

Hume Region Family Violence Prevention Newsletter Summer 2004

Inside this issue....

Foreword

What's been
happening in Hume

Introducing Victorian
Police Family Violence
Advisors
Ken O'Connor & Lance
Werner

Statewide Family
Violence Prevention
Information

Recent Publications

Kid's Page
Kay Lavendar
Children's Resource
Worker

Network Contacts

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the final newsletter of 2004! The dedication of the family violence prevention networks across the region shone through during Week without Violence. There was diversity in activities throughout the week, yet we all shared in spreading the word, and increasing our communities understanding of family violence. This newsletter gives you a glimpse of the activities and initiatives that took place during Week without Violence. It also highlights activities that are currently underway in our communities. Cosmopolitan magazine's November 2004 addition has a feature article on domestic violence and young people. The feature article is "No Respect, No Relationship; Angela's Boyfriend did this". It is definitely worth reading!

This week has seen the Senator Kay Patterson launch an educational kit aimed to educate young people on healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships. The kit features Angela Barkers story. The educational kit will be distributed to all secondary schools across Australia to be implemented into secondary school curriculum.

The Victorian Women's Legal Service provided three professional development workshops on Family Law Fundamentals in Wodonga, Seymour, and Shepparton. These professional development workshops were well supported with a total of forty people attending the workshops. Please feel free to contact me in regard to future training requests. The Anne Summers forum held in Wangaratta was a huge success, stimulating vibrant discussions and community motivation

Contact Emma Fahey
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57 Rowan St Wangaratta
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e.fahey@whealth.com.au



WOMEN'S HEALTH
GOULBURN NORTH EAST

What's been happening across Hume: Week without Violence 2004

The Family Violence prevention networks across the region worked tirelessly during Week Without Violence.. The following are a taste the activities across the North East and Goulburn valley during this time.. **Shepparton Family Violence Prevention Network** hosted two forums a public forum with guest speaker Phil Cleary and professionals forum with guest speaker Jennifer Criitchley and Judith Arnette. This is a just a snap shot of the activities of this network. **Wodonga DV committee** facilitated Everyday Heroes workshops in several secondary schools throughout the week. **Central Hume Network** put all there energies into the shop-a-docket initiative and posting community messages in the participating supermarkets. **Corowa/Rutherglen DV committee** held a vigil Wednesday 20th October at Corowa court commemorating the memory of all the women and children who have died as a result of domestic violence. This committee also organised young people to make a banner that was used in the 'Reclaim the Night ' march in Albury.

Report from Lower Hume Family Violence Prevention Network

On Monday 25th of October we held an 'information evening on domestic and family violence' with the aim being to educate professionals about what domestic violence is and the services available that can assist women, men, teenagers and children affected by domestic violence. The following professionals were invited to attend; GP's, Police, Churches, Child Protection, pre, primary and secondary school teachers and welfare staff, Centrelink, Mental Health workers, local government, Maternal and Child Health Nurses, housing services and other health professionals. Over 50 people attended the information evening. We presented all of the information through role plays which was very well received. We were also very lucky to have one of the women from 'A Powerful Journey' speak about her experience. On this evening we also launched our discreet wallet size domestic violence brochures that we hope to distribute to health agencies, hairdressers, sporting clubs and pubs, etc, in the near future.. On Thursday 28th of October we hosted 'Reclaim the Night/ Seymour & Surrounds Says No to Violence Community march'. A free BBQ and entertainment followed this event. What's next for LHFVPN? We are currently working with local Police on 'Project Envelope'. What this entails is that every time police attend a 'domestic dispute' they will be required to distribute an envelope with relevant service provider information to any women, men and teenagers present.

Report from Albury Domestic Violence Network

Another busy year has almost ended. The Week of Action against Violence helped raise the issue of violence against women and children and the 10th anniversary of Reclaim The Night in Albury saw over 100 women and children march noisily up Dean Street. It was encouraging to see many younger women marching for the first time and one of our Albury Domestic Violence Liaison Officers, Francine, joined the march in police uniform, which was a great show of support. Unfortunately the "mini-expo" had to be postponed due to inclement weather, however, we hope to hold the event in December.

The Women's Centre Albury/Wodonga wishes everyone a peaceful and relaxing Christmas and New Year. The Centre will be closed from 23rd December to 4th January 2005.



Corowa/Rutherglen Banner which was used in the 'Reclaim the night 'march in Albury.

Current Family Violence Prevention Initiatives across the North East and Goulburn Valley.

- Wodonga- shop-a-docket initiative (14th Sept- 11 Jan 05)
- Wangaratta/Benalla shop-a-docket initiative - (14th Sept /Nov04) To commence again in April 2005 due to service model changes at Cooroonya Domestic Violence Services
- Corowa/Rutherglen working on street sign project for Week without Violence in partnership with local police.
- Seymour is developing a partnership with the local police called the Envelope Project. When the police respond to a family violence situation in the community, the people involved will be handed an appropriate envelope which outlines and offers services suitable to the needs of that woman, child or man.
- Community radio announcement during Week Without Violence 25th-31st October 2004 across the region.
- Several of the family violence prevention networks have developed and printed their own brochures with relevant localised contact numbers (Seymour, Corowa/ Rutherglen and Wodonga).

Cooroonya Domestic Violence Service has now consolidated its service delivery operations to Wangaratta. For further information or copy of the service delivery model please feel free to contact Marg on 5722 1100

Mansfield 16419 candles

Background

When countries go to war we realise that there are heavy casualties in the armed forces. The even heavier losses among the civilian population are less well reported and less recognised. The highly respected international medical journal, The Lancet, published a study that estimates an excess of 100,000 civilians deaths in Iraq since the invasion. The full study is publicly available at www.thelancet.com. However, we note that this figure is an estimate and based on cluster samples. A more conservative figure can be obtained

from www.iraqbodycount.net, which collects names, ages and mode of death of all identified dead. This number of identified civilian dead at time of writing stands at 16,419. We note that these deaths are the result of actions from both sides of the conflict.

Proposed Action

To light 16,419 candles in the Median Strip of Highett St Mansfield on Sunday December 19th to provide a visual display of the number of innocent lives lost – children, women and men of all ages. It is hoped that this display will make real to our community the sheer numbers of civilian's casualties and horrors of war and terrorism. The aim is to highlight the human dimension of the conflict in Iraq and to re-affirm the Christmas themes of peace and goodwill.

To light 16419 candles is a big project. We will need teams of helpers on the night of the 19th to organise the distribution and lighting of these candles and we welcome support from individuals, families, and community groups. If you are able to help us in any way please contact our working committee.

Contacts:

Fund raising

Paul Wood: 03 5775 2036

Working Party or other assistance

Joan Curtis: AH: 03 5775 2253

Elva Condon: Wk: 03 5775 8563 AH: 03 5775 243

National Awareness Opportunity.

If you think this is something you would also like to express in your local community / parish / diocese consider doing something similar on the same date and time and inform the media. Together we can raise the issue of the precious lives that have been lost

Paul Wood

(Social Responsibilities Committee St John's Church, Mansfield, Vic)

Introducing the Victorian Police Family Violence Advisor's covering the Goulburn Valley and North East

My name is Ken O'Connor and I am a Sergeant of Police attached to the Shepparton Police Station. I can be contacted on telephone 58205835, or ken.o'connor@Police.vic.com.au
<<mailto:ken.o'connor@Police.vic.com.au>>

The official name of my position is the Region 3 Northwest, Division 4, Family Violence Adviser, but in more normal terms, it means that I cover the area from just south of Murchison, north to the Murray River, bordered by Echuca and Yarrawonga, half way to Benalla and half way to Bendigo. I have been doing this job since the middle of August 2004 and I must say that I have been pleasantly surprised, with the responses that I have received from the outside agencies. They all have made me feel most welcome and in all cases, without exception, have been very helpful. Having said that, I would like anyone that thinks I may be able to help them, to not hesitate and please contact me on the details provided. As a long serving veteran, when it comes to family violence, I must confess and say that I would have been one of the worst offenders when it came to inappropriate responses, particularly at repeat attendances. My care and concern factor would decrease sharply with the number of re - attendances. I now can say, after reading everything I could get my hands on in relation to family violence, that I have "seen the light," and that in some small way I hope to help improve our response to family violence by working together to break the cycle. My job includes liaising with outside agencies involved in family violence, hopefully to produce strong partnerships, overseeing the Police response to family violence in this area and identifying any trends or methods that may improve our response. Please do not

Introducing the Victorian Police Family Violence Advisor's covering the Goulburn Valley and North East

Greetings to all readers of the Family Violence prevention newsletter. My name is Lance Werner and I am an Acting Sergeant of Police located at the Benalla Police Station. I can be contacted on telephone 57622112, or <mailto:lance.werner@police.vic.gov.au> The title of the position I hold is the Family Violence Advisor covering police Region 4, Division 4. What this really means is that my area goes from Wallan to Wodonga, Rutherglen to Corryong and from Nagambie to Marysville. I understand that the area covers most of the DHS Hume Region. The remainder of the Hume Region is covered by Ken O'Connor from Shepparton. Unlike Ken I have only been doing this job since early October 2004.

The role itself is probably best described as a management role regarding family violence for the whole area. There is a number of roles that I play. I oversee the police response to family violence for the area.

This will involve monitoring and identifying any issues or trends which occur. I will also endeavor to establish great working partnerships with family violence agencies and the Victoria Police. Hopefully this will enable all of us to tackle the issues successfully together.

I must say that in the course of my 22 years of policing I and the majority of my colleagues have not always taken the right approach for family violence, despite seeing some great outcomes. In recent years we have seen some change in the police response to the issue, but the changes we have just commenced with our new Code of Practice are enormous. I think that as an organisation we are headed for a big culture change from the methods of the past. The opportunity to be involved in this culture change is quite exciting. I must say that the reaction of all personnel working in this industry to

myself and the role I am filling has been overwhelming. I would like to thank all of you who have phoned, e-mailed and spoken to me. Your encouragement and passion for the cause is incredible. Hopefully we can see some results in the future that were once only dreams for all of you. If you think I could possibly provide assistance in anyway, please don't hesitate to call me. Likewise I am willing to discuss any issues that may come to light as we all chart this course together.

Yours sincerely,

Lance Werner

Prevention Information

The Victorian Law Reform Commission's family violence reference launch its consultation paper on Friday 26 November at the "What Women Want" forum.

This is the first major publication to be launched by the Commission's review of family violence laws and focuses on how the intervention order system operates, the problems people have using it, suggested improvements and alternative approaches. To publicise the findings and questions contained in the paper they will be sending out media kits to suburban and country media throughout the state.

MEDIA RELEASE, 19TH November 2004 Victorian Law Reform Commission

Murder Laws Need Reform

The partial defence of provocation will be abolished and excessive self-defence will be reintroduced if recommendations from the Victorian Law Reform Commission are adopted. The Commission released its Defences to Homicide Final Report today, containing 56 recommendations about defences and evidence allowed in homicide trials. "We received many suggestions about reforming the partial defence of provocation, but we decided the best response would be to abolish it," the Commission's Chairperson Professor Marcia Neave said. "The defence tends to be used by men who kill their partners or ex-partners out of jealousy or anger. The community does not accept this as a reasonable excuse for murder and our law should reflect this sentiment. "Our report also addresses family violence victims who kill their abusers, and acknowledges the need for juries, as well as judges and lawyers, to better understand how a history of abuse can result in murder. "A woman who kills her husband after years of abuse may have limited options available to her under the current law because juries, judges and lawyers generally don't have a good understanding of what it's like to live in an abusive relationship. "Under our recommendations, the court will be able to hear evidence about the nature and extent of the abuse, expert evidence on the dynamics of family violence, and she will have the defence options of self-defence or excessive self-defence. "We have recommended the definition of self-defence be clarified to recognise that a threat on life which is not immediate, but which the accused believes is

inevitable, may support a finding that the accused acted in self-defence. This will better reflect the situation of many victims of long-term abuse. "The legal defences available to people accused of murder need to reflect the reality of when people kill and why. Homicide law is rooted in the past, reflecting a time when men killed each other, often in duels over matters of honour. Because of this focus on male behaviour, the law effectively discriminates against women and how they react to threats to their safety. "Our recommendations will not prevent judges from taking provocative circumstances into account at sentencing in appropriate cases."

The final report is available on the website www.lawreform.vic.gov.au or 1300 666 555.

DVIRC are conducting a research project to hear of women's experiences. They would like to hear from any women that have attended mediation for family disputes, or workers that have facilitated in or supported women in mediation. In particular, we are interested in finding out about mediation in cases where family violence has been present.

They hope this will build on the research of Keys Young in 1996. Our research, and women's stories, will also inform work between DVIRC and Relationships Australia (Victoria), to develop a model of practice in mediation that best supports women experiencing family violence. Women's voices will also inform DVIRC in developing supporting materials for women attending mediation or other forms of dispute resolution at a number of agencies statewide.

Training, Development and Consulting
Domestic Violence and Incest Resource
Centre
292 Wellington Street
Collingwood VIC 3066
Tel: 9486 9866
Fax: 9486 9744
www.dvirc.org.au
<http://www.dvirc.org.au/resources/Mediation%20Research.htm>

Latest Research on the Economic Costs of Domestic Violence

Following a Freedom of Information request, the federal government last month released a report by Access Economics that conservatively estimates the annual cost of domestic violence in Australia at \$8.1 billion. Half this cost is carried by victims, with pain, suffering and premature death being the primary cost categories. The report strongly supports international research indicating that women and children are the primary victims of domestic violence and that men are the primary perpetrators (98%). The report estimates that the total lifetime cost of domestic violence for the average victim is \$224,470, and during 2002-2003 the average cost borne by each victim who has ever suffered DV was \$4570. The report estimates that in 2002-2003, 37,437 years of healthy life were forgone in relation to female victims. While these figures are conservative, they undoubtedly have significant implications for compensation claims by victims and may influence current family law practice, where the cost of domestic violence borne by women is largely disregarded in calculations surrounding the division of matrimonial property. Report can be accessed via the following website www.padv.dpmc.gov.au (DVIRC Newsletter, November 2004)

MEDIA RELEASE 26 November 2004 Intervention orders no protection

Victoria's intervention order system is not adequately protecting victims of family violence, Victorian Law Reform Commissioner Judith Peirce said today. Ms Peirce was launching a Commission consultation paper that explores problems with intervention orders and proposes possible improvements to the system. The paper is part of the first complete review of the intervention order system, which has operated in Victoria for the past 17 years.

"The Commission has spent the past year talking to people across the state and we were frequently told that intervention orders were not worth the paper they are written on," Ms Peirce said. "For some people they work, but for many others problems with getting an order, enforcing it and prosecuting breaches has led to an erosion of faith in the system".

"We found that people with disabilities, those who don't speak English well, people living in rural and

regional areas and Indigenous people all face problems on top of those faced by everyone else." "Police procedures, court staff attitudes and magistrates' decisions all came in for criticism from people who have experienced violence and family violence support workers. "For many people who seek protection through an order, the penalties handed out when the orders are breached are seen as no more than a slap on the wrist. While heavier penalties may not be the answer, we need to explore how the justice system can improve its response to breaches to keep women safe".

"In our consultation paper we've detailed all the areas where problems occur, and ask people how the system could be improved".

"It was also our job to look at ways to improve the current system. We need to think about how the justice system overall can best protect people from family violence".

"We also need to acknowledge that one response won't fit everyone. The best way to protect people may be to develop some flexibility in the system so people can choose what suits them and their situation". The consultation paper and summary is available on the Commission's website www.lawreform.vic.gov.au or 1300 666 555.

The Kids Pages

Welcome to the first edition of The Kids Pages. The Kids Pages will include events, information, profiles, resources and training opportunities. Please pass The Kids Pages onto to anyone who you think might be interested.

EVENTS

On the 3 November the Albury Wodonga women's refuge presented 'kidsecretvoices', a play written and performed by children and young people from the women's refuge. The children's workers from the refuge, Stef and Lorraine, did a fantastic and tireless job getting the play from its infancy to a full blown stage production. The children's performance was magnificent, and as a spectator, I thought it as worthy a stage production as any other I have seen. From the response of the audience on the night other people

thought so too. Well done guys and girls! Stef and Lorraine report that both the children and their families believed the process of creating the play was extremely beneficial to them, and also helped to raise the awareness of the effects of domestic violence and bullying on children.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Supporting Kids program which supports kids who's parents experience a mental illness (A program of Upper Murray Family Care Wodonga & Wangaratta) The supporting Kids program will be conducting a January school holiday program. Contact Wangaratta Kirsten Green (03) 5723 4000 or Wodonga Ellen Sharp (02) 6022 8000

PROFILES

Kathrine Washington, Children's Counselling Service; is a free and confidential service provided by Upper Hume Community Health Service. It provides counseling and support for children and their families in the shires of Towong, Indigo, City of Wodonga, and the Kiewa Valley. To access this service please contact Katherine on (02) 6022 8888.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attention all Chocoholics! CHSS Day Activities Program for youth are holding a raffle for a 10kg (Yes, that's right, 10KGS!!) block of Cadbury Chocolate, YUM. Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5.00. Winner notified on 24th Dec. Contact Kelly Utley on PH: 02 60437 417

RESOURCES

The Children's Resource Project highly recommends a report 'Children living with domestic violence: Research foundations for front-line intervention' by Jen McIntosh and Helena Deacon-Wood (2002).

The report is easy to read and goes a long way to unraveling the complexities that children experience where there is family violence. It is an important document to read for anyone who is planning to provide a service to children or to develop more appropriate responses to children and their care givers.

A copy of the report can be obtained from Kay Lavender, Children's Resource Worker, (02) 60437 404 or 0427 227776

WORK WITH KIDS

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Kay chats with Linda Ward, Central Hume Support Service Children's Therapist

Q) Linda, how much of your work involves teaching kids about healthy relationships?

A) Most of it, because it is such a large part of DV and other forms of abuse. The concepts of a healthy/unhealthy relationship transfer over to all relationships, involving peer relationships. Children learn of identify forms of power and control in relationships.

Q) What kind of things do you talk about with the kids to teach them about healthy relationships?

A) We usually cover gender ideas I ask them about how people think boys and girls should behave and we explore this quite a lot; personal space and types of behaviours that are OK and not ok and the different types of hurt (heart and body hurts).

Q) What kind of tools do you use when talking with kids about Healthy Relationships?

A) I use bear cards, St. Lukes stones (feelings), I usually give kids their own scrap book that they draw in, charts and scaling

– say from ok to not ok behaviours and some ideas from gestalt.

Picture of girl



Drawing by girl 10 yrs of 'early warning signs'



Drawing by boy 7 depicting how much personal space he requires. Note the length of the arms.

If you would like any more information on healthy relationships for children contact the Children's Resource Project on 02 6043 7404

Your contributions and feedback are invaluable to making 'The Kids Pages' useful and interesting. Please email your ideas to childrensproject@chss.net.au

Recent Publications

Accountability and Connection with Abusive men: a new child protection response to increasing family safety.

www.endabuse.org/programs/children

His money or our money; Financial Abuse of women in intimate partner relationships.

www.communitylaw.org.au

The Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health: Health and experiences of violence among young women

www.osw.dpmc.gov.au/downloads/pdfs/violenceGlossy.pdf

Helping Children Thrive: Supporting Women Abuse Survivors as mothers: a guide to supporting parents.

www.lfcc.on.ca/mothers.html

Police codes of practice for responding to family violence

<http://www.police.vic.gov.au/document/ACF1A4.pdf> or hard copies can be organized for those who haven't received a copy.

Legalonline is the Victorian Government's legal information website - it is the Law made clear and simple. Anytime. You can find the information you need to take the next step. Fact sheets, links to legal practitioners, relevant legislation and agencies are all provided.

<http://www.legalonline.vic.gov.au/CA2569020010C266/Homepage>



The Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC) have produced a resource kit to assist people working on family violence prevention projects. The kit provides information on the current political and legal context, details of recent research findings, plus case studies and examples of a variety of family violence prevention projects from Victoria, interstate and overseas. Several projects and initiatives from the Hume region are featured throughout the kit. I have been distributing copies throughout the networks, if you have not already got a copy please either email e.fahey@whealth.com.au or phone 03 5722 3009.

DVIRC have recently published a discussion paper on support groups. This paper highlights and challenges the marginal status of family violence support groups. Papers available from DVIRC 03 98469866 \$15 per copy.

Statewide Services

- Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre
- Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service
- Women's Legal Service Victoria
- Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service
- Translating & Interpreting Service
- Police
- Court Network – Telephone info & referral
- Women's Information & Referral Exchange Info Line
- Statewide Women's Community Housing Service
- Victim's Referral & Assistance Service
- Sexual Assault Telephone Service

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**Postage
Paid**

If undelivered return to:
Hume Region Family Violence Prevention Worker
Women's Health Goulburn North East
PO Box 853 Wangaratta 3676
Print Post Approved Publication No: PP 346626100047

Regional Services

Domestic Violence Outreach Workers

- Mitchell, Murrindini, Strathbogrie 03 5784 5555
- Shepparton 03 58233200
- Wodonga 02 6056 1550

Other Domestic Violence Services

Cooroonya 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 60566282

Refuges

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

Family Violence Prevention Meetings

Seymour-Lower Hume

Contact Kate Lewer Ph. 5799 1711

Shepparton- Goulburn Valley

Contact Narelle Ph. 5823 3200

Corowa Rutherglen

Contact Fiona Renshaw Ph. (02) 6032 9505

Wangaratta- Central Hume

Contact Emma Ph. 5722 3009

Albury

Albury/Wodonga local & district DV Committee

Contact Jill Sumner Ph. (02) 6041 1977

Wodonga

Sgt Garry Corcoran Ph. (02) 6049 2600 or
Karen Wise Ph. (02) 6022 8888