.au</a></p> <p><b>LawAccess 1300 888 529</b> Can provide legal information, advice and referral. Call this number to be referred to your local Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service who can support you at Court.</p> <p><b>IF YOU NEED HELP TO CONTACT US:</b></p> <p><b>Telephone Interpreter Service 131 450</b> You can contact any service through TIS if you need help with english.</p> <p><b>National Relay Service 133 677 (TTY / voice)</b> For women with a hearing or speech impairment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">27</p>
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OTHER USEFUL SUPPORT SERVICES	NOTES
<b>NSW Community Services Domestic Violence Crisis Line (24 hrs)</b> 1800 65 64 63	
Can assist with referrals to women's refuges, crisis support and other help.	
<b>NSW Rape Crisis (24 hrs)</b> 1800 424 017	
www.nswrapecrisis.com.au	
24 hr phone counselling and referral for victims of sexual assault.	
<b>Salvation Army 24hr Care Line</b> 1300 363 622	
Can help with accommodation, support, vouchers for food, electricity, gas and phone.	
<b>LOCAL SUPPORT</b>	
Put your important local contacts here...	
<b>Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service:</b>	
<b>Local Police / Domestic Violence Liaison Officer:</b>	
<b>Other:</b>	





## Appendix B: One in Three Campaign Fact Sheet No. 2

Fact Sheet No.2: Severity



### Fact Sheet No.2

#### Is men's intimate partner violence (IPV) more severe, and more likely to inflict severe injury?

International studies show that, on average

- Overall, women are injured more than men, but men are injured too, and often seriously<sup>2</sup>
- The overall physical and psychological effects of IPV are similar for men and women<sup>1 2 5</sup>

**"The authors concluded that their findings argued against theories of greater female vulnerability to pathological outcomes."<sup>8</sup>**

**"we also observe evidence that contradicts the idea that violence by male partners tends to be more serious"<sup>4</sup>**

- Women and men who use IPV hurt their partners in similar ways (kicking, biting, punching, choking, stabbing, burning, etc), however men are as likely or significantly more likely than women to experience assaults using a weapon<sup>2 5 6</sup>
- Male perpetrators are more likely to produce minor injuries, but less likely to produce severe injuries<sup>2</sup>
- Male victims are more likely to suffer serious injuries, while female victims are more likely to suffer minor injuries<sup>1 2</sup>
- Women are slightly more likely than men to seek medical treatment for their injuries<sup>2</sup>
- Men and women bear similar intentions when using IPV, leading to similar results when their average differences in physical strength are taken into account (such as when weapons are used)<sup>3 7</sup>
- Men, having greater strength on average, are more likely to use direct physical violence, while women are more likely to use a weapon to compensate for their lack of strength<sup>2</sup>
- Women are more likely than men to retaliate to IPV<sup>10</sup>

- Reducing women's use of violence will reduce women's rates of injury from violence because a woman's perpetration of IPV is the strongest predictor of her being a victim<sup>7 11 12</sup>
- Children witnessing IPV by either their fathers or their mothers are more likely to grow up to use violence themselves<sup>7</sup>.

#### Is focusing on the severity of physical injuries the best approach to reducing violence?

- If men are injured less than women, is this a reason to deny them protection?
- Don't all victims of IPV deserve protection, not just those who are physically injured?
- Does only addressing the outcome of violence (physical injury) distract from addressing the process of violence which can include verbal, emotional, psychological, financial, and other forms of control and abuse?
- Does a focus upon injury ignore the fact that people who use IPV do so to control their partner, not necessarily to injure them? In fact, control of one's partner is often achieved without the use of violence.

**"Concentrating on 'severe' violence only ignores the fact that the primary intent of fighting spouses is not to injure their partner... but to hurt... Their focus is on getting their way... and making the partner comply with their demands rather than on causing physical injury."<sup>9</sup>**

- Does a focus upon injury ignore the fact that victims of IPV are often hurt more by the violation of the bond of trust and love between them and their partner, than by the physical injury itself?
- Does a focus upon injury in effect give a 'hitting license' to weaker partners, who may eventually be severely injured, should their stronger partner retaliate (regardless of the gender of the partners)?

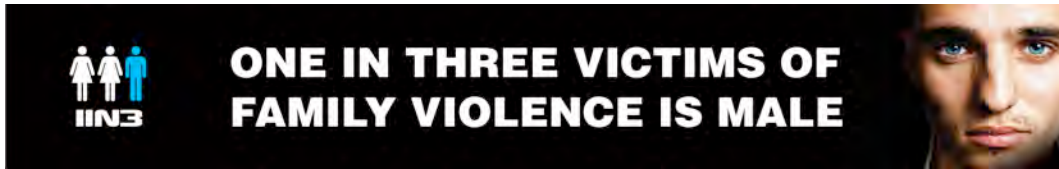
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- 12 While this may sound like 'victim-blaming', it is simply stating the research evidence finding that women who perpetrate violence suffer greater injuries than those who do not. If a woman hits her partner who then hits her back and injures her, both people are responsible for their own use of violence. Perpetrating violence is a risk factor for women's injury.

oneinthree.com.au



## Appendix C: One in Three Campaign Fact Sheet No. 3



### Fact Sheet No.3

#### Is women's intimate partner violence (IPV) more likely to be self-defence or a pre-emptive strike against a violent male partner?

Although it cannot be denied that there are cases in which women and men abuse their partner in self-defence, international studies have found that

- Self-defence is cited by women as the reason for their use of IPV (including severe violence such as homicide) in a small minority of cases (from 5 to 20 per cent)<sup>1 2 3 5 6 7 9 10 12</sup>

**“Studies... found that a relatively low percentage of women endorsed self-defence as a primary motive for violence.”<sup>13</sup>**

**“Women report using violence against male partners repeatedly, using it against non-violent male partners, and using it for reasons other than self-defence.”<sup>3</sup>**

- In a study where self-defence was given as a reason for women's use of IPV in a large number of cases (42%), it was cited as a reason for men's IPV more often (56%)<sup>12</sup>
- Rather than self-defence, reasons commonly given by both women and men for their use of IPV include
  - ♦ coercion (dominance and control)
  - ♦ anger
  - ♦ punishing a partner's misbehaviour
  - ♦ jealousy
  - ♦ confusion
  - ♦ “to get through” (to one's partner)
  - ♦ to retaliate
  - ♦ frustration<sup>6 7 8 9 12</sup>
- Rather than self-defence, reasons commonly given by women for their use of IPV include
  - ♦ disbelief that their male victims would be injured or retaliate

- ♦ they wished to engage their partner's attention (particularly emotionally)
- ♦ their partner not being sensitive to their needs
- ♦ their partner being verbally abusive to them
- ♦ their partner not listening to them<sup>3 8 9</sup>
- Reciprocal partner violence (which makes up approximately 50 per cent of all IPV and is the most injurious to women) does not appear to be only comprised of self-defensive acts of violence<sup>2 3 13</sup>
- Men and women initiate IPV (both minor and severe) at around the same rates and women are equally likely or more likely to perpetrate violence against a non-violent partner<sup>2 3 11</sup>
- Women are more likely than men to hit back in response to provocation<sup>2</sup>
- Women are more likely than men to kill their partner in self-defence, however overall, only 10 to 20 per cent of women's partner homicides are carried out in self-defence or in response to prior abuse<sup>4 11</sup>

**“Important is the finding that women's allegations of DV were proven to be false. In most cases, the initial allegations of DV were modified considerably by them during the course of the study, particularly when they were faced with the accounts of their children and mothers, admitting in the end that they were neither victims of violence nor acting in self-defence.”<sup>10</sup>**

- Women's use of IPV, rather than being reactive to male violence, is predictable by kindergarten age, and certainly by the teenage years. Aggressive girls grow up to be aggressive adults. High incidence rates of personality disorders are found in both male and female court-mandated samples of IPV perpetrators. Women who kill their husbands are just as likely to have criminal records as women who kill in other circumstances.<sup>2 4 11 12</sup>

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## Appendix D: One in Three Campaign Fact Sheet No. 4



### Fact Sheet No.4

**Is men's violence towards women most often an attempt to control, coerce, humiliate or dominate by generating fear and intimidation, while women's intimate partner violence (IPV) is more often an expression of frustration in response to their dependence or stress, or their refusal to accept a less powerful position?**

International studies show that,

- Dominance by either partner is a risk factor for IPV (both minor & severe). It is the injustices and power struggles that are associated with inequality in relationships that give rise to violence, not just the inequality of male dominance<sup>1 2 9 13</sup>

**“The results of this study suggest important conclusions about two widely held beliefs: that partner violence is an almost uniquely male crime and that when men hit their partners, it is primarily to dominate women, whereas partner violence by women is an act of self-defence or an act of desperation in response to male dominance and brutality. These beliefs were not supported by the results of this study.”<sup>9</sup>**

- Empirical research on American couples has found that the vast majority of relationships involve equal power between partners. Relationships in which one partner is dominant are in the minority, and are just as likely to be female-dominant as male-dominant<sup>9</sup>.
- Egalitarian couples are the least violent, while both male and female dominance are associated with increased IPV<sup>13</sup>
- Both husbands and wives who are controlling are more likely to produce injury and engage in repeated violence<sup>5</sup>
- Coercion (control and domination) is a frequently cited reason by women for their own use of IPV, and by male victims for their partner's use of IPV<sup>9</sup>

**“Abuse was not just a sum of violent acts, but in almost all cases it constituted a system that was imposed upon the abused spouse, that dominated his whole life. The study reported that abusive women assumed total control of the relationship, e.g. by getting hold of power producing resources, imposing themselves upon the husband by enforcing authority over him or indirectly making serious threats to frighten him into submission.”<sup>10</sup>**

- Even in research samples selected for high rates of male aggression (such as shelter samples), women sometimes report using comparative frequencies of controlling behaviour<sup>7 9</sup>

**“Partner violence is more a gender-inclusive systemic problem than it is a problem of a patriarchal social system which enforces male dominance by violence.”<sup>13</sup>**

- Risk factors for IPV for both women and men include dominance, but also include youthfulness, self-defence, angry and antisocial personalities; alcohol and illicit drug use; conflict with partner; communication problems; criminal history; jealousy; negative attributions about the partner; partner abuse, sexual abuse and neglect histories; relationship satisfaction; stressful conditions; depression; traditional sex-role ideology and violence approval<sup>2 9 11</sup>.
- Factors associated with the use of controlling behaviours include socioeconomic status, ethnicity, education level, age and length of marriage (but not gender)<sup>5</sup>
- Female IPV is not a response to male aggression but, like male IPV, follows developmental trajectories including crystallising into personality disorders. Aggressive girls grow up to be aggressive adults (as do aggressive boys)<sup>1</sup>
- After analysing for verbal aggression, fear, violence and control by each gender, husbands are found to be no more controlling than wives<sup>1 2 7 9 13</sup>. Men and women may differ in their methods of control, but not their motivation to control<sup>5</sup>. Men are more likely to prevent their partner from knowing about or having access to family income even when they ask; and prevent their partner from working outside the home. Women are more likely to insist on knowing who their partner is with at all times; insist on changing residences even when their partner doesn't want or need to; and try to limit their partner's contact with family and friends. Relatively few men or women engage in any of these controlling behaviours<sup>4</sup>.

**“The... hypothesis that dominance by either partner, not just the male partner, is a risk factor for violence was also supported. In fact, this study found that dominance by the female partner is even more closely related to violence by women than is male-dominance. The results on dominance as a risk factor for violence, like the results on symmetry and asymmetry in perpetration, apply to both minor violence and severe violence. This contradicts the belief that when women hit, the motives are different, and that male-dominance is the root cause of partner violence. Thus, the results in this paper call into question another basic assumption of most prevention and treatment programs.”<sup>13</sup>**





**“The same distortion of the scientific evidence by selective citation applies to discussion of dominance and control. Only studies showing male use of violence to coerce, dominate, and control are cited despite a number of studies showing that this also applies to violence by female partners.”<sup>3</sup>**

- Controlling behaviours exhibited by abusive women include
  - ♦ the use of threats and coercion (threatening to kill themselves or their husbands, threatening to call the police and have the husband falsely arrested, threatening to leave the husband)
  - ♦ emotional abuse (making the victim feel bad about himself, calling him names, making him think he is crazy, playing mind games, humiliating him, making him feel guilty)
  - ♦ intimidation (making him feel afraid by smashing things, destroying his property, abusing pets, displaying weapons)
  - ♦ blaming the men for their own abuse or minimising the abuse
  - ♦ using the court system to gain sole custody of the children or falsely obtain a restraining order against the victim
  - ♦ isolating the victim by keeping him away from his family and friends, using jealousy to justify these actions
  - ♦ controlling all of the money and not allowing the victim to see or use the chequebook or credit cards<sup>8</sup>
- In a large recent Canadian study, victimisation by repeated, severe, fear-inducing, instrumental violence (often called intimate terrorism) was reported by 2.6% of men and 4.2% of women in the last five years. Equivalent injuries, use of medical services, and fear of the abuser were also discovered, regardless of the gender of the perpetrator and the victim<sup>1</sup>.

**Do men who are violent in intimate relationships typically underreport their violence?**

International studies show that,

- Both sexes tend to over-report minor acts of violence they commit, under-report serious acts they commit, and over-report serious acts they suffer<sup>2</sup>
- The same results are obtained regarding the relative frequency of men’s and women’s violence regardless of whether men or women are the ones being questioned<sup>2</sup>.

**“The rate of minor assaults by wives was 78 per 1,000 couples, and the rate of minor assaults by husbands was 72 per 1,000. The Severe assault rate was 46 per 1,000 couples for assaults by wives and 50 per 1,000 for assaults by husbands. Neither difference is statistically significant. As these rates are based exclusively on information provided by women respondents, the near equality in assault rates cannot be attributed to a gender bias in reporting.”<sup>12</sup>**



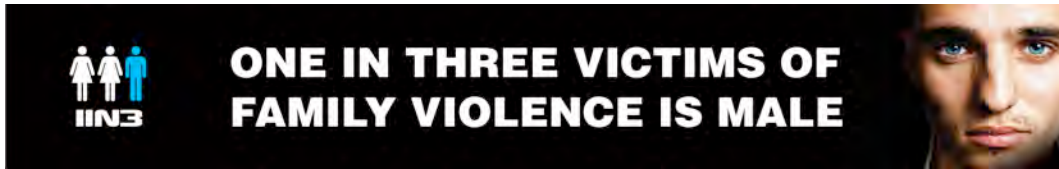
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## Appendix E: One in Three Campaign Fact Sheet No. 5

Fact Sheet No.5: Fear & Intimidation



### Fact Sheet No.5

#### Are male victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) far less likely to be afraid or intimidated than female victims?

International studies demonstrate that

- Males are taught by sex-role conditioning not to admit fear, making it appear that women are more fearful simply because they report fear more freely than men<sup>1 2</sup>

**“In most cases, the wife's intent to control and dominate the husband entailed efforts to induce fear in him relating to his personal safety as well as the fate of the children and property in general. She would often threaten to burn the house down, hurt the children or animals, or kill herself, him or the children: she would often drive dangerously to frighten him, and make him realise how serious and dangerous she could be. This generated intimidation, insecurity, and fear in the husbands and the family members in general.”<sup>5</sup>**

- Women and men have different perceptions of danger and use fear-scales quite differently. Women are twice as likely as men to fear death from a partner, when the actual probability of being killed is the same. Women may over-react to objective threat, while men probably under-react<sup>1 2</sup>.

**“Men reported also symptoms such as tightness in the stomach, muscular pain, racing pulse, thought distortion, and panic attacks. Perpetual fear and being 'on guard' were experienced by most participants. Other commonly expressed reactions were, feelings of lack of control and inadequacy and constant denigration of the man, which often caused him to accept his partner's view of him, and to lose self esteem.”<sup>5</sup>**

- Women's greater fear of male violence, where it exists, could also simply stem from the greater average size and strength of men, rather than from any difference in motives between men and women who use IPV<sup>4</sup>.

- Men have rarely had their fear of female violence assessed. One of the few studies to do this found that a substantial minority of male victims of IPV feared their partner's violence and were stalked. Over half the men were fearful that their partners would cause them serious injury if they found out that he had called the domestic violence helpline<sup>2 3</sup>.

**“The feminist view is that all male violence is designed to generate fear to enable coercion. The data suggest a motivational profile for use of violence by either gender is far more complex. The question for feminists remains given that research indicates high levels of female violence, much of it against non-violent males and hence not in self-defence; how is that violence any different from male violence? How can male violence still be depicted as being in pursuit of power and control when female violence is also frequent and, according to the women themselves, not defensive?”<sup>2</sup>**

- Another such study of male victims of IPV found that “perpetual fear and being ‘on guard’ were experienced by most participants”<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that men's fear is often internalised and thus invisible to the outside observer.
- There is little evidence to support the assertion that all male violence is designed to generate fear in women to enable coercion. In fact the data shows that both men and women have much more complex motives behind their use of IPV<sup>2</sup>.

**“Analog studies of fear induction in response to intimate conflicts found that women would report more fear even when exposure to the stimulus (a videotaped conflict between others) could not possibly be threatening or endangering... Men use fear scales differently and are less likely to report fear as opposed to other emotions. Creating police responses based on who is most afraid means perpetrators can be arrested based on reported internal reactions that cannot be corroborated.”<sup>1</sup>**

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## Appendix F: NSW Health Domestic Violence Screening Tool

 SMR025080	NSW HEALTH	FAMILY NAME	MRN	
	Site _____  <b>Mental Health</b> <b>SCREENING FOR</b> <b>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</b>	GIVEN NAMES	<input type="checkbox"/> MALE <input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE	
		D.O.B. ____/____/____	M.O.	
		ADDRESS		
		LOCATION		
COMPLETE ALL DETAILS OR AFFIX PATIENT LABEL HERE				
<p><i>For females aged 16 or over, the completion of the Screening For Domestic Violence is mandatory. Attach completed module to Assessment module and summarise findings under 'Alerts/Risks' on page 1, 'Current Functioning and Supports' on page 5, 'Risk Assessment' on page 7 and 'Initial Management Plan' on page 8.</i></p> <p>The domestic violence routine screening tool is to be used with women aged 16 and over and in accordance with screening protocols and the NSW Health Policy and Procedures for Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence.</p> <p><b>YOU MUST EXPLAIN THIS TO THE WOMEN BEING INTERVIEWED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "In this Health Service we ask all women the same questions about violence at home."</li> <li>• "This is because violence in the home is very common and can be serious and we want to improve our response to women experiencing domestic violence."</li> <li>• "You don't have to answer the questions if you don't want to."</li> <li>• "What you say will remain confidential to the Health Service except where you give us information that indicates that there are serious safety concerns for you or your children."</li> </ul> <p><b>SCREENING QUESTIONS:</b></p> <p>1 "Within the last year have you been hit, slapped or hurt in other ways by your partner or ex-partner?" <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</span></p> <p>2 "Are you frightened of your partner or ex-partner?" <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</span></p> <p>If the woman answers NO to both questions, give the information card to her and say:  <b>"Here is some information that we are giving to all women about domestic violence."</b></p> <p>If the woman answers YES to either or both of the above questions continue to question 3 and 4.</p> <p>3 "Are you safe to go home/Are you safe here at home?" <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</span></p> <p>4 "Would you like some assistance with this?" <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</span></p> <p>Consider safety concerns raised in answers to questions.</p>				
<p><b>ACTION TAKEN:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence identified, information given <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence identified, information declined <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence not identified, information given <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence not identified, information declined <input type="checkbox"/> Support given and options discussed <input type="checkbox"/> Reported to DoCS <input type="checkbox"/> Police notified <input type="checkbox"/> Referral made to _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Other action taken _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Other violence/abuse disclosed _____		<p><b>SCREENING WAS NOT COMPLETED DUE TO:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of partner <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of other family members <input type="checkbox"/> Woman declined to answer the questions <input type="checkbox"/> Other reason/s, please specify: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____		
Staff Name: _____ Signature: _____		Designation: _____ Date: _____		

BINDING MARGIN - NO WRITING

MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PH 655 - 09/2008

SMR025.080



## Appendix G: Transcript of recent Triple J talkback session

**Tom Tilly:** Yesterday on the show we brought you some research about the way gender-based violence towards women has drastic consequences for their mental health. While that segment was going to air a few of you guys called in to tell us your stories. Around one in three young victims of relationship violence are male. And, if you are a guy whose been on the receiving end of some relationship violence please give us a call and share your story with us.

**Announcer:** HACK. 1-300 0555 36. Text 0439 75 7555.

**Tom Tilly:** One of the men that called in yesterday was a guy that we have called Johnny.

**Johnny:** Things like a hit across the face or a punch. Swearing, calling me “cunt,” “fuckhead,” saying the thought of touching me made her sick. Threats of suicide if I stayed, threats of suicide if I left. Self-harming in front of me.

**Johnny:** My name is Johnny. I am 26 years old and I was involved in a relationship and I still am. And for a time, it was an abusive relationship where my girlfriend was verbally abusive and actually physically violent and of course as a man there is no way I would ever retaliate. It went on for a while until I threatened to leave. But it had a major effect on my mental health. I lost my dream job restoring early cars. I got a bad case of the shakes. I became really anti-social – didn’t want to talk to anyone and genuinely, just had a break down, I guess you could call it.

**Johnny:** Still my concentration is atrocious. When I talk about it I get shaky again. I am trying to improve but it was a genuinely horrible part of my life and something that took me a while to deal with. I didn’t feel like I should have an issue because I just thought, “I am a man so I should be able to just harden up,” you know, just get through it and I thought it was just me being silly. But, after I started to lose my coordination, my job, my ability to focus for long periods of time, I realised that it did it was not on and had a major, major, major impact on my life.

**Johnny:** It was a real shock and it took a while to register. For the first while, I just thought it was just girls blow off steam, the crazy garden-variety women stuff. But it turns out it is not. It got worse and worse to the point where it was – had me in tears, I guess. And then that's when I sought to get help. I see a psychologist and I learned that that behaviour was inappropriate and I had to make a definite change or she had to change. So that pretty much brings you up to speed of where we are at at the moment.

**Johnny:** I am on Escitalopram or Lexapro which is a form of antidepressant. I also have to have a lot of my own mental strategies in order to function on a day to day basis. My loyalty for the girl outways what my brain also says is you know, run while you can. But, I do believe I love the girl with all my heart. I do believe that she needs a lot of help. And, I do believe that I am able to be a supportive partner and I want to be so much, so, so, so much.

**Johnny:** The longer I stick around if it continues the more I am going to just get worn down until my own mental health is equally as destroyed, I guess, so it's a bit scary. But we are trying to work it out and seek help for my girlfriend and see if she can sort herself out and this relationship can be saved. But, I am under no illusions that it will be easy and I'm under no illusions it will definitely work out so that's where we are at at the moment.

**Tom Tilly:** Johnny speaking to our reporter Patrick Abboud there. If you've got a story that relates to Johnny's, you have experienced relationship violence as a male give us a call.

**Announcer:** HACK. 1300 0555 36. Text 0439 75 7555.

**Tom Tilly:** A few texts coming in. One person says “physical violence of any sort is not on but many forget about emotional abuse just as important but no obvious scars. It destroys guys’ confidence.” That’s from Ryan. Another person says, “I was attacked by a partner, had to get a protection order but it took three attempts in court because I was male.” And that’s from Drew. Michelle, you have known three guys that could relate to Johnny's story.



**Michelle:** Yeah, I have had three friends that have been victims of violence by their girlfriends.

**Tom Tilly:** Were they able to talk to someone about it?

**Michelle:** Yeah, not really like even when I witnessed one of my friends being hit by his girlfriend and when I sort of tried to talk to him about it like saying you know, "It's not okay," he was just like, "Oh, I don't want to talk about it," and didn't really back away from that. He didn't know where to go or what to do about it. And, yeah, it's pretty hard for him to do that. You know, go through it.

**Tom Tilly:** Did you get the sense that he was really ashamed of what was going on?

**Michelle:** Yeah, and when I tried to speak to her about it as well, she was like, "Oh well, you know, he does this and he does that." And she really was putting the blame back on him and he was almost mirroring that behaviour, like he was really embarrassed about it and you know just like as though he should be able to take that.

**Tom Tilly:** Thanks so much for the call Michelle.

**Michelle:** No worries, thanks.

**Tom Tilly:** Mike, you can relate to it and it's made you terrified of getting into a new relationship.

**Mike:** Yeah absolutely. I have been single and celibate for over 11 years now. And in that time – I'm not putting tickets on myself – but I've have some quite attractive offers, but I'm terrified. It really scares me the thought of getting into a relationship.

**Tom Tilly:** Why is that?

**Mike:** Because of it was just endless verbal abuse and emotional blackmail and emotional abuse, and then fairly regular, like violent outbursts where I've had, you know, bottles, knives, endless objects thrown at me and I've been punched and kicked, kneed in the nuts, the whole thing. Actually I'm shaking.

**Tom Tilly:** Oh, that's full-on. Obviously, you are still worried that that might happen in your next relationship.

**Mike:** Yeah it terrifies me. I'm actually shaking talking about it. It terrifies me.

**Tom Tilly:** Yeah, I can hear in your voice. Mike, thanks so much for your call.

**Mike:** No worries, thank you.

**Tom Tilly:** Brooke, you've been on the other end. You have abused your male partner. What happened there?

**Brooke:** Well basically, I hit him a couple of times and I know that is pretty bad. I am actually a black-belt in Taekwondo.

**Tom Tilly:** Wow. Frightening.

**Brooke:** I should probably know a little better than that. Yeah I was at a point where I had actually experienced some violence myself and I wasn't defending myself at the time he was just constantly at me and arguing and emotionally abusing me. And, I am just the type of girl where I don't like to argue and I don't like to yell. I just like things to be over. And the only way I could see for things to stop was for me to hit him. It was actually, we were both intoxicated in the middle of the street and I punched him expecting nothing to happen because I'm a lot smaller and he's a football player and I knocked him out. In the middle of the street.

**Tom Tilly:** Wow. You really did sort it out quite quickly.



**Brooke:** Yeah, and there was blood. And I freaked out. I'm crying, calling my dad saying "he won't get up, I don't know what to do," and people think it is actually okay, and I, like the previous email caller...

**Tom Tilly:** How did you feel after that happened?

**Brooke:** I felt really guilty. You know it is not the right behaviour. I trained in Taekwondo for how ever many years to know that it's a defence thing. He didn't attacked me when I did it, he just aggravated me to the point where I just, I snapped, I guess. And you know, I know that that's not okay and I've never done it since and you know, I've been in many arguments and so on. But, it's just he seemed to be able to get at me to that point where there was nothing else I could do or say except to just stop it.

**Tom Tilly:** Thanks so much for the call there Brooke. That's a really interesting story.

**Brooke:** Mmm, thank you.

**Tom Tilly:** We have Greg Andresen in the studio. He is a researcher in relationship violence, and particularly in relation to men, and he is part of a campaign called the One in Three Campaign. It highlights the fact that over a third of young victims of relationship violence are male. Greg thanks for joining us in the studio.

**Greg Andresen:** Yeah, you're very welcome.

**Tom Tilly:** You just heard that really interesting story from Brook where there was a combination of the male partner being aggressive in a verbal sense and she fought back physically. Obviously there is a trade off of different kinds of abuse going on there.

**Greg Andresen:** Right!

**Tom Tilly:** How do you kind of manage that sort of scenario?

**Greg Andresen:** Well that's actually, we hear a lot about domestic violence and the main story that is out there is about female victims and it is really great that you are talking about males today, but another story that you've just brought up now which does not get much of an airing is this mutual violence. It's actually...

**Tom Tilly:** Of different kinds.

**Greg Andresen:** Of different kinds, right! So it's actually, it's more common for there to be this mutual violence where men and women are going at each other, both of them are in a sense abusive or violent but possibly in different ways. That is actually more common than this unilateral, one person abusing the other and so...

**Tom Tilly:** Yeah because we talk about victims, don't we, and that seems to almost, you know, dichotomise them, but it is not often like that.

**Greg Andresen:** Right and then suddenly someone's the saint and someone's the evil party, but really violence is extremely complex especially, and here is another key, when alcohol is involved like in this story. The correlation between alcohol use and relationship violence is very, very high. People lose control of their normal inhibitions and unfortunately can lash out like your last caller.

**Tom Tilly:** One person's texted in and says "I was mentally bullied by my first girlfriend for seven years. I'm now 34 and still haven't recovered properly." Why is it so hard for men to be able to deal with this?

**Greg Andresen:** Look, men, they really face a set of unique barriers compared to women which make them much less likely to actually report being a victim or to actually tell someone about it. And a lot of it is about this challenge to their sense of manhood or masculinity. There is a lot of shame or embarrassment for men if their female partner is abusing them. There is a





real social stigma out there, because they are afraid that if they tell someone, they might be laughed at, they may be told, you know "Man up!" as that earlier caller said.

**Tom Tilly:** Well, actually a text has just come in and says, "The men should eat a teaspoon of concrete and harden up."

**Greg Andresen:** Right.

**Tom Tilly:** Is that part of the problem?

**Greg Andresen:** That's absolutely the problem. That's the problem. And that attitude unfortunately does not just come from friends or family, that comes from, we have had men tell their stories on the One In Three website and there are stories of men going in to police stations, you know, this is where they should be taken seriously and the police saying, "Go home! Harden up!" you know, "There's nothing we can do for you here."

**Tom Tilly:** Is there work being done to change those attitudes?

**Greg Andresen:** Look, I wouldn't want to tar the whole police with that brush. I think it is probably a few bad apples and on the whole, it's actually probably pretty good, but, look, let's hope that they are doing something and programs like this may help with that.

**Tom Tilly:** Bill, you weren't taken seriously when you were in this situation.

**Bill:** No, not at all. I mean, you know, I was in a relationship where it was pretty good most of the time, but then there was a lot of emotional abuse coming my way. You know, and it got to physical abuse and it was both of us, you know. Nothing too major but at the end of it, when everything fell apart, I lost pretty much everybody, because I was taken as the bad guy because I'm a male when no-one really knew how complex the whole situation really was. Where, you know, I was trying to do everything, but nothing was ever resolved. And now I'm the bad party when really it wasn't the case.

**Tom Tilly:** Was it her only that was carrying out physical violence or were you involved in that as well?

**Bill:** No, not at all. I mean, as far as, you know, there was a few slaps and things like that and a bit of pushing and things like that, but no nothing, nothing major on my half, it was more the other way but I...

**Tom Tilly:** Was she laying right into you?

**Bill:** Oh yeah, absolutely yeah, at times definitely.

**Tom Tilly:** Were you physically stronger than her like if you had wanted to would you have been able to overpower her?

**Bill:** Oh absolutely, easily but you know that's not my nature.

**Tom Tilly:** But you never did?

**Bill:** No, no not at all. But I was always seen as the bad party in the end of it because you know, people thought the relationship got violent and it was my fault.

**Tom Tilly:** Thank's so much for the call there, Bill.

**Bill:** No worries, ta.

**Tom Tilly:** Greg, that raises an interesting question for me because in a lot of cases on average, men will be stronger than women and they potentially could overpower them, unless they are a taekwondo black-belt like our previous caller.

**Greg Andresen:** Right.



**Tom Tilly:** But what does a man do in that situation? We all grow up with that great ethic “a men should never hit a woman,” but how does a man deal with that when physically he could solve that situation.

**Greg Andresen:** Right, well look, this is all too common and in fact, one other issue he brought which I just wanted to mention is often, men are really seen as the bad guy when there is mutual violence or even when they are the victim of violence and that’s really, really unfortunate. But, yeah absolutely, this... men are told – well, little boys learn, you don’t hit girls and men learn you don’t hit women. It’s this sort of old chivalry thing that we all learn.

**Tom Tilly:** And obviously, you don’t want to do that. But, is that part of the problem, that sort of old school ethic in a way?

**Greg Andresen:** No, I think that is really great, because imagine if your last caller didn’t have that ethic and he’d laid back into her, he probably, because of his bigger size and strength, would have injured her a lot worse. So it’s actually great that he was able to restrain himself. But the problem is, that he ends up taking it because he feels there’s no way to, in a sense, fight back or to challenge it. So I really think men in his situation, they really need to tell someone about it. That’s the first step: don’t bottle it in yourself.

**Tom Tilly:** Greg Andresen thanks for joining us on Hack.

**Greg Andresen:** You are very welcome.

**Announcer:** HACK. With Tom Tilly on triple j.

**Tom Tilly:** That’s Greg Andresen. He is from Men’s Health Australia talking about violence in relationships where the man is the victim. That’s all we have time for today. Thanks so much for all your texts and calls. We’ll be back tomorrow at 5:30.





## Appendix G: Details of Ending Family Violence Program, Woorabinda

*CDFVR Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum*

*2 May 2006, Mackay*

### **Ending Family Violence Program, Woorabinda**

By Annette Hennessy and Carol Willie

#### ***Introduction***

This paper deals with a program developed specifically for Indigenous Offenders in the area of Domestic and Family Violence related offending. The program is delivered by the Office of Community Corrections (Rockhampton) in Woorabinda and is supported by the Magistrates Court. The aim of the use of the program is to divert offenders in this category away from violent offending through a culturally appropriate offender intervention program. Many of the offenders attending the program might otherwise be in prison. Many studies recently have highlighted the problems indigenous families face when offenders are imprisoned. The aim of this process is to allow offenders to stay in the community whilst working on rehabilitating themselves with a view to an end to violent offending in the future, resulting in a safe environment for the family.

#### ***Ending Family Violence Program – Entry to Program***

Offenders appearing in Magistrates Court at Woorabinda for offences related to family violence – breach domestic violence order and assaults – may be placed on probation with conditions to attend and satisfactorily complete Ending Offending and Ending Family Violence programs, both of which are delivered by staff of the Office of Community Corrections.

An offender is considered an appropriate candidate to be placed on Probation if they have not breached community based orders in recent years or have not been given the opportunity of a community based order (whether or not they have previously been sentenced to imprisonment); that they are willing to participate in a probation order (they are required to consent to the order being made under the legislation); that it appears to the Court that the offender will benefit from intervention through the programs coupled with domestic violence counseling or otherwise; and that the circumstances of the offence before the Court, taking into account the offender's history means that an order of Probation is legally appropriate. Offenders at risk of a sentence of imprisonment are also targeted.

Probation orders are usually made for a period of 12 months to enable the offender to complete both the Ending Offending (Alcohol related) and Ending Family Violence Programs. There are quite often other conditions such as domestic violence counseling through Helem Yumba Healing Centre, attendance at ATODs for substance abuse, attendance at Mental Health Unit (all available in Woorabinda) and attendance on the Community Justice Group (for monitoring and assistance from community members involved in the justice system). It is a pre-requisite that offenders complete the Ending Offending program first as the vast majority of this offending is alcohol related or the offender has substance abuse problems and the information given in this program is built on in the Family Violence program. Both courses are run as a block twice a year in Woorabinda.

The Ending Family Violence Program is facilitated at present by Carolyn Willie (Department of Community Corrections) and Pastor Barry Mann. It was initiated by the Department of Corrective Services and developed by Murri people for use in prisons with Murri offenders. The program has been delivered in Woorabinda since late 2003 and Woorabinda first place in the State to run program for females.

Offenders on Probation orders with a condition that the programs be completed may also be joined in the program by offenders on other community based orders who the Office of Community Corrections consider will benefit from the program. Conditions of community

## **Ending Family Violence Program, Woorabinda**

*By Annette Hennessy and Carol Willie*

based orders (Probation, Community Service and Intensive Correction Order) provide for referral to programs or services by the supervising Community Corrections Officer.

Both males and females are referred to the program. There has been an increase in “mutual” or “cross” domestic violence orders in recent years, where on application an order is made against each of the parties in a conflict. As a consequence there have been more women who are subject to an order as a respondent and more breach charges against women have been seen in the Courts. All Woorabinda offenders are offered the opportunity by the Court of the intervention through the Ending Family Violence program when it is appropriate, at the earliest stage possible. Anecdotally it has been apparent that generally women are more prepared than men to accept intervention at an early stage in their offending life. Many men coming to court for family and domestic violence offences have the expectation (or desire) that they will receive a fine as penalty and may not be prepared to consider intervention of this nature until they are at risk of a more serious penalty such as imprisonment. Whilst some men have accepted the intervention early on, many men have not. As the offender is required by law to agree to the Probation order being made, the intervention cannot be imposed on them. Consequently, many of the men coming to the programs are entrenched offenders and the task of diverting them from future offending becomes much more difficult.

### ***Duration and setting of the Program***

The Ending Offending Program is of 6 weeks duration and is run 2 days per week for 5 hours. Ending Family Violence Program runs for 10 weeks and is run on Mondays and Tuesdays of each week for 5 hours each day. The program is run at Woorabinda Justice Group Office. The maximum number of offenders in the program at any one time is 6-8. Male and female offenders are handled by male and female conveners as is culturally appropriate. The meeting format varies during the delivery of the program including discussions, information giving, videos, group activities, private discussions and ‘homework’ activities.

### ***Contents of the Program***

At the outset of the program delivery, participants introduce themselves by reference to the tribal map and who their people are. Group rules are explained. A video, “*Regenerate the Warrior*” is shown. The video explores the experiences of a Murri man who explains the traditional role of Murri men as Warriors. The facilitators also incorporate the traditional of Women as Nurturers. The video looks at the role of the warrior, looks at where the warriors have gone and the social impacts on the continuation of that role. The dual roles of the Warrior/Nurturer is expressed in the program as being to provide food, shelter and protection for all members of the family. Traditionally Murri people are not violent people and the social disintegration which has occurred over the last 200 years has changed the fabric of the Murri family and broken down traditional roles.

The program promotes a healing circle approach – Identifying the problem, admitting responsibility for the problem, dealing with it, and planning for the future. It is the participant’s responsibility to do this, there are services and people who can assist them but the ultimate responsibility is theirs.

Following an introduction to program, an outline of the feature sections of the program is provided. Those points include: Understanding different types of violence; Understanding the

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impact of violence; Looking at the influence of alcohol; Alcohol and violence in families; Consequences of violence; Empowerment; and Relapse Prevention.

Violence is looked at and discussed in detail, with an exploration of understanding different types of violence. The impact of violence on family, community and offenders is little understood and time is taken to look at those impacts. Often this is the first time that offenders actually consider all of the impacts of their actions on themselves and those around them. A more general examination of the impact of domestic violence, family violence and the cycle of violence in the community is also undertaken. This is an integral section of the program as navigating the hazards of a dysfunctional community in relation to family violence can be very difficult for an offender despite their best intentions efforts to move away from violence. It is not until positive change in the cycle of violence can be effected in the community, starting from individual efforts, that offenders will be living in a situation where violence is not accepted and not tolerated. Definitions of violence are discussed and the broad nature of actions which are included is usually a revelation to offenders (Threats, harassment, intimidation and sexual assault etc).

A Power Exercise (using sets of photo language cards) is conducted early in the program and again later in the program. The exercise involves the display of numerous photos ( of landscapes, children, beaches, horses, many different photos) and participants are asked to choose 3 photos that speak to them. They are asked why they choose those photos and to discuss what feelings prompted those choices e.g. loneliness may have prompted the choice of a photo – the facilitator will speak with the participant about the feelings and then talk about the positive aspects of the photograph and the potential that the image can contain, in effect encouraging looking forward in a positive way and not perpetuating the negative feelings that might presently be associated with the participant's life.

A Power and Control Wheel is utilized to look at who in the family or social situation where violence occurs actually has the power and who has the control. The focus is to encourage a realistic acknowledgment of who holds the power in a real sense and encouraging that person to take responsibility for the control of the situation – acknowledging who has control and who is placed to do something about improving the situation.

Equality and Non –Violence is looked at in a similar way and focuses on the equality of all members of the family and respect for those people as well as acknowledging that all members of the family have equal rights and a say in what happens. Myths about Men's Rights are also challenged. Issues discussed include – your wife is your partner not your property, children are individuals and have needs which you need to meet, looking at participant's responsibility for their families.

Alcohol can often be a significant factor in the cycle of family violence in communities. The Ending Offending program is a pre-requisite to the Ending Family Violence program at Woorabinda and the issues from that program are reinforced again. Participants are informed of the facts relating to Alcohol-related Offences amongst Indigenous Australians. The Ending Offending Video is played and the effects of Alcohol on the Community are discussed. Reasons for violence are looked at (Alcohol is never an excuse). A video, "In the Gutter – no Way" is viewed which contains interviews with Murri people who have been 'in the gutter' and worked their way back into the community. Further issues looked at include Physical Effects of Alcohol misuse; Alcohol and Violence in Families; and Impact of Violence on Children and Young People.

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Participants are asked to draw a Timeline, plotting when they first started offending (including childhood), when they started drinking or smoking yarrdi and what was happening in their life at the time. Quite often it is apparent that a trigger event (death of a significant person, marriage) coincides with the drinking and offending commencing. This enables the participant to see that they are not bad people but there are reasons underlying these difficulties in their lives and perhaps to identify counseling or assistance they need for those underlying issues.

The question - Where do You want to be – is posed to participants and they are encouraged to look back and look forward in order to answer the question. They may come from violent background and have developed a tolerant attitude to violence, for instance. This session looks at where the participant should be (in their view) and asks them to examine other ways they could have changed situations, and ways that they can manage situations in the future to break the cycle in their life. Other sessions include - Thinking about your drinking patterns; What are your feelings (Thinking about your Victim) – victim empathy; Emotional and Physical Effects of Violence; Impact of Violence on your Partner and Family.

A Video of a ‘Sunday’ Program report on a clan of Aboriginal Elder women from Central Australia which tells the story of their move from the mission settlements back onto their land in Central Australia and the traditional lifestyle they now lead. This story illustrates to participants that such a move could be possible if the community works towards it.

Non Violent Ways of Behaving, the consequences of actions for yourself and those around you are explored. Information is given on Learned Social Behaviour with a focus on good memories from learned social behaviour - what makes you feel loved and needed and how to act in that way towards others. The program provides practical information for discussion by participants to arm them with skills to live their lives without needing to resort to violence as a reaction or coping mechanism. They are encouraged to identify Cues and Warning Signs which lead to or prompt their violent behaviour. Methods to bring the role of protector (Warrior) back to the fore are discussed.

An exercise is conducted using a relationship pyramid. Participants are asked to place themselves on the pyramid indicating where see themselves in the extended family (they should be somewhere in the middle). They then give justifications for where they have placed themselves, look at where they think they should be after a rethink.

Discussions include finding reactions which may be an alternative to violence. Participants are strongly informed that the ‘Violence has to Stop’ and it has to “begin with you”. Stress and Relaxation Strategies are discussed. Alternative Strategies are examined – suggestions include walk away, ban alcohol from house, take the children for game of footy, if you know a big booze up is on, then take the children out hunting, spend traditional time with children and extended family – there is a big emphasis on children and what they feel about what they see.

The Building Blocks of Change are put in place. Participants are encouraged to take Baby steps - if you fall down don’t mentally beat yourself up, walk on from there, acknowledge that you are changing a whole lifestyle and the habits of many years and move on in a positive way. Questions to think about are given – look at what changes they want to make and ideas they can use to bring about change themselves – the focus is on self-reliance rather than the welfare approach.

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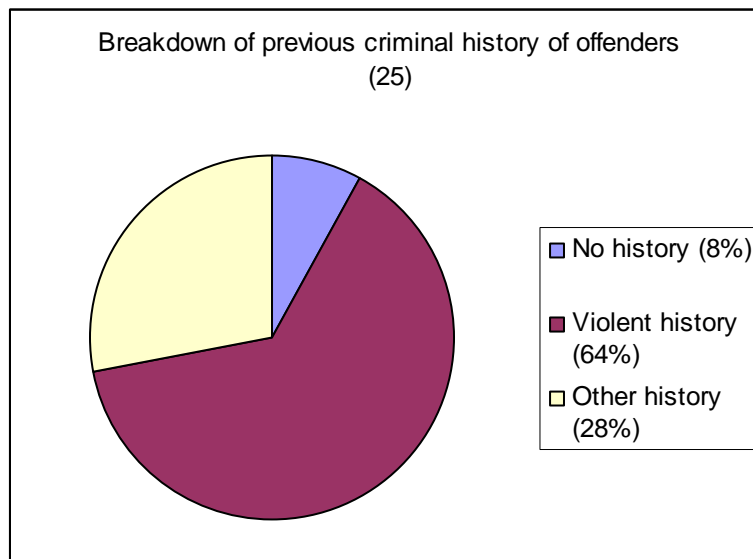
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The program concludes with the participants Clarifying their Values. Preventing a Relapse Back to Violent Behaviour is an important focus and practical methods of self monitoring and self control are reinforced to arm the participants with the skills to move forward in a non-violent way. Participants are encouraged to think about making a Contract with themselves to end violent reactions to situations. A Post program questionnaire is conducted with each participant and the program is brought to a resolution.

### ***Outcomes of the Program***

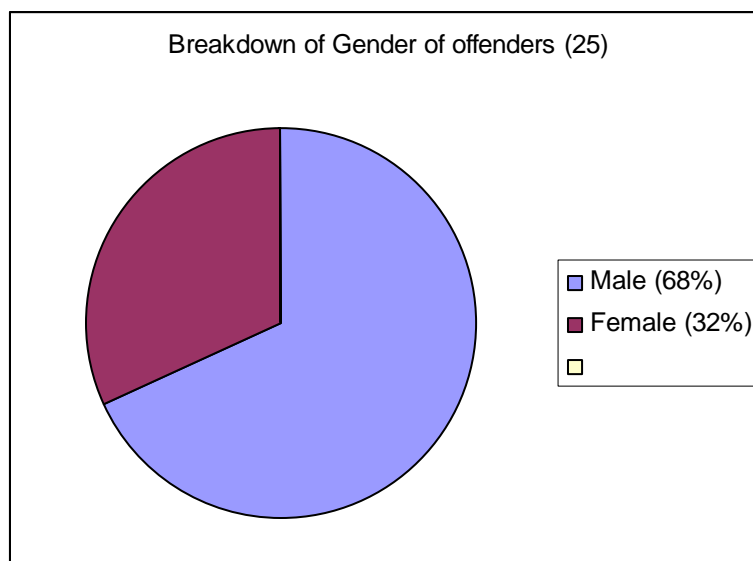
The subject group of offenders is a small group of 25, ordered to the program over a period of 2 ½ years.

Previous Criminal History - Of the 25 offenders, 2 had no previous criminal history, 16 had criminal history with predominantly violent offences and 7 had other criminal history (traffic and minor offences (See Table 1).



**Table 1**

Gender Breakdown - 17 of the 25 offenders were male and 8 were female.

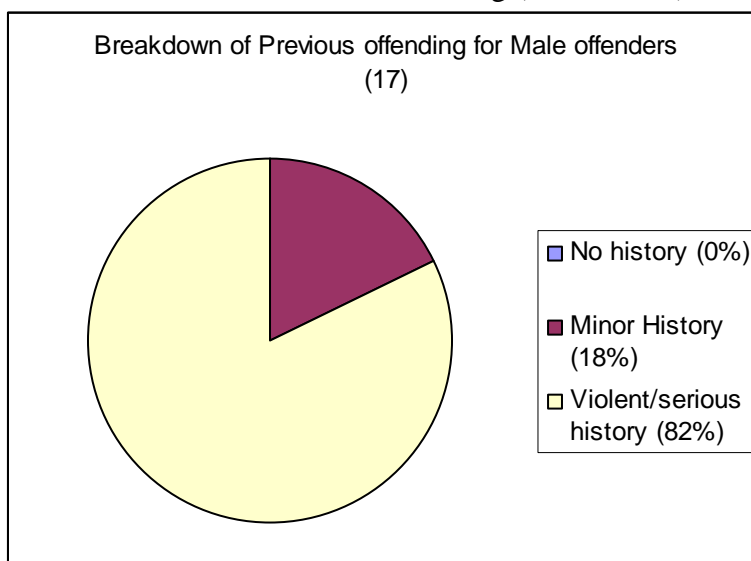


**Table 2**

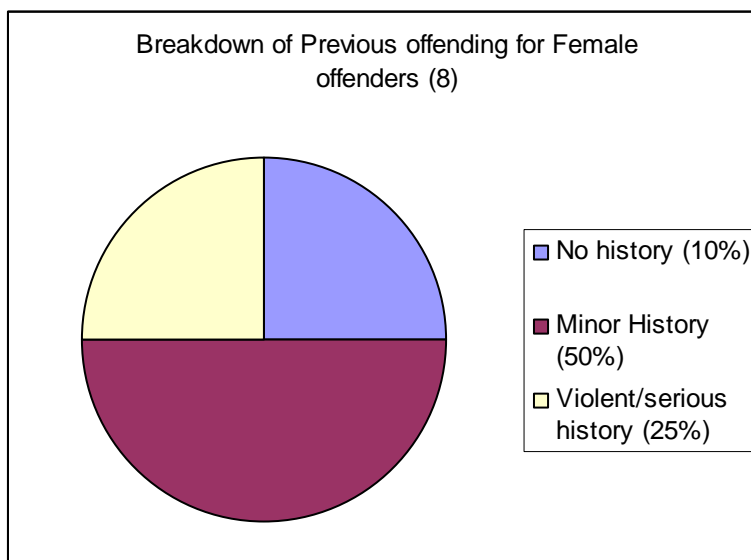
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The Male offenders were made up of 3 with minor criminal history and 14 with violent or serious offending (See Table 3). Female offenders consisted of 2 with no criminal history, 4 with minor history and 2 with violent or serious offending (See Table 4).



**Table 3**



**Table 4**

Completion Rate - 76% of the offenders completed the Probation Orders (19/25). Offenders were charged with breaching the Orders in 10 cases (8 offenders re-offended during the Probation order – 6 for violent offences - and 2 offenders did not comply with the Order in that they did not attend the program. Of the 10 Orders breached, 6 orders were revoked and the offenders were re-sentenced in relation to the original offences. The other 4 Orders continued. 30% of the offenders committed violent offences during the period of the Probation order.

24% of the offenders ordered to attend the program **completely ceased offending** (6/25). 36% of the offenders ordered to attend the program **ceased violent offending** (9/25).

In total, **60% of the offenders (15/25) were diverted from violence**. Of the 23 offenders who had **previous criminal history**, **64% of them did not commit further offences of violence** (15/23).

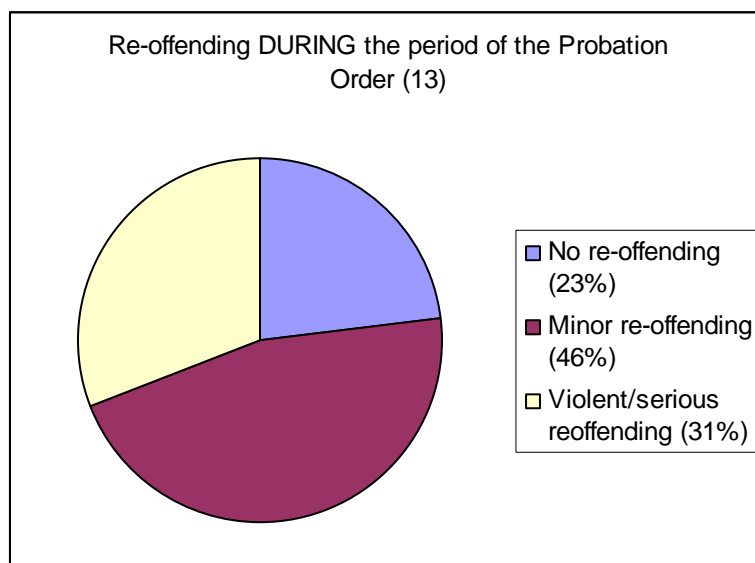
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There was a general reduction in the offending rate of the offenders on the Orders after completion of the programs. 6 of the offenders who completed the programs did not re-offend at all (31%) while 13 of the offenders completing the program had some re-offending (69%).

**Table of Re-offending DURING the period of the Probation Order**  
(D = defendant – Total 13)

Type of Offence	Number of Offenders	Offenders
No Re-offending	3	D1 D5 D7
Minor (traffic, simple offences)	6	D2 D3 D8 D9 D10 D11
Violent / Serious offences	4	D4 D6 D12 D13



**Table 5**

Re-offending after completion of program

46% of the offenders completing the program did not re-offend at all.

19% committed further violent offences after the program (compare with 64% of offenders who had previous violent or serious history).

Of the 30% who committed offences of violence during the Probation order, ½ of them committed no further offences of violence.

Of the 4 offenders who committed violent offences during the Order, 1 re-offended violently twice, 1 re-offended after a significant period of time and **2 did not re-offend at all** after they completed the Order (See Table 6).

Of the 6 offenders who committed minor offences during the order, only 1 committed a violent offence after the Order more than a year later. Therefore 5 offenders who committed minor offences during the Order **DID NOT commit a violent offence** after the completion of the Order (See Table 6).



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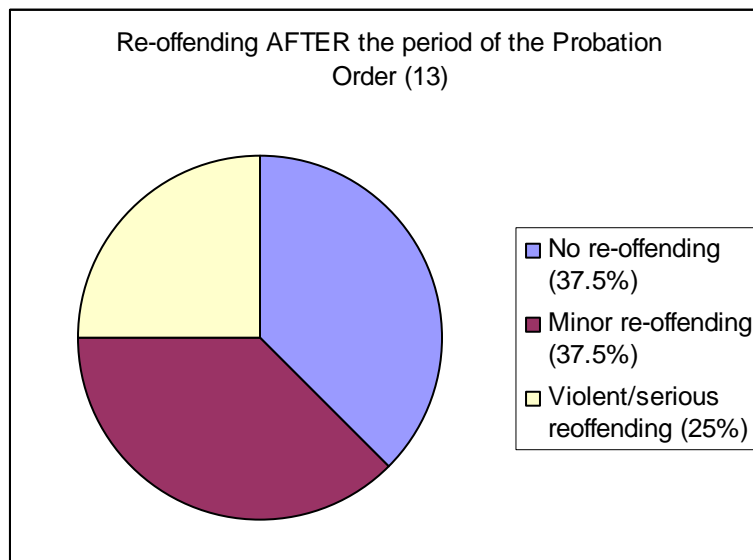
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The majority of re-offending was for non-violent offences (12 of 20 instances).

Violent re-offending occurred shortly after the program completion and 12 or more months after the program completion. It would seem overall that the effect of the program wanes as time progresses for some offenders with 5 offenders re-offending after the 9month mark.

**Table of Re-offending AFTER the period of the Probation Order**

No re-offending	6	D3 D9 D10 D11	D12 D13			
<b>Type of Offence</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>0-3 months after program</b>	<b>3-6 months after program</b>	<b>6-9 months after program</b>	<b>9-12 months after program</b>	<b>12 +mths after program</b>
Minor	7	D5	D4 D4 D5 D2 D2	D7 D8	D2 D7	D1 D4
Violent/serious	4	D7 D7	D6 D7 D7		D6	D2 D4



**Table 6**

NOTE: Some offenders committed both minor and violent offences after the Probation Order.

Re-sentenced Offenders

4 offenders were re-sentenced for the original offence after breaching the Probation order. 2 of them committed further offences of violence (compare that 50% with only 19% of those completing the Order committing further offences of violence indicating a trend towards the reduction of violent offending after the program).

**Table of re-offending by offenders who DID NOT complete the program (4)**

Type of Offence	No. of Offenders	0-3 months after breach	3-6 months after breach	6-9 months after breach	9-12 mths after breach	12 + mths after breach
Nil	1 D16					
Minor	3	D15			D17	D14
Violent	2		D15	D17		

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### ***Positive Social Benefits of the Program***

Many offenders have become very engaged with the process during the program and facilitators have seen offenders who give deep thought to the issues, discuss topics with their partners and families, ask questions and even present themselves to the facilitators requesting to do the program a second time. Members of the community are gradually becoming more inclined to access and use resources and services on a regular basis to address issues that they have – they know where the help is for them, even though it might be different for everyone. As people become aware of the services and programs being offered in the community, other members of the community have also indicated a desire to participate in the program even though they are not on a Probation Order. The facilitators have made themselves readily available to go to Woorabinda at other times if needed, arrangements are easily made for them to assist offenders to put something in place for them to move forward in a positive.

### ***Case Studies***

The following Case Studies are brief outlines of the situations of two offenders, both with similar criminal histories and coming before the Court for the same charge, Breach of Domestic Violence Order.

Offender 1 was aged 41 when he came before the Court. He had a previous conviction for Grievous Bodily Harm (a more serious offence than the subject offence which involved his partner) and had three convictions for assaults and other offences in the previous 10 years. He came before the Court for an assault on his partner (which act breached the domestic violence order) in a situation where they were both drinking and argued. He assaulted her by ripping off clothing and dragging her along the ground, also inflicting blows. He had a good job at the time of appearing in Court and was prepared to participate in the program. He was ordered to serve 12 months on Probation with conditions to attend and satisfactorily complete the Ending Offending and Ending Family Violence Programs. He completed the Probation order without incident, in the manner in which it was required and has not committed any further offences 18 months on from his appearance in Court.

Offender 2 was aged 24 years when he appeared before the Court. He had numerous previous convictions for assaults and other offences of violence which had previously resulted in terms of imprisonment. He was ordered to serve 12 months on Probation with conditions to attend and satisfactorily complete the Ending Offending and Ending Family Violence Programs. He breached the Probation Order 5 months after being placed on it, for failing to report to undertake the Ending Offending Program and responding poorly to supervision under the Order. The order was breached and he was re-sentenced for the original offence to 2 months imprisonment suspended for 12 months. He committed further offences 5 months on – Breach Domestic Violence Order x 2, Wilful Damage x 2, Breach Bail, Escape from Lawful Custody, and Assault Police – and was sentenced to imprisonment terms to be served.

Whilst both offenders had violent criminal histories, Offender 1 took advantage of the assistance offered to him through the program and has moved away from offending to live his life. Offender 2, on the other hand, did not comply with the requirement to attend at the program and was otherwise unco-operative with the conditions of the Probation Order. He was given a further opportunity through a suspended sentence which required him not to commit an offence during the period of suspension (12 months) but only 5 months on, he committed similar and more serious offences and was sentenced to imprisonment. One might have expected that the

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older man might have been harder to divert from his previous offending but it seems his maturity may have played a part in the decisions he took. Offender 1's employment may have also played a significant role in his turnaround.

### ***Conclusion***

Whilst the subject group is a small one and there was no control group, the early indications are that there are some benefits in the program for most offenders. The program provides assistance to the offender and the community as a means to divert offenders from violent offending. Most of the offenders in this group would have been at risk of a term of imprisonment due to their criminal history and/or the seriousness of the offence/s before the Court.

60% of offenders in this group were diverted from violent offending with 24% committing no further offences at all. Given that only 8% of offenders had no previous history at the outset, it could be argued that there was a **16% improvement** in that area.

64% of offenders had violent criminal histories but only 40% of offenders committed violent offences after going through this process, a **reduction of 24%**.

The offenders who completed the program were more successful than those who did not in reducing violent recidivism (19% compared to 50% committed further violent offences, a **reduction of 31%**).

It would seem that the program's positive benefits would be improved if there was follow up and support for offenders available 9-12 months after the completion of the program, and perhaps a refresher course to extend the effectiveness of the program.

Considering these objective outcomes and the social benefits for the offenders and consequently their families and community, the early indicators show that the program can assist offenders to reclaim their futures and move from violence and upheaval to calm and safe lives.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Department of Corrections Power Point Presentation on Ending Family Violence Program

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