

# Forum Report



## Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum 2011



## **Acknowledgements**

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## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The annual Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum is CDFVR's contribution to Queensland's annual Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, held in May each year. The objectives of the Forum are to provide an opportunity for Indigenous people who are working in Indigenous family violence prevention, policy or practice across the state to highlight and celebrate the good work that is being done by Indigenous people themselves to end domestic and family violence; to support Indigenous people to share information, knowledge and ideas about strategies and programs that could be used effectively by others; and to promote opportunities for networking across Queensland between Indigenous workers in the field of domestic and family violence prevention.

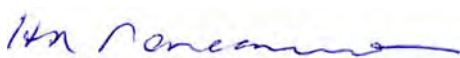
One of the hallmarks of the Forum over the years it has been held has been the representation of men and women, young people and elders and people from urban, rural and remote parts of the state. In 2011, the Forum again achieved this level of diversity among its participants and presenters. It was particularly rewarding to see so many people from remote parts of the state, with the focus returning to Queensland-specific issues and initiatives, after the successful national Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum held in 2010.

The diversity within the group was reflected in diverse views resulting in some vigorous discussion on the role of provocation in domestic and family violence. Such discussion is healthy and welcome at the Forum, as it provides an opportunity to expose myths and misconceptions, to sharpen critical analysis and to educate.

CDFVR vehemently rejects the proposition that domestic and family violence can be justified on the basis of provocation. Domestic and family violence is never acceptable - there simply is no excuse for abuse. One cannot be made by another to act violently; one chooses how to respond to external factors and must take responsibility for the choices made. Best practice programs for those who perpetrate domestic or family violence recognise that violence is a choice and aim to provide knowledge and skills for non-violent choices.

I would like to sincerely thank the Forum presenters and participants, all of whom contributed to the success of the Forum through their willingness to share their knowledge, expertise and views. We look forward to welcoming you back!

Heather Nancarrow



Director

## INTRODUCTION

The return to a State-focused forum this year contributed to the broad distribution of the 135 participants who attended from remote areas such as Palm Island, Cunnamulla, Lockhart River, Thursday Island, Bamaga, Cooktown, Hopevale, Mornington Island, St. George and Weipa. A majority of the people who attended this year were from Queensland (95% n=128) with the remaining 5% (n = 7) from New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Victoria and New South Wales.

The three topics for this year's forum came from recommendations from Queensland participants at our National Forum in 2010. They were:

- *Primary prevention – working with children and young people to prevent violence happening*
- *Impacts of domestic violence on children; and*
- *Working with men and young people who perpetrate domestic and family violence*

One hundred percent of participants who responded to the survey (n=95) agreed or strongly agreed that they had learnt new things at this year's forum and 98% (n=93) said they could use what they learnt in their work (paid or voluntary).

The 10-minute bite segment at the end of day two gave six participants the opportunity to speak for 10 minutes about their service or a project or initiative they are currently progressing. This proved popular with participants with feedback such as *10 minute bites excellent!* and *Speakers, yarning circles, 10 minute bite sessions, food/dinner – all great.*

This year CDFVR offered Indigenous participants who attended the forum the opportunity to take part in free accredited training in the first unit of *Course in Responding to Domestic and Family Violence (30949QLD) – Recognise and Respond Appropriately to Domestic and Family Violence*. Twenty one participants from areas such as Yarrabah, Palm Island, Cherbourg, St. George, Aurukun and Hopevale were able to take advantage of this offer and improve their skills and knowledge about domestic and family violence.

The food provided by Grinders Catering, including the spectacular forum dinner, was up to its usual high standard and the voices of participants at the karaoke and moves on the dance floor were equally impressive!

Ninety five people completed the evaluation form at the end of the forum. Further results of the evaluation can be found at the end of this report.

### **Keynote addresses:**

Keynote addresses were presented by Charles Passi, Torres Strait Islander Community worker and member of CDFVR's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reference group; and Bruce Simpson, Programs Manager, Wunjuada Rehabilitation Centre in Cherbourg.

The title of **Charles Passi's** address was *'Reclaim the Warrior'*. Charles spoke about the responsibility of elders to be role models and to stand up and fight for the rights of their community. He expressed his view that this was the year for healing for Indigenous communities and that part of that healing process would be brought about when Indigenous men were able to 'Reclaim the warrior'. Charles talked about ways to identify what it meant to be a true warrior in an Indigenous society – sacrifice and protection. In order to achieve the goal of reclaiming the warrior, Charles asserted that Indigenous men would need to face negativity, pain and unfinished business to rediscover their traditional identities. He explained that before colonisation, Indigenous people lived in a different state of consciousness, designed around the concept of self-discipline. This self-discipline was expressed through two concepts embedded in Indigenous culture: do not let your hand touch others' property and do not let your feet lead you toward others' property.

Charles closed by saying that by working through layers such as education through forums and technology, identifying Indigenous culture and heritage and reconnecting with wisdom, philosophy and spirituality, Indigenous people could find healing and the true prevention of violence in their communities.

**Bruce Simpson** spoke about the Cherbourg *Snuff Out Sniffing* (SOS) campaign launched in 2009 to end or reduce sniffing within the Cherbourg community. He talked about how the Cherbourg community worked collectively to steer people's mindset from a 'blame game' to a 'solutions' approach. The program includes interviews conducted between parents, young people, services and community members to discuss the impact of 'sniffing' on families. Bruce said that it became evident during the program that family violence escalated as a result of the frustration experienced by participants when working toward a solution. He spoke about women's contribution to the violence in communities and the need to also support men who are victims of violence.

### **Plenary Panels:**

There were three panels at this year's forum, each designed to discuss the range of initiatives that responded to individual topic areas. The first panel addressed the topic *Primary prevention – working with children and young people to prevent violence happening*. The panel members included Leanne Smith and Terry-Anne

Goodreid from *Save the Children*, Laurel Blow from *Mudjimba Women's Safe House*, and Heather Nancarrow from the *Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research*.

**Leanne and Terry-Anne** spoke about the *Future Parents Program*, which has been delivered by Save the Children since 1989. It is an early intervention abuse prevention program for young people aged 13-19 years and strives to prevent and reduce incidence of abuse before abusive situations occur. Leanne and Terry-Anne explained that the program provides opportunities for young people to increase their understanding of healthy relationships; develop positive problem solving skills and help-seeking behaviours; and increase their connection to supports in their community. They explained that some of the important factors that contributed to the program's success include: partnerships – with youth and community; supporting young people develop a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and empowerment; evaluation to ensure that the program continues to be relevant to young people; and structuring each group according to need.

Mudjimba Women's Safe House team leader, **Laurel Blow**, spoke about the *S.A.F.E.L.Y. Tool* adopted by Families Plus to orient workers and clients around the tasks necessary to recover from trauma. She explained that the tool is an acronym for six aspects which workers encourage young people to explore during the process of recovery from trauma: S=Safety – the need for individuals to feel safe, physically, psychologically, socially, culturally, spiritually and morally; A=Affect – individuals need to be able to identify and modulate their affect/emotions; F=Future - the need to look toward the future; E=Empowerment; L=Loss – to feel grief and come to term with loss; and Y=You – individuals' (and workers') need to recognise their role in the recovery process.

**Heather Nancarrow** presented an overview of the Council of Australian Government's National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children, which was launched on the 15th February 2011. This is the first time ever in Australia's history that every state and territory government and the Commonwealth Government have signed on to such a national plan. The 12 year plan is to be implemented through a series of four 3-year implementation plans and states and territories have to submit their jurisdictional implementation plans, within the framework of the National Plan, by mid-June 2011. The National Plan, based on *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2009-2021*, identified 6 key outcomes required to achieve a significant reduction in violence against women. These are:

1. *Communities are safe and free from violence*
2. *Relationships are respectful*

3. *Indigenous communities are strengthened*
4. *Services meet the needs of women and their children*
5. *Justice responses are effective*
6. *Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account*

While the National Plan recognises the need to continue to support victims of violence against women through services and improved justice responses, and the need to hold perpetrators accountable, it emphasises the need for primary prevention - being proactive and working towards a future free from violence rather than just reacting to violence after it has occurred.

The afternoon panel was titled *Impacts of domestic violence on children*. Speakers included Kerry Thompson from Yarra Valley Aboriginal Health Service in Victoria and Simone Jackson from the Department of Communities in Mt. Isa.

**Kerry Thompson's** topic was *Violence is Not Our Way*. She explained that the *Violence, it's not our culture, it's not our way* program is arts-based and seeks to increase community knowledge about different types of violence experienced by the community and individuals; prevent violence through safety messages and information; increase positive culture messages; support families experiencing violence to seek support; enable participants to explore and express their experience of violence to begin a healing journey through art and story; strengthen links within Indigenous and mainstream family violence services; and report outcomes to key stakeholders and Department of Human Services to inform future projects. Kerry explained that the success of the program was due to women identifying, naming and learning about family violence. They expressed and shared their feelings and experiences in a safe manner, identified the impact of family violence on themselves and their children and sought counselling for themselves and their families.

Department of Communities spokesperson, **Simone Jackson's**, topic was *Children within the statutory space as a result of domestic and family violence – the impacts and outcomes*. Simone's presentation focused on key measures undertaken by the Queensland Government to address domestic violence and the impacts on the lives of Indigenous children. Simone outlined the range of services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in their own homes and advised that during a one year timeframe the department is aiming to support more than 2000 families in the 11 established regional hubs. An additional 11 safe houses have been established, nine of which are currently operating in the Doomadgee, Napranum, Pormpuraaw, Kowanyama, Palm Island, Yarrabah, Aurukun, Lockhart River and Northern Peninsula areas. Simone also shared information about the review of the domestic and family violence legislation. Currently there is no guidance to courts as to whether a child witnessing or being exposed to domestic violence is sufficient to

have them named on a domestic violence order. Simone advised that the Act is looking at providing further clarification to courts when they are faced with applications to name children on orders, particularly where children have not been subjected to acts of domestic and family violence, but have experienced the effects of it.

**Day two's** panel speakers were Jason Jarro from the Department of Corrective Services and Gil Thomsen from Helem Yumba. They addressed the topic *Working with men and young people who perpetrate domestic and family violence*.

**Jason Jarro** spoke about the *Ending Family Violence Program* which is run over 10 two hour sessions. The purpose of the program is to help participants look at their violent behaviour toward family and community members; to gain skills to accept change and challenge themselves to grow; and to have a greater understanding of the program to enable full participation. The expected outcome of the *Ending Family Violence Program* is that offenders will have a greater understanding of family violence and how to manage violent behaviour. Jason also presented information on the *Ending Offending Program*, run over six two hour sessions. The difference between the two programs is that the *Ending Offending Program* looks at violent behaviour toward family and community members caused by alcohol. The goal of this program is that offenders have strategies to deal with, and a greater understanding about, alcohol and how alcohol can contribute to family violence.

Helem Yumba elder, **Gil Thomsen**, presented about *Restoring cultural health and harmony*. Gill told his audience about Helem Yumba's belief that reconnecting clients to their culture established their identity, improved their social and emotional wellbeing and reconnected clients to self, family and country. He explained that Helem Yumba works to help clients seek wisdom and knowledge passed down from their ancestors. Factors like dispossession, government policies and trauma make clients become disconnected from themselves through their feelings and emotions. Gill explained that Helem Yumba's step by step process of engaging clients ensured that they were actively motivated and willing to accept change which enabled them to improve and build healthier relationships within their families. In discussing the *Not Our Way (NOW) Program*, Gill described the aim as to instil into clients that violence is not the way of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. The program's philosophy is that an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander man's traditional role is to protect, not to hurt; is to care for, not to intimidate.

### **Yarning circles**

Yarning circles were convened at the conclusion of each forum panel and these were structured around the three forum themes: *Primary prevention – working with children and young people to prevent violence happening; Impacts of domestic*

*violence on children; and Working with men and young people who perpetrate domestic and family violence.*

The first yarning segment addressed the theme *Primary prevention – working with children and young people to prevent violence happening*. The three circles addressing this topic were led by Leanne Smith and Terri-Anne Goodreid; Selena Miller from the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service; and Laurel Blow.

The *Future Parents Program* yarning circle led by **Leanne Smith and Terri-Anne Goodreid** elaborated on their panel presentation. This yarning circle gave participants the opportunity to draw out what the Future Parents Program was about and how particular issues such as setting up safety networks and support for young people; group guidelines; confidentiality; disclosures and mandatory reporting policies work within the program. The yarning circle discussed the strong structure of being committed to covering their core topics with flexibility to tailor their program to the needs of each individual group. They explained that they encouraged the young people to attend by providing an abundance of fun and food.

**Selena Miller** spoke about the *BROC program* in her yarning circle. BROC is an acronym for Break-Reverse-Our-Cycle. The program, which Selena conducts each Friday in her local state primary school, aims to break down communication barriers and encourage children to share and care for each other and in the process foster more healthy relationships. Selena spoke about her belief that through these activities children become more open and more willing to share what goes on in their lives. It not only helps the children, but filters down into the families when the children return home. Currently, Selena runs the program by herself, but would like to train others to deliver it in their own communities.

**Laurel Blow's** yarning circle drew on her panel presentation about the S.A.F.E.L.Y. Tool. Conversation in the circle centred about work people in Bamaga do in the schools to raise awareness of domestic and family violence; the need for a safe place for children to go to when violence erupts; and discussion about a men's reconnection group in Cherbourg where men are encouraged to confront their violence and not use denial tactics as a means of managing the guilt.

The afternoon yarning circles addressed the topic *Impacts of domestic violence on children* and were presented by Fiona Mawson and Kerry Thompson from Yarra Valley Aboriginal Health Service in Victoria; Denise Johnson from Bundaberg Family Relationships Centre; Tracey Morris from Far West Indigenous Family Violence Service and Fay Gee-Hoy and Josephine Martin from Relationships Australia.

**Fiona Mawson** and **Kerry Thompson's** yarning circle gave an insight into how art therapy can assist women and men to express who they are 'in country, community, family or as an individual'. Fiona and Kerry spoke about how, through art and story, participants can explore and express 'a safe and peaceful place'. The theme of caring, sharing and love for one another and community was raised in discussion. The process of creating art also allowed participants to express feelings in a non confronting and safe manner.

The digital story *Consider the Jarjums* was the title of the yarning circle led by **Denise Johnson**. Denise explained how this resource is specifically designed for Indigenous clients, based on the Attorney General's DVD *Consider the Children*. *Consider the Jarjums* contains Indigenous actors and pictures and is presented to Indigenous clients as part of a parent information session offered to all clients of the Family Relationship Centre. Denise spoke about how these sessions aim to help parents focus on their children prior to family dispute resolution. They explore the impact of family separation on children and how parents can build a positive co-parenting relationship after separation.

The yarning circle delivered by **Tracey Morris** was titled *Showcasing Far West Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Programs*. Tracey explained that Far West delivers services to Cunnamulla, Charleville and St. George and that their main aim is to assist families and individuals, including children, who are affected by domestic and family violence. The size and isolation of towns like the three centres Far West service means that they often have to send victims of domestic violence to the city as they currently don't have a safe house facility. Tracey spoke about some of the initiatives that Far West offer, including: the senior ladies' group; a healthy relationships group for young people; the liquor accord, which has developed partnerships with publicans, community organisations and police within the local community to identify and implement practical solutions for liquor-related problems; and a men's group. Other problems such as *Young girls' night in* and the *U Can't Touch It*, a chronic disease awareness program, were also discussed. The towns of St. George and Cunnamulla are united in banning perpetrators of domestic violence from public drinking areas and the St. George rugby team is committed to suspending perpetrators from their team and expelling them if they continue to re-offend.

**Fay Gee-Hoy** and **Josephine Martin** presented *Raising awareness on the impact of family violence on children*. Josephine spoke about the importance of having a Murri worker in the initial and subsequent engagement of families and about the most important aspect of engagement – listening to families. Generally, engagement involves working with the mother of the family to identify situations relating to domestic and family violence. From there the mother is in a better place to look at

the changes that need to happen to keep the children safe. Discussion in the circle looked at the unmet needs of workers from remote communities who don't have access to services. One participant spoke about how she felt pressured to work outside of her role to provide support to families. Additional discussion included the needs of men within communities and the lack of services to provide meaningful support.

Yarning circles on day two addressed the forum theme *Working with men and young people who perpetrate domestic and family violence*. These yarning circles followed the panel discussion on the same topic. Yarning circles were led by Charles Passi and Bruce Simpson; Jason Jarro, Cameron Barwick from Queensland Police Service and Gil Thomsen and Mathew Quaife-Ryan from Helem Yumba.

**Bruce Simpson** and **Charles Passi's** yarning circle titled *What's working in our communities* was an extension of Bruce's keynote earlier in the morning. Bruce opening the discussion by asking his yarning circle if they believed there was reverse family violence and whether they knew of men who were being abused in their communities. The yarning circle agreed that reverse family violence to men does occur and that more support, prevention and intervention strategies should be developed. Charles stated that communities needed to support the whole family approach to domestic and family violence. Service providers, men's and women's groups in the circle discussed the urgency and action required to support whole families. Discussions continued around what family violence looks like in some communities and how it affects the whole family, the community and service providers.

The *Ending Family Violence Program* yarning circle was led by **Jason Jarro**. This program is presented at the Capricornia Correction Centre and is closely linked with the *Ending Offending Program* (an alcohol awareness program). Discussion in Jason's circle was about how violence was not part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and more about choices that people make. Participants in the circle spoke about the importance of follow-up with ex-prisoners when they returned to their communities. Jason discussed the responsibility of offenders to commit to scheduled meeting times with their probation/parole officers to maintain their community status. The group were interested to find out about the opportunity for elders and other prominent community members to visit people who were incarcerated. There was general agreement within the yarning circle that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need to stand up and be leaders and role models within their communities.

**Cameron Barwick** presented on the *Watchhouse DVD Project* currently being run at the Mt. Isa Watchhouse. The aim of the project is to provide information to offenders

who experience social disadvantage, homelessness and illiteracy, frequently reoffend and have difficulty exiting the criminal justice system. The Watchhouse DVD Project was developed to provide a brief but consistent message of support via DVD which made prisoners aware of their rights, obligations, and responsibilities, provide links to support agencies and offer a range of options available when they are released from custody. An important factor of the DVD is that it 'puts a face to a name' of agency support staff who are featured on the DVD. The yarning circle group looked at the project aims, involvement of partner organisations and the audience that the DVD is targeted at. The discussion involved looking at other messages that could be used in a similar manner to assist illiterate and disadvantaged clientele. Participants expressed the need for this type of DVD project to be duplicated in other watch houses in the state.

**Gil Thomsen** and **Matthew Quaife-Ryan** presented on a program developed by Helem Yumba called *The NOW Program*. The program is a three phase healing retreat program for Indigenous perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Currently, the program is only for men, but there are plans to include female perpetrators in the future. Gil and Matthew explained that the purpose of the retreat is to provide non-judgemental assistance to offenders to assist them to reconnect with themselves and hopefully to become the people they were born to be. The first phase of the healing process is to meet with their case worker to discuss offences committed, then they meet one-on-one with their client. At this point it is important that the client admits that they have committed a violent act, as many are in denial. The second healing phase is a four-day retreat which begins with a smoking ceremony and meditation. The perpetrator identifies the land he came from and they discuss dreaming stories and early colonisation and its affect on their people. Participants are then asked to fill in two columns – one with past memories and one for future plans. During a meeting around the fire, the past column is burned and stories are shared about future plans. They then watch the DVD *Once Were Warriors* focusing further discussion on how they feel about the effect of violence on the children main character's partner. Stage three of the program is a sorry ceremony where participants are asked to write a detailed sorry letter explaining how the violence they have perpetrated has affected their partner and children. This is usually the time when the damage that has been done becomes evident to participants. Gil and Matthew explained how there is the opportunity for these men to continue their healing journey. They are welcome to bring their partners to meetings to discuss the healing process. Comments from the yarning circle likened the program to an Indian program in Arizona. Another participant voiced concerns about the children in their community abusing the already abused parent and how this problem has been allayed by the introduction of a community services program.

### **Forum evaluation/feedback**

## **Process**

At the end of the national forum participants were invited to complete an evaluation/feedback survey. Ninety-five participants (70%) chose to take up the offer. The forum evaluation collected qualitative and quantitative data to ascertain when the forum achieved its objectives; to determine the most popular theme for 2012; and to collect feedback on what worked and what could be improved upon at the next forum.

Forum objectives were to provide an opportunity for Indigenous people who are working in Indigenous family violence prevention, policy or practice across the state to:

- highlight and celebrate the good work that is being done by Indigenous people themselves to end domestic and family violence;
- support Indigenous people to share information, knowledge and ideas about strategies and programs that could be used effectively by others; and to
- promote opportunities for networking across Queensland between Indigenous workers in the field of domestic and family violence prevention.

## **Results**

Of the 135 participants at this year's forum, 89 (66%) identified as either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

### **Are you from Queensland?**

Of the 95 respondents to the survey, 88 (92.6%) were from Queensland.

### **Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?**

Sixty-four participants who responded to the survey (67.4%) identified their culture as either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

### **Do you or your workplace offer services predominantly to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people?**

The majority of people who responded to the survey, 72% (n=68) said that either they personally or their service offered services predominantly to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

### **Do you or your workplace offer services predominantly to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?**

Just over half of the respondents, 49% (n=51.6) said they provided services to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

### **I learnt new things at the forum**

Of the 95 respondents to the survey, 100% (n=95) either strongly agreed or agreed that they had learnt new things at the forum.

### **I can use what I learnt in my own work (paid or voluntary)**

The vast majority of respondents, 98% (93) either strongly agreed or agreed that they could use what they learnt in their work. One participant said they could not use what they learned in their work and one participant did not complete this question.

### **Would you come back again next year?**

When asked whether they would return to the 2012 forum, 95% (n = 90) of participants said they would. The reason why people wanted to come back to the 2012 forum was consistently weighted toward *gaining knowledge and networking opportunities* with 63.6% of respondents indicating the following thoughts:

- Networking opportunities – to reconnect with like minds and heartfelt passions.
- Great networking and to hear about programs that address domestic violence issues to inspire my community.
- Networking support, increased knowledge and relaxed atmosphere.
- Networking, relationship building, continue to learn.

The remaining 32% of positive responses included:

- Great organisation, relevant topics, welcoming environment.
- Because we come together as a group but leave as one. We unite, stand together and fight.
- Forums such as this strengthen our communities.
- Capacity to hear collective wisdom of Indigenous people working to prevent domestic and family violence.

Five percent (5) of respondents said they would not return to the forum. One of the respondents qualified their response by saying they did not think their organisation would fund them to attend again. The remaining three comments said they would not return because:

- Too many no-shows for speakers I wanted to hear [all speakers on the program attended and presented].
- Programs need to be shared, not just mentioned.
- Forum the same as the last two years.

**Name two themes you would most like to see covered in next year's state forum.**

Participants were not given a range of topics to choose from so they were able to choose two topics which related directly to their work or community need. Because the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum is designed specifically for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants and 32.6% (n=31) of respondents were non-Indigenous, theme choices for next year's forum were separated into Indigenous and non-Indigenous suggestions. The results, in order of popularity, are as follows:

*Indigenous*

1. **Young people and domestic violence** – Youth and youth violence/teenage violence/young mothers' programs/youth to parent abuse/suicide and young people/self harm as a result of domestic violence/drugs, sniffing, safe houses.
2. **Programs that work** – tailoring programs for community needs/models of programs/how to engage communities to address issues/new programs that address Indigenous people's needs/working with perpetrator programs/community owned and led initiatives.  
**Children** – impacts of domestic violence on children/programs for young mothers/safety/sexual and mental abuse of children/prevent children being the next generation of victims.
3. **Healing and culture** – reconnecting with country and spirituality/healing journeys for men, women and children/holistic support for families/family wellbeing programs/therapeutic approaches to domestic violence.

*Non-Indigenous*

1. **Prevention** – homelessness and its contribution to domestic violence/primary prevention strategies/safety/integrated responses to domestic violence/working with families together/self care for workers.
2. **Healing and culture** - healing services – group work activities/alternative programs that work holistically with families.  
**Children** – working with the whole family/children as silent victims/ promoting the importance of education in Indigenous children.  
**Programs for men** – men's views/ men's role within the family continuum/ men's groups/young men's programs, issues and solutions/men's healing.

**Additional recommendations** from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were: housing and homelessness, legal issues; violence against men; violence against women; men's issues; men and women's issues; elder abuse; intimate partner sexual assault and remote services.

**Additional comments** contributed by participants were mainly complimentary and included:

- Good atmosphere, good venue, good food. Good interactions and discussion.
- Much enjoyed 2011 Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum – the way it worked, the professionalism and the support given to speakers showcasing their programs.
- This is the first forum on domestic violence that I ever been to and what I learnt here is – a lot!
- This has been an invaluable experience. The respect shown from everyone to each other was amazing. The environment was relaxed and comfortable for me. Thank you.

**Feedback and recommendations for next year included:**

- Need for conference pack outlining speaker and keynote content to enable informed choice.
- More structure to yarning circles. A way to keep topic on track (facilitator?). Also a best practice session.
- Perhaps the opportunity to develop formal recommendations for the forum?
- Not sure if the conference can be moved to another city every year, as I know a lot of people would like to attend but don't have the funds to travel or for accommodation.
- Ensure speakers don't use the opportunity to 'soapbox' and keep to time limits.
- An opportunity for men to engage in 'men's business' as a component of the forum.
- As a non-Indigenous person working with all Australians I would like to see encouragement given to non-Indigenous people who have chosen to work with Indigenous people. It saddened me to hear statements like 'white people taking jobs away from Indigenous people'.

## Conclusion

When everyone who completes their survey at the end of the forum say they have learnt new things and 98% (n=93) say they are able to use what they learnt in their work, it's difficult to believe that this year's event could have been anything other than very successful!

The forum's aims were successfully addressed during this year's event with most presenters being Indigenous (76%, n = 17) and a great deal of the presentations showcasing programs that work well in Indigenous communities. These included the Future Parenting Program, the BROC Program, the S.A.F.E.L.Y. Tool, an art therapy program, the Violence is Not Our Way Program, the SOS Program, the Watchhouse DVD Project and a range of successful programs being run by Far West Family Violence Service. As in past years the main reason given by survey respondents to return to the 2012 forum was to take advantage of networking and learning opportunities that the forum provides

The free training event held immediately after the forum provided participants with a nationally recognised qualification in the area of domestic and family violence. *Recognise and Respond Appropriately to Domestic and Family Violence*, which was delivered by Betty Taylor and Shirley Slann, is the first of three units of competence in CDFVR's *Course in Responding to Domestic and Family Violence (30949QLD)*. Participants in this training will be able to add the remaining two units in this course toward a full qualification as they become available.

Thank you to all who took the time to complete the survey at the end of the forum – your advice and recommendations will steer the direction that the 2012 forum will take. We look forward to meeting with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group later this year to review your ideas and feedback which will directly determine next year's forum themes.

Lastly, thank you to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, Dr Jackie Huggins AM, Shirley Slann, Harold Fatnowna, Jenny Binsiar, Pat Cora and Charles Passi, without whose generous and enthusiastic guidance this forum would not have been so successful.