

Hume Region Family Violence Prevention Newsletter Summer 2004

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Congratulations to all involved in creating community awareness and enhancing our services for family violence. There has been much activity happening with the networks in the past few months and a busy schedule planned for initiatives to come to fruition in 2004.

Highlights in the second half of last year were the continued success of the Wangaratta Family Violence Integration project and the good news that many rural and regional networks are setting up similar models to suit their communities. This collaborative response is improving the pathways for women seeking support to survive their violent family situations. A Victorian Community Council Against Violence family violence prevention pilot project in Shepparton is well on the way to implementing some initiatives that address the themes of improved service delivery and enhanced prevention and early intervention capacity.

Young people are constantly being identified as in need of relationship education that will prevent violent families in their later life. We were all excited about the \$15 mill. National media campaign about DV that was targeted at young people over the holiday period. We were devastated when we heard just prior to Xmas that the campaign had been vetoed because Federal MP's argued that the emotional torture portrayed in the ads "was not really violence". Another objection was the fact that only men were shown as the aggressors. The objection flew in the face of crime statistics showing that domestic violence is overwhelmingly committed by men. (The Australian, Christine Wallace, 16/12/03) You can all join in the protest of this waste of much needed resources by writing letters to MP's and supporting media releases in response to this. Meanwhile, the new DVIRC's Bursting the Bubble website is a useful tool for young people.

There have been several well attended training days, conferences and forums across the region and a rising interest in men's behaviour change programs. A range of inspiring community activities supported by much media attention across the region helped to create community awareness that family violence is everyone's business and not to be ignored. Please note the upcoming family violence prevention planning and review day scheduled for March 16th in Benalla when we will identify current issues, share information and set regional priorities.

All the best in your endeavours. Cheers for now,

Karen

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Ph. 57223009 Fax 57223020
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Congratulations to the Integration Team!

The Wangaratta Family Violence Integration Project was announced the winner of a 2003 Community Safety and Crime Prevention award from Crime Prevention Victoria.

Debbie Bailey, Integration project coordinator from Women's Health Goulburn North East and Claire Lewis, manager of Cooroonya Domestic Violence Service, along with Sgt. Graeme Threlfall from Wangaratta police received the award in the category of *Crime and Violence Prevention in Rural and Regional Victoria* at Parliament House on Wednesday 10th December. The Wangaratta integration project was one of 11 Victorian award winners who were presented with a trophy and \$500.

In the Wangaratta region, family violence services and the criminal justice system have worked together to achieve a more cohesive service system to benefit women and children who have experienced family violence. Police and court staff formally refer family violence clients to specialised domestic violence services in the local region. A brochure developed in partnership by local family violence services provides information about support services available to families.

The integration project is a collaboration between services working within the Wangaratta locality and their response to issues of family violence. The service system was mapped out by the members of the project team. The team included project partners Wangaratta police, Wangaratta court, Victim's Assistance Program, Community Legal Service, Central Hume Domestic Violence Service, Cooroonya Domestic Violence Service and Women's Health Goulburn North East, who collaborated with a focus on local resources and strategies to make effective change.

The project developed and implemented a formal referral system called 'fax back' for police and courts. This simple tool was created for women and agencies to identify local services for clients and services. This improved the pathway for clients seeking assistance at the Wangaratta courthouse in regards to family violence matters. The Wangaratta Integration Project has enabled family

violence services and the criminal justice system to work collaboratively together to achieve a more cohesive service system to benefit women and children who have experienced family violence. The scope of these partnerships is unprecedented for this region.

The Integration Project has significantly contributed to shifts in culture and attitudes towards women and children experiencing family violence in the local criminal justice system. The project will now monitor and evaluate changes in practice, relationships between services, levels of collaboration, shifts in attitudes, and the potential for long term systemic change by identifying gaps in service provision. The project has received a \$20,000 grant from The Reichstein Foundation to further develop the project.

Family violence in the home is a major issue in North East Victoria. This growing problem cannot be solved by any one agency alone. The Wangaratta Family Violence Integration Project is a great example of support agencies, police and the courts working together to address this significant community safety problem.



Pictured above: *Representatives of the Wangaratta Family Violence Integration project receiving the 2003 Community Safety and Crime Prevention award from Crime Prevention Victoria. from left: Claire Lewis, manager Cooroonya Domestic Violence Service, Sergeant Graeme Threlfall Wangaratta police and Debbie Bailey Women's Health Goulburn North East Project coordinator.*

A Resource Kit for Community Groups

Has your group or agency organised any activities or programs to prevent family violence in your community?

The Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre are producing a resource kit to illustrate the great work taking place in Victoria to prevent family violence in the community and we are looking for projects to include. We will have the kit available to your community by July 2004.

The Resource Kit will focus on the role that community services and organisations can play in the prevention of family violence and how these organisations can work in partnership with each other and with family violence specific services. This is an exciting opportunity to document some of the great work that goes on in your community to address family violence.

The kit will include examples of family violence prevention activities from the past 10 years from around the state and draw together the learning that has emerged from these activities. To accurately reflect the diversity and strength of the work being done in this area, we need your help in gathering information and materials.

If you think your project should be included please call your local Family Violence Networker or the Kit Coordinator to find out how to become involved.

We need to hear from you by February 6th 2004.

For more information please call your Family Violence Prevention Networker

Karen Roben on Tel: (03) 57 22 3009

Or

Sue Finucane, Kit Coordinator on:

(w) (03) 9397 7683 Mobile: 0411 031 809.

E-mail: pcsf@pacific.net.au

Week Without Violence activities 2003

Some projects to be published in the kit may well include some of the inspiring community activities that were organised for Week Without Violence 2003 by the Hume family violence prevention networks. All the

networks put in a great effort to make some important statements in their community about the unacceptability of family violence. This was achieved through some powerful media articles and by the creative community development initiatives implemented by each network. These included the **Lower Hume Family Violence Network** who presented *Sand and Symbols Workshops* - Responding to emotional problems with symbolic creative expression. The very well attended workshops were presented by Mark Pearson and Helen Wilson Directors of the Turnaround Centre for Expressive Therapies, Brisbane. The network drew an enthusiastic response from locals who attended their Reclaim the Night march and community BBQ and a concert featuring the fabulous "Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company"

The Corowa Rutherglen Family Violence Prevention Network marked the week with a remembrance vigil at Corowa court house for women and children who have lost their lives due to family violence. An original concept to raise community awareness was the launch of "A Child's View"- a child's experience of family violence reproduced as drink coasters, t-shirts and posters. Coasters were distributed to hotels and clubs in the Corowa Rutherglen area. The network also held a community art day for secondary schools.

The freshly reformed **Central Hume Family Violence Prevention Network** presented a Men and Violence seminar by Noel MacNamara (see report). Three banner art workshops days were facilitated by artist Susan Dixon for women survivors and young people. The banners depicting butterflies as symbols of 'new life' were displayed in the Wangaratta Post Office Arcade. There was much interest in the information, displays by local service providers and the free BBQ. Many thanks to Zoe Gephart, Health Promotion student from Latrobe University, for her enthusiastic and valuable assistance with these activities.

The Goulburn Valley Family Violence Prevention held a BBQ, art workshop and Information display at North Shepparton Community House. They also hosted a performance by Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company. The performance was enthusiastically received by the young

audience with a valuable discussion after the event. Despite the cold and rain, the traditional Reclaim the Night gathering and Women's Entertainment Night by local performers still turned out a poignant event.

Other local activities

A highly informative Regional Domestic Violence conference was presented by the **Albury Wodonga Family Violence Prevention Network** in September as well as a traditional Reclaim the Night march, concert and badge making activities.

The Hume DV Outreach Network has collaborated to organise a fun and therapeutic three day camp in the NorthEast for women survivors and their children in February.

Men and Violence

Noel MacNamara presented a seminar on **Men and Violence** in Wangaratta on **Monday 1st December**. Many social welfare workers from the region and beyond attended. Noel has worked in the area of family violence for more than 20 years and he regularly conducts training in relation to family violence and risk assessment.

There is a much needed gap to be filled in providing a service for male perpetrators of family violence in the Hume area. Currently there are insufficient men's behaviour change programs and a great number of men and families who could benefit from such a service. Recent studies indicate some men can change their violent behaviours and that programs contributed to improved lives for women and children. There are currently 25 services throughout Victoria conducting programs or groups for men who use violence towards family members. Eighteen of these are located in Melbourne. At present there are inconsistencies in the funding and distribution of programs for men. There is a recognised need for the development of partnerships and linkages between services that are an entry point for men, women and children who disclose male violence within the family.

The Central Hume Network recently hosted Michael Brandenburg from Ballarat community and family Services who has been running

men's Behaviour Change programs for 6 years. Michael explained the 'No to Violence' model and spoke of the challenges and achievements of the program.

Working with Men Who Use Violence

One-Day Competency Based Training Workshops are available from *No to Violence* in 2004. This essential training is now available for all workers and supervisors.

A unique opportunity for all health and welfare practitioners to gain many of the essential skills for responding to men who have used violence against their family members.

Presented by qualified and experienced family violence workers and trainers.

- ✓ How to engage effectively with men who use family violence
- ✓ How to understand and utilise the role of 'masculinity' in family violence
- ✓ How to ensure an accountable approach to the safety of women and children
- ✓ How to challenge and encourage men to take responsibility for their violence
- ✓ How to attract men who use violence to make use of family violence related services

The training is based on the core competencies of the nationally accredited Graduate Certificate in Social Sciences (Male Family Violence) and informed by 'Stopping Men's Violence In The Family: A Manual for Running Men's Groups, Volume 1, Context and Standards'.

The Workshops will be offered at various locations across Victoria during 2004. For further information contact Lindsay Clark, Training Co-ordinator ph: 94283536 email: lindsay@ntv.net.au

www.ntv.net.au

Introducing our Indigenous Family Violence Workers

The Indigenous Family Violence Strategy is currently being implemented in the Hume region. The strategy has set up the Hume Indigenous Family Violence Action Group, and there will be a focus on resourcing Indigenous community involvement at a local level. It aims to develop a long-term, sustainable response to the incidence of family violence within Victoria's aboriginal communities.

The Indigenous Family Violence Taskforce was set up to engage Indigenous communities in the development of a community led strategy, to address family violence and to prepare a report recommending the contents of a statewide strategy.

Graeme (Cannon) Briggs is employed by Department of Human Services as the Hume Indigenous Family Violence Support Officer.

The Hume Indigenous Family Violence Action Group would like to see the Indigenous Family Violence Strategy continue to assist community members in addressing Family Violence within the Hume Region. The Hume Indigenous Family Violence Action Group looks forward to seeing the government commit to the strategy as ongoing.

The strategy is allowing a person within Indigenous culture to present their life experiences & implement strategies to prevent the impact family violence has on each & every Indigenous person within the Hume region. It is important that the budget is extended to allow the communities across the board to their share of solutions.

Issues identified so far for the Indigenous communities include a lack of services with Indigenous based programs for the Indigenous people in smaller towns and a lack of funding for sexual assault victims to access counseling within their communities.

There is a need to increase awareness within Indigenous communities regarding the assistance that is available to victims from service providers with DV program/projects. There appears to be confusion and lack of

clarity within all local communities that have Indigenous action groups about the purpose of the Indigenous Family Violence Strategy.

Priorities include obtaining ongoing funding for Projects assisting the prevention of family violence at a community level and increasing the Indigenous communities' awareness of services within their communities. This can be done by displaying the mapping of project work at all access points that Indigenous communities use within the Hume Region.

Graeme Briggs

Koori Focus on Family Violence

Goulburn Valley Community Health Service recently welcomed the appointment of Vernise as the Family Violence Support Worker – Indigenous Women & Children.

Vernise has returned to the Shepparton area, after working in Melbourne for the past six years, and is enthusiastic about her new role. "As an Indigenous woman, the challenge does not escape me given that the position is unique within the Hume region" Vernise noted.

Community Health has established a partnership with Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative to develop a collaborative and coordinated approach in assisting Indigenous women/women with children experiencing family violence within the City of Greater Shepparton area.

"I envisage that the service will be identified as an effective option for Indigenous women/women with children experiencing family violence, which is both sensitive and responsive to the needs and issues that present" Vernise stated.

Vernise offers client focussed assistance, including counselling, court support, advocacy in accessing accommodation services, legal assistance, financial management, health/welfare services etc.

Vernise is contactable at Community Health (Ph. 03 5823 3200) and referrals are accepted via agencies or directly from individuals.

TRAINING and FORUMS

An important date for your diary!

A Powerful Journey

stories about women's experiences
of leaving abusive situations

Please join us and some of the research participants for the launch of *A Powerful Journey* research project. 16 women from across North East Victoria and Goulburn Valley participated in the research project conducted by Women's Health Goulburn North East. Their experiences and their recommendations for change will be the focus of our launch.

Launched by Judith Peirce, Commissioner, Victorian Law Reform Commission.

Judith is currently involved in reviewing the Crimes (Family Violence) Act 1987

Thursday Feb. 26th 11.00am - 1.00pm
Benalla Campus, Goulburn Ovens TAFE,
Samaria Rd, Benalla
\$50.00 includes

A Powerful Journey
the book of stories, the research
report and lunch.

RSVP

to Women's Health Goulburn North East
by Monday 23rd February

Ph. 03 5722 3009

whealth@whealth.com.au

Responding to Domestic Violence

An introductory course for those new to the field of family violence work (less than one year's experience) or workers with no specific family violence training. It covers the effects of family violence on children and adults; ways of asking about violence and responding to disclosures, a brief overview of legal responses, resources and referrals.

Date: Thursday 27th and Friday 28th May

Time: 9.15- 4.30 pm each day

Location: Shepparton Venue to be confirmed

Facilitators: Margot Scott and Virginia Geddes

Registrations: close 14th May **Cost:** \$80

Contact: Karen Roben

Family Violence Prevention Networker

Ph. (03) 57223009

Publishing for Practitioners

with **Jan Fook**

A one day workshop

9.30am – 4.30pm

Thursday 12th Feb.

Publishing for Practitioners is for any health or human service practitioner who has difficulties in getting their writing or research about practice published. The aim of the workshop is to enable participants to plan and begin writing an article for publication. The content includes information about the politics and the processes of publishing for different forums. Exercises are designed to begin the process of writing and writing an article.

Professor Jan Fook has over twenty years experience teaching social work and welfare in several Australian universities.

Her teaching and research span the areas of critical practice, critical reflection, practice research and professional expertise. Jan's books include: *The Reflective Researcher*, *Social Work: Critical theory and practice*, and *Professional Expertise* (with M. Ryan and L. Hawkins).

**To book send deposit or full amount to
Women's Health Goulburn North East.**

Phone: 5722 3009

Cost: \$132 inc GST

The Hume Region Family Violence Prevention Planning and Review Day

will be held on

Tuesday 16th March

9.30am - 3.30pm

**Dept Sustainability and Environment
35 Sydney Rd. Benalla**

Please mark this in your diary now as it will be an important opportunity to come together to review, reflect and plan for the year ahead. This will be a valuable information sharing and networking day for services working towards prevention of family violence. Be informed on current projects and initiatives; evaluate past community initiatives; plan and coordinate regional priorities. Members of networks agencies and interested community members

are encouraged to attend. **RSVP by March 11th** to Women's Health Ph. 57223009 email k.robent@whealth.com.au
Lunch provided. No cost. Bookings essential.

REAL LIFE

Relationship Education & Awareness for Life

The REAL life program as a preventative model motivates young people to consider the concepts of inappropriate use of power in relationships, gives them skills to develop healthy relationships and to seek support when relationships become abusive. The program has been developed for year 8 students to run over four 60-minute sessions, with additional material provided. Sessions are usually co facilitated by the teacher and DV worker. Objectives of the training are for teachers and welfare workers to gain a sound understanding of relationship violence and the cycle of violence and how to impart this information to young people. Professional DV workers will assist teachers to understand how to recognise and respond to young people who are experiencing or are at risk of being involved in violent relationships.

NO COST !

Training for teachers and welfare workers including free teacher resource manual

**Presented by
Women's Health Goulburn North East**

Tuesday 2nd March

1.00 – 4.00pm

**District Education Office
130 Hayes St. Shepparton**

RSVP by Fri. 20th Feb to Karen Roben
Family Violence Prevention Networker
Women's Health Goulburn North East
Ph. (03) 5722 3009

HOME TRUTHS

Conference

**Stop sexual assault and domestic violence:
A national challenge
15th, 16th & 17th September
2004, Melbourne**

This conference aims to provide a dynamic, national forum for service providers, policy makers, academics and victims/survivors to discuss, debate and highlight practice and policy issues in sexual assault and domestic violence issues.

For further information contact;
Deb Bryant (co chair) (03) 9687 8637
Email: westcasa@vicnet.net.au

Family Violence Resource Directory

Thank you to Judi Fisher and to agencies across the Hume region that have made suggestions and added valuable input into the compilation of the Family Violence Resource Directory.

We are now investigating an on-line version which will make important information available at the push of a button.

What is the purpose of Family Violence Prevention Networks ?

- To provide a forum for community agencies, service providers and individuals who have an interest in family violence prevention
- To raise public awareness about family violence. This includes informing the community about the causes and effects of family violence, the extent of family violence and prevention strategies with the goal of reducing the incidence of family violence
- To provide current information to the community about support services for:
 - Women and children and young people who have experienced or are experiencing family violence
 - Men who want to change their violent/abusive behaviour
- To enhance service provider's knowledge by skill sharing, professional development and/or training
- To provide an opportunity for information sharing and mutual support between service providers
- To undertake local, regional and state wide community education activities in collaboration with local networks and service providers
- To identify gaps in service provision and lobby for those services

Regional Services

Domestic Violence Outreach Workers

- Benalla 03 5762 7330
- Broadford/Seymour 03 5784 1306
- Shepparton 03 5823 3200
- Wangaratta 03 5721 8277
- Wodonga 02 6056 1550

Other Domestic Violence Services

- Cooroonya (Wangaratta/Benalla) 03 5722 1100
- Marian (Shepparton) 03 5821 9458

Centres against Sexual Assault

- Shepparton 03 5831 2343
- Wangaratta 03 5722 2203

Victim's Assistance Program

- Wangaratta 03 5722 2355
- Shepparton 03 5831 6967
- Wodonga 02 6056 6282

Refuges

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service 03 9373 0123
or 1800 015 188 (Toll free)

Family Violence Prevention Meetings

Seymour-Lower Hume

Feb. 4th March 3rd April 7th 2.00-3.30pm

Goulburn Valley Family Care

Contact Kate Lewer Ph. 5799 1711

Shepparton- Goulburn Valley

Tues. 10th Feb., 13th April 12.30-2.30

Community Health Wyndham St.

Contact Narelle Ph. 5823 3200

Corowa Rutherglen

Wed. 25th Feb, 24th March, 12.30-2.00

Corowa Hospital

Contact Fiona Renshaw Ph. (02) 6032 9505

Wangaratta- Central Hume

Mon. Feb. 2nd, April 5th 2.00 - 3.30 pm

Women's Health 57 Rowan St.

Contact Karen Ph. 5722 3009

Albury Wodonga

Fri. 6th Feb, 5th March

Contact Jill Sumner Ph. (02) 6041 1977



**SURFACE
MAIL**

**POSTAGE PAID
AUSTRALIA**

If undelivered return to:

Hume Region Family Violence Prevention Worker

Women's Health Goulburn North East

Po Box 853 Wangaratta 3676

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Statewide Services

Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre	03 9486 9866
Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service	03 9373 0123 or 1800 015 188 (Toll free)
Women's Legal Service Victoria	03 9642 0343 or 1800 133 302
Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service	03 9898 3145
Translating & Interpreting Service	131 450 or 1800 112 477 (24 hours)
Police	000 (24 hours)

