

From the Director

It's been a busy quarter, and one in which the entire month of May was dedicated to domestic and family violence prevention activities across Queensland. I had the pleasure of participating in three Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month events, in addition to the Centre's own event, the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum: *Which Way Now?*

Over one hundred people attended this one-day Forum, which was hosted by the Centre in conjunction with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group on 4 May 2004. Participants came from communities across the State to meet with keynote speakers Professor Mick Dodson and Jackie Huggins AM, State Government and ATSIC representatives, Indigenous researchers and community-based Indigenous family violence prevention practitioners.

Professor Dodson, Chair of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at the Australian National University, called for a national strategic framework and increased resources to address Indigenous family violence. He also spoke about the need to redefine masculinity for Indigenous men and boys and stated that "Indigenous men and women must move forward again together, and guide our children toward mutual respect and gender equity".

Jackie Huggins AM, Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia and Deputy-Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at University of Queensland described the Forum as "reconciliation in action". Jackie also called for symbolic reconciliation in addition to the Government's preferred practical reconciliation approach. She argued that solutions to Indigenous family violence and other social justice issues will only be found when frameworks of action incorporate symbolic recognition of past wrongs and building of pride, as well as practical measures.

The Forum was followed by a policy planning day, attended by about 40 Forum participants, where detailed consideration was given to the issues raised in the Forum and strategies to respond were proposed. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group will work with the Centre to formulate a plan of action for the centre to progress relevant issues and to make recommendations to other agencies where appropriate. The keynote addresses and some of the presentations from the Forum are posted on the Centre's website. A summary of the Forum evaluation is provided on page 2 of this edition of the Newsletter.



Keynote speaker Jackie Huggins at the *Which Way Now?* Forum (see page 2)

Inside this issue:

Evaluation Overview: Indigenous Family Violence Forum: <i>Which Way Now?</i>	2
Family Wellbeing Empowerment Program: A Participatory Action Research Initiative	6
Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month - May 2004	6
Domestic and Family Violence Database Summary	9
International Visitors' Presentations	11
Specialised Justice Responses to Family Violence in Canada	12
Restorative Justice and Gendered Violence	13
Workshops, Conferences and Date Claimers	15



A New Look for the Centre

the Centre's new logo

You may have noticed from the front cover of this issue that the Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research (CDFVR) has adopted a new logo. The logo was chosen to reflect the theme 'freedom from violence' by incorporating into the Centre's acronym an image of a butterfly and the colours of the sky (blue and white). The butterfly image was first developed for the Centre's "FREEDOM, NO FEAR, no violence" poster in 2003 and has continued to feature in a number of other Centre publications.

CDFVR's website has also undergone a significant transformation at a time of reaching a significant milestone. Since its launch almost two years ago, the Centre's website has received over 400 000 web hits.

The new website design focuses more on the needs of the user in a number of ways:

- The site has been streamlined to allow for faster loading times - this is an essential element considering that many services and individuals do not have broadband internet access.
- The new site features an improved menu system that now includes direct links to both Global Data Summaries from the Centre's Domestic and Family Violence Database and the secure Data Collection Site.
- A search engine has been placed on the top of each page to enable easier access.

We invite you to explore the various changes at: www.noviolence.com.au and share your feedback in our Guestbook. Simply run your mouse cursor over the "Interact" button on the website's menu, select "Feedback" and sign our guestbook.

Centre Staff

The Centre is delighted to welcome to the team Lyndon Reilly, Indigenous Research Worker. Lyndon is a Badtjala man from K'gari (Fraser Island). Lyndon's formal qualifications include a Bachelor of Education in Adult Education with Aboriginal Studies and Community Adult Education majors and he has a wealth of experience in working with Indigenous families and students in educational settings through Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA). Lyndon aspires to work closely with Indigenous people and communities, and is particularly interested in Murri men's groups to improve the quality of life for Murri families.

Social Work Student

The Centre welcomes third year social work student Pam Viti, on a field placement with the Centre until August 2004. Pam identifies with her South Sea Island (Vanuatu) and Aboriginal (Koinjmal) heritage and brings to her social work student placement a strong background in Aboriginal health service delivery (Northern Territory) and community development. Pam's formal qualifications include a Bachelor of Community Welfare and a Diploma of Applied Science (Community and Human Services).

Evaluation Overview

Indigenous Family Violence Forum: *Which Way Now?* CQU Mackay 4 May 2004

Lyndon Reilly, Indigenous Research Worker, CDFVR

Domestic and family violence is of great concern, especially in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, where women are 45 times more likely to be affected by domestic violence when compared to women as a whole in Australia (Memmott 2001). Furthermore, according to comparative data, our women are 36.7 times more often hospitalised by their partner, when compared to non-Indigenous women (Queensland Government Response to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence 2000:9). There needs to be a shift in mindset amongst our people, urban and remote, that such behaviour is unacceptable. We need to take ownership of our responsibilities, and not simply shift the blame onto other paradigms such as Colonisation.

This article reflects on and evaluates the four objectives of the Indigenous Family Violence Forum: *Which Way Now?*; and collates participants' opinions and responses to the five questions posed in the evaluation.

The Forum's objectives were to:

1. Highlight and celebrate the work that Indigenous people and organisations are doing to prevent domestic and family violence.
2. Identify policy, research and/ or practice areas requiring more support or further work.



3. Bring Indigenous people from around the State, to share information and ideas.
4. Provide an opportunity for Indigenous people from around the State to contribute advice on areas needing further action.

The five questions posed in the Forum's evaluation were:

1. Overall, how relevant do you think the content was (i.e. the presentation by speakers and the panel discussion)?
2. Overall, how would you rate the structure for the day, i.e. keynote speakers, followed by discussion of policy and research, followed by presentation from community workers, followed by a panel discussion?
3. Would you like the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research to convene such a forum again?
4. Please state what you would like to be done differently in the future.
5. Please state what you would like to be done the same in the future.



Keynote speaker Professor Mick Dodson and Karen Dorante from ABC Radio

Objective 1 Highlight and celebrate

Highlighting and celebrating Indigenous people and organisations, preventing domestic and family violence encompassed within the Forum was extremely informative. Participants' viewpoints regarding this segment were that it was positive and exciting, furthermore it was informative and the audience was extremely impressed with the projects presented (for example, the Wellbeing Project). Hence, talking can generate proposals for further strategies in the prevention of domestic and family violence.

Although the overall impression of this section was positive, there was room for improvement. A number of participants would have liked to discuss issues informally and believed one day was not enough time. Others believed there was not a great deal of information concerning men and men's groups and their achievements. Achieving a holistic presentation that highlights the work of Indigenous people and organisations must therefore reflect a diversity of domestic and family violence prevention programs (i.e. women, men, elders etc).

Objective 2 Policy, Research and/or Practice

Participants predominantly indicated that the component of the Forum which identified policy, research and/or practice areas requiring more support or further work was well done.

According to the audience, the Forum established a platform for policy, research and practices. Furthermore, the responses emphasised the need for support, greater understanding and more work in these areas.

Furthermore, although the information that was available was relevant, the consideration of Statewide representation was not evident. Without a holistic approach to policy, research and practices, and areas requiring additional support or extra work, a true indication can not be achieved. Identifying the process that links policy and outcomes to the workforce needs to be addressed also. Furthermore, a lesbian, gay and transsexuals equity policy needs to be discussed, as understanding certain demographics within our communities may also decelerate family violence.

Objective 3 Share information and ideas

Indigenous Queenslanders sharing information and ideas at the Forum enabled clearer understanding (for non-Indigenous Forum attendees) of issues facing Indigenous communities. There was an overwhelmingly positive response from the audience regarding presentations delivered by Women's Shelter representatives from Woorabinda, Cherbourg and Palm Island, described by one audience member as "deadly". Furthermore, sharing information and theories can be encouraging for new approaches that ensure equitable outcomes for Indigenous communities.



Other comments indicated that whilst the sharing of information and ideas segment of the Forum was greatly accepted, representation from the whole State needed to be considered: *"This I think could have included people from Far North Queensland"...* *"Was north of Townsville adequately represented?"...* *"I am sure there were people from around the State who would like to have been there, but for who travel to attend (cost) may have been prohibitive".* There was also disappointment expressed in the lack of representation from within the Public Service, and community people working at the grassroots level of domestic and family violence.



Objective 4 Indigenous people contributing advice

Indigenous peoples' contribution regarding advice in areas that need additional attention used the Forum as a vehicle to articulate their projects and illustrate what is/is not working in their communities to restrict domestic and family violence. As a result of these accomplishments, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and organisations can embrace new advice to create improved strategic outcomes relating to domestic and family violence in all communities, black and white.

However one must keep in mind the participants at such events, and the environment in which forums or conventions are conducted. Though there needs to be formality and appropriate technological equipment (for example computer access and overhead projection facilities), there is also a need for informality when dealing with Indigenous people's perspectives. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are likely to express themselves more freely around a camp fire than from within four walls: *"I feel that a lot of people were shame to ask important questions due to the number of people in the auditorium"...* *"Too structured and the large theatre group detracted from information sharing"*. Increasing intimacy or using intimate pods of forums may entice participants into deeper discussions.

Another problematical issue related to this section was the insufficient contribution of male voices and advice. There's a need for Indigenous men's groups to speak up about family violence. Indigenous communities, urban and rural, require their men to be proactive in stemming family violence, as stated by one audience member: *"This was apparent in the identified lack of male advocacy for positive stories and support"*.

Relevance of content

The content of the Forum which included keynote speakers, presentations and panel discussion was rated overall as "very" to "extremely" relevant to the theme of domestic and family violence prevention. According to statistical database frequencies, 40.9% of participants responding to evaluation questions believed the content to be very relevant, while 50% believed it to be extremely relevant. Their views are as follows:

- *I probably found the practitioners (refuge workers) most inspiring. It was worthwhile listening to all of the presenters, particularly the context within which they work.*
- *Very relevant and informative.*
- *I enjoyed hearing the presenters, particularly those in service delivery.*
- *This has been an exclusive platform for Indigenous people.*

Even with the strength of these views, feedback indicated that improvements can be made. Keeping information new and updated and to make clear what is changing within the communities, (i.e. performance indicators) will enhance the prevention of family violence. Furthermore discussion time needs to be focused on the task at hand with more audience participation. Community role models and service providers need to elevate their presence at such forums. Reflection and evaluation comments stated: *"Certain speakers were stuck in parrot fashion regurgitating old and irrelevant information"...* *"What is changing on the ground, what is actually working etc is still missing from discussion"....* *"Some audience participation was more about getting recognition rather than asking questions"*.

Overall structure

The overall structure of the Forum was judged by participants to be constructive, and successful in keeping the audience interested. The inclusion of keynote speakers such as Professor Mick Dodson and Jackie Huggins, both well known black voices within the nation's political and social arena, were distinguished and powerful tools in the construction of the Forum. Presentations by guest speakers and community workers and panel discussions were relevant, and worked faultlessly to the time specifications.

Although the structuring of the Forum appeared pragmatic, some participants suggested that keynote speakers' lectures could have followed the policy, research and community presentations. This would have given the keynote speakers a stronger contextualisation that may have benefited their rhetoric in the keynote addresses. It was further suggested that small workshops may have also been beneficial, as they would have provided informal and intimate structures for Indigenous participants to examine, discuss and synthesise their understanding of information.

Generally, however, participants indicated that the structure of the Forum was excellent: *"This process was strategic and purposeful in that the structure evoked motivation, information, interaction and reflection whilst still having the opportunity to extract valuable information"*.



Suggestions for future forums

What would be different in future forums concerning Indigenous family violence?

Feedback suggested that if we are going to be serious about preventing family violence within our communities, a greater quantity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations need to attend these forums. For example, other Indigenous representatives beginning with Far North Queensland need to attend future forums, to ensure better outcomes in the prevention of family violence.

The inclusion of more Murri men, promoting their interest in combating domestic and family violence within their communities is also a concern. Murri men's groups need to stand up, and be acknowledged by their communities for being proactive in stemming family violence.

What should be the same in future domestic and family violence forums?

Participants indicated the value of interaction and dialogue between academics, organisations and community representatives sharing innovative approaches.

The structure i.e. keynote speakers, guest speakers and panel discussions, together with the timeframe allowed, was beneficial for all involved. Hence the volume of speakers from diverse backgrounds sharing their knowledge and achievements was perfect.

The environment, though formal, was appreciated by those who attended. It was evident from the responses that Forum participants felt that overall, the hospitality provided by the Centre was magnificent.

Conclusion

Why have forums concerning Indigenous Family Violence? Is it because of the prevalent violence in our communities - violence such as: spousal assaults, psychological violence, homicides, suicides, rape and sexual assaults? Aboriginal and Torres Strait women are at 45 times greater risk of spousal violence than all Australian women. Moreover, the extent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women being the victims of homicide are 10 times higher than all Australian women (Memmott 2001).

The Indigenous Family Violence Forum: *Which Way Now?* gave members of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities throughout Queensland a remarkable opportunity to participate in information sharing and discussing policy, research, practices and strategies in family violence prevention. The Forum also gave participants the opportunity to listen to influential national Indigenous leaders, Professor Mick Dodson and Jackie Huggins AM, along with Barbara Flick and Yvonne Cadet-James - all Indigenous leaders within their own domains. All of these speakers have years of experience and expertise when relating to family violence prevention; as Jackie Huggins stated at the Forum, *"I'm an old girl at this"*.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men need to step up to the mark; one of the most significant questions raised at the Forum was: *"Where are the male advocacy and men's groups?"* There are men's groups out there, and hopefully they can attend the next forum. Future forums must include guest speakers from existing men's groups (for example, the Murri Men's Group Brisbane, Beaudesert and Logan Men's Health Group), as without this input, a true analysis of family violence and the outcomes will remain imprecise.

Another key consideration that was raised by participants in their evaluations was the issue of the environment. The majority of the audience were either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. We are living in a society where technology seems to dominate our existence when trying to present information (for example PowerPoint presentations). Outdoor locations are also needed when networking with Indigenous people or communities. Our people think clearer when they are outdoors, and this approach should be espoused into the next forum.

References:

Memmott, P. Stacey, R. Chambers, C & Keys, C. (2001) *"Violence in Indigenous Communities: Report to the Crime Prevention Branch of the Attorney General's Department, Crime Prevention Branch of the Attorney-General's Department, Canberra.*

"The Next Step: Queensland Government Response to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence" (December 2000).

Family Wellbeing Empowerment Program: A Participatory Action Research Initiative

Summary of Presentation at the Centre's Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum 4 May 2004
Yvonne-Cadet James, James Cook University

Research Team Leader: Dr. Komla Tsey, University of Queensland
Presenter: Ms. Yvonne Cadet-James, James Cook University

The Family Wellbeing Program is an empowerment program which is based on the belief that through collective action of empowered individuals, entire families and communities can achieve self determination goals. The program is delivered in two stages; stage one is the empowerment program and stage two, the facilitator program promoting sustainability of the program, through community members taking control of the delivery of the program.

The Family Wellbeing approach is based on a Participatory Action Research model where community members become the researchers, exploring what is happening in their lives, examining issues, identifying resources and support mechanisms, and gaining the knowledge and confidence to find solutions and take action to address inequalities and improve their quality of life. The initiative involves engaging communities, delivering the Family Wellbeing Program, and evaluating outcomes.

Evaluation of the program has shown that on a personal level, the participants' self worth was enhanced along with resilience, an ability to reflect on the cause of problems, take control of their lives, and realisation that they can affect change. From a community perspective, there is evidence of increased capacity to identify and address issues including:

- Enhancing education and employment opportunities through development of strategic initiatives for Indigenous families to establish business interests;
- Identifying reasons for poor school attendance rates and developing safe and effective learning places for children; and
- Addressing issues for at risk children by planning for outside school hours care and activities.

This type of program has the potential to reduce family violence in Indigenous communities, thereby improving individual and social wellbeing. The longer term implications for family wellbeing in this respect are yet to be evaluated.

To view the Wellbeing Empowerment Program PowerPoint presentation, please visit our website at www.noviolence.com.au/whichwaynow.html.

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month - May 2004

Heather Nancarrow, Director, CDFVR

Congratulations to the many individuals, services and communities that contributed to Queensland's domestic and family violence prevention activities during the entire month of May. Congratulations also to Cecilia Barassi-Rubio, Policy Officer with the Department of Communities' Violence Prevention Unit, and this year's co-ordinator of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. A wide range of creative and inspiring events were held across the State to raise community awareness and challenge attitudes that support domestic and family violence.

In addition to participating in the Centre's own event, the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum: *Which Way Now?*, I was invited to present keynote addresses at two regional forums, one in Rockhampton and one at Noosa, which were convened to enhance local inter-agency collaboration to prevent domestic and family violence. I would like to thank Robyn Blandford from the Rockhampton Women's Health Centre and Sandie Pitter from the Noosa Shire Council for their invitations to me, and to congratulate them both on the success of their events. Similarly, I would like to thank Annabelle Alimante of the Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) for the invitation to launch the artwork produced by the IWSS women's group. IWSS continues to be inspirational in its strength, resilience and creativity in supporting women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds affected by domestic violence and sexual assault, and it was an honour to launch the wonderful results of their work.



The Centre also extends congratulations to the recipients of the 2004 Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Awards. Cecilia Barassi-Rubio provided the following summary of those initiatives presented with a domestic and family violence prevention award:

Individual Category: Heather Oakes

Initiative: Raising Community Awareness of Domestic Violence

Heather Oakes has been nominated for an award given her long-standing voluntary support of the prevention of domestic and family violence in her local community. Heather has been involved with SANDBAG, a community based organisation. over the last three years as a volunteer counsellor. Heather is described as a key instigator of SANDBAG's program to raise awareness of domestic and family violence in the local community.

Heather's ongoing commitment to the prevention of domestic and family violence is demonstrated by her contribution to the development of a fax back program between SANDBAG and the Sandgate Police, which has occurred without any additional funding.

Through SANDBAG Heather is also involved with Voices of Hope, a support and action group for women who have experienced domestic and family violence. Voices of Hope has a role in the prevention of domestic and family violence and Heather's association with this group has been crucial to their empowerment and skill development in this preventative role.

School-Based Prevention Project Category: Maroochydore State School

Initiative: A Workplace Response

This initiative aims to increase the safety of children affected by domestic and family violence and minimise the disruption to their lives when their families are disrupted due to domestic and family violence.

The Maroochydore State School aims to provide a safe and productive learning environment for their students to help them achieve their highest potential. Unfortunately, students' lives can be potentially disrupted by domestic and family violence. The school has developed a strong relationship with the local women's refuge where students sometimes reside with their families due to domestic and family violence. The Maroochydore State School, aware of the safety needs of these students, has developed a system to maintain their confidentiality and ensure their safety. The school uses a different Education Queensland ID number and school records to ensure children's destination school is not revealed if domestic and family violence has occurred. The school also tries to provide a stable environment by working in collaboration with the women's refuge. As a result of this collaboration,

children are provided with school uniforms and other basic items to help them settle in and feel part of the school community.

The Maroochydore State School also operates a "non-custodial parent register" which entails regular access by non-custodial parents to copies of report cards, test results and newsletters without having to obtain these from their estranged partners. This avoids potentially conflictive situations that can disrupt the lives of the students. The register also allows the non-custodial parent's inclusion in their children's education and they can take on an active interest in their children's school life.

Other initiatives to protect the safety of children include compulsory identification badges for everyone on site and staff members on playground duty carrying walkie-talkies.

Community Organisation Category: Kowanyama Justice Group Inc

Initiative: Mediating in Community

This initiative aims to enhance the capacity of local community members in the Kowanyama Aboriginal community to prevent and respond to family violence.

Mediating in Community is an initiative that includes men and women from three different clan groups, Kunjen, Kokoberra and Kikomnjena, all with their own language and 'country'. The purpose of this initiative is to provide community education that is relevant to the community and to convey the message that all families have a right to live a peaceful life. It also aims to lower the level of violence in the community through the skills acquired by participants in the mediation process.

Mediating in Community operates with a team of Justice Group Members trained in mediation. This community initiative has a focus on adults experiencing difficulties in relationships. The system currently in place allows for families, individuals and couples to seek assistance by attending the Justice Centre when they have concerns about violence or are in distress. The Centre also offers regular sessions to community members with an emphasis on skills development to assist them to deal with violence issues that include intervention from Justice Group Members and discussing personal issues.

The Justice Group is also involved with the justice system and they can recommend that a Magistrate direct clients to professional counselling as part of their sentence.



Partnerships Category: Ipswich Jets Rugby League Football Club and The Ipswich Domestic Violence Strategies Group

Initiative: There is No Excuse For Abuse (Ipswich Domestic And Family Violence Prevention Week 2003)

This initiative aims to raise awareness among young people about respectful relationships and that violence in relationships is unacceptable; and to encourage young people, parents and local sporting clubs to take a stand against domestic and family violence.

This initiative was developed and implemented as a result of a partnership between the Ipswich Jets Rugby League Football club and the Ipswich Domestic Violence Strategies Group, which consists of members from police, health, housing and other local government and non-government agencies.

This initiative consisted of a number of activities that took place over a three-day period at the Ipswich show. These included an information, display and activity stall targeting young people where “show bags” for young people were distributed. The show bags contained information on respectful relationships, balloons with the message “Abuse & Violence in Relationships is Unacceptable”, free tickets to the next Jets game, Jets stickers, and other products promoting the message that abuse in relationships is unacceptable. Young people also had the opportunity to write anti-violence messages on a banner that was completely covered with these messages.

Government Category: Women’s Legal Aid - Legal Aid Queensland

Initiative: Diversity Counts - Legal Information for Women Project

This initiative is the second phase of a project targeting rural women and their access to legal services. The initiative identified Filipino women in rural and remote areas of Queensland as a priority group whose access to the legal system and legal information were limited by language and geographical isolation among other issues.

Diversity Counts - Legal Information for Women Project is the second stage of a Legal Aid project The Rural Women’s Awareness Project. This project identified the need to improve access to legal services for Filipino women living in rural and remote Queensland and to provide them with legal information on domestic and family violence and the legal system in Queensland. Research also shows that Filipino women in particular are at risk of over representation as victims of domestic and family violence and are almost six times over represented as victims of homicide in Australia.

This initiative consisted of the development of a set of resources that include a pocket card and a leaflet with specific information about domestic violence, women’s legal rights in Australia and information about aspects of the Australian legal system. The principle is that accurate information and an effective response are essential to the prevention of domestic and family violence.

Filipino women were consulted on the development of these products through a range of focus groups and consultations. The resources are being distributed and there is the possibility of replicating them in Aboriginal and Torres Strait languages.

Domestic Violence in Rural and Remote Areas

The CDFVR project known as “*Who Can You Call? A Health Promotion Strategy for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence in Rural and Remote Areas*” aims to develop, implement and evaluate a health promotion strategy, appropriate to women in rural and remote areas of Queensland, that increases women’s awareness of the domestic violence helpline and provides them with basic information about domestic and family violence.

The resulting product is a ‘fact sheet’ that takes the form of a catalogue-style newspaper insert. The front cover of the insert depicts an image and caption, with the following three pages outlining information about domestic violence, healthy relationships and options for support and assistance. Approximately 48,000 inserts were distributed via regional newspapers to areas in central-western and south-western Queensland, with a further 2000 (approximately) distributed through a range of rural services.

The first stage of evaluation has been completed and indicates some very interesting information about the impact of the insert. However, the second stage of data collection has not yet concluded, which means that we are not yet able to provide details of a complete evaluation. The Centre will post a summary of the “*Who Can You Call? A Health Promotion Strategy for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence in Rural and Remote Areas*” evaluation on its website as it becomes available.

Domestic and Family Violence Database Summary

1 October 2003 – 31 May 2004

Heather Nancarrow, Director, CDFVR and Sharon Conway, Research Assistant, CDFVR

At 31 May 2004, a total of 12,089 new clients, or new client matters, were recorded in the Centre's Domestic and Family Violence Database¹. Where gender was identified, 85% of the total recorded contacts were with women (10,277), 14.3% were with men (1733) and 0.06% were with transgender clients (6). There was no value entered for 0.6% of clients (73).

Apart from the substantial difference in the number of recorded contacts for men and women, the data reveals other proportionate variations in men's and women's use of domestic and family violence services.

Type of relationship²

As expected, spousal relationships continue to be the biggest single category (74.9%) of relationships represented in the total 12,089 cases in the database. Parent /adult child relationships comprise 9.4% of all relationships represented in the data, followed by various other family relationships, including siblings (7.1%); intimate personal relationships (7.0%); and informal care relationships (0.5%).

The percentage of the spousal domestic violence cases recorded for females (76.4% of all cases recorded for females) was substantially higher than the percentage of such cases recorded for males (66.5 %of all cases recorded for males). As illustrated in Table 1 (below) males are proportionately more likely than females to be seeking assistance in relation to parent/adult child relationships and sibling relationships (13.6% of males and 8.7% of females).

Table 1: Type of relationship by gender

Type of relationship	Males (1733 cases)		Females (10,277 cases)		Transgender (6 cases)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Spouse	1152	66.5	7852	76.4	4	75.0
Family – Parent/Step Parent/Adult child	236	13.6	894	8.7	1	25.0
Intimate personal	121	7.0	719	7.0	0	0.0
Family/Sibling	84	4.8	315	3.1	0	0.0
Intimate Personal Same Sex	3	0.2	41	0.4	0	0.0
Spousal Same Sex	14	0.8	37	0.4	0	0.0
Family – Grandparent/Grandchild	14	0.8	37	0.4	0	0.0
Providing Informal Care	6	0.3	29	0.3	0	0.0
Receiving Informal Care	15	0.1	4	0.2	0	0.0
Totals	1645	94.1	9928	96.9	5	100

The total percentages are slightly less than 100 due to small numbers, inconsistencies and omissions in recording of data.

Primary service provided by gender

Overall, court support was the single most commonly sought response to domestic and family violence, representing 57% of the total of primary service provided to new clients/new client contacts. As seen in Table 2 (overleaf) the database reveals that, for men, court support was the primary service provided in 66.4% of recorded cases, while for women court support was the primary service provided in 55.5% of recorded cases. Proportionately, then, men seek court support from domestic and family violence support services as the primary service more often than women. Correspondingly, men are less likely than women to seek crisis intervention, counselling or advocacy as the primary service response.

¹Since 1 October 2003, domestic and family violence prevention services across Queensland have been entering data for new clients or new client contacts into the Centre's "Domestic and Family Violence Database". As the data is collected by the service providers in respect of each new client, or new client matter presenting for assistance in relation to domestic or family violence, it does not accurately reflect numbers of individual people, nor can it be seen to represent the total workload of these services. Furthermore, the data only relates to people who access support services and should not be seen to represent the incidence of domestic and family violence in Queensland.

²Definitions of relationships are as defined in Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989, although the database separates 'spousal' and 'same-sex spousal'.

Table 2: Primary service provided by gender

Primary Service Provided	Males % (1,733 cases)	Females % (10,277 cases)	Transgender % (6 cases)
Court Support	66.4	55.5	50.0
Crisis intervention	12.9	20.1	16.66
Counselling	11.0	15.8	16.66
Other	8.5	6.3	16.66
Advocacy	0.8	1.7	0.0
Totals	99.6	99.4	99.98

The total percentages are slightly less than 100 due to small numbers, inconsistencies and omissions in recording of data.

Violence reported to police

There is practically no apparent gender difference in rates of reporting to violence to police in regard to spousal domestic violence. Where known, (1034 cases) 59.7% of matters for male clients had been reported to police, compared to 60.4% of matters for women (6,203 known cases). However, the rate of reporting to police for cases involving same sex spousal domestic violence appears to be higher than those in opposite sex relationships, although the number of same sex cases is very small.

For females in same sex relationships, 64% of the total 24 known cases had been reported to police and for males in same sex relationships, 71.4% of the 10 known cases had been reported to police. While the data identifies the number of cases where the violence has been reported to police, it does not reveal who has made the report (eg the client, a neighbour or a family member).

Primary Reason for contact

The primary reason for contact with a funded service, where known, was related to experiencing violence in a current relationship in 62.7% of the total recorded cases for women (10,277) and 40.7% of recorded cases for men (1,733). Experiencing violence from a past relationship was the primary reason for contact with a funded service in 21.4% of recorded cases for women and 8.9% of recorded cases for men. That is, women are more likely than men to be seeking assistance in relation to violence, whether the relationship is current or past. However, the gender difference is substantially greater in regard to current violence from a past relationship.

Perpetrating violence in a current relationship was the primary reason for contact with a funded service for 1.8% (187) of the total number of cases recorded for females, and 27.6% (479) of total recorded cases for males. This is illustrated in Table 3, below.

Table 3: Primary reason for contact by gender

Primary reason for contact	Females		Males	
	Number	%	Number	%
Experiencing violence in a current relationship	6444	62.7	705	40.7
Currently experiencing violence from a past relationship	2199	21.4	154	8.9
Using violence in a current relationship	187	1.8	479	27.6

Conclusion

The eight months of data from the Domestic and Family Violence Database indicates substantial gender differences in the experience of domestic and family violence and the primary type of services required in response. This summary highlights areas that may warrant further investigation, including relationships between the use of domestic and family violence services and the use of violence.

Another area to be considered for further investigation is the difference between opposite sex relationships and same sex relationships and the frequencies with which the violence is reported to police. It appears that proportionately, violence is reported more for same sex relationships than opposite sex relationships. Further violence is reported to the police in notably higher numbers with regard to same sex relationships involving men when compared to same sex relationships involving women. Understanding this phenomenon will require continued monitoring and investigation.

International Visitors' Seminar Presentations

Professor Frank Ascione, University of Michigan

On 27 July 2004 the Centre, in conjunction with CQU's School of Psychology and Sociology, will be hosting a presentation by Professor Frank Ascione, a leader in the field of research that explores animal abuse as a predictor or indicator of domestic violence and child abuse. We would like to thank the Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences for facilitating Professor Ascione's visit to CQU Mackay Campus, through the Distinguished Visitors' Program.

Professor Ascione is a Professor of Social and Administrative Sciences, and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Pharmacy, University of Michigan. His work examines the retrospective and prospective links between cruelty to animals, child abuse and domestic violence; particularly regarding the potential that humane education has to prevent violence through early intervention. More recently, Professor Ascione has focused his attention on child and adolescent animal abuse. This research examines the common roots of violence toward people and animals and is directed at identifying an early indicator of at-risk status in children.

Professor Ascione has co-edited two books: "Cruelty to Animals and Interpersonal Violence: Readings in Research and Application" (1998); and "Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, and Animal Abuse: Linking the Circles of Compassion for Prevention and Intervention" (1998). He has also authored "Safe Havens for Pets: Guidelines for Programs Sheltering Pets for Women who are Battered" and published a number of articles on the development of anti-social and pro-social behaviour in children.

In 2001, the US Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention published Professor Ascione's review of animal abuse and youth violence as a Research Bulletin. Professor Ascione was selected to receive the 2001 Distinguished Scholar Award from the International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations and the International Society for Anthrozoology and in 2002, was selected as USU's College of Education Scholar/Researcher of the Year.

Dr Valli Kalei Kanuha, PhD, University of Hawaii

Dr Valli Kalei Kanuha, Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, will be visiting the Centre in early August (date to be confirmed) and presenting a seminar on her work on the social construction of violence.

Dr Kanuha has worked for 30 years in the United States and Hawaii as clinician, activist, administrator, and consultant with community agencies, HIV/AIDS organisations, and other social service settings.

Dr Kanuha's current research focuses on the development, implementation and evaluation of a Native Hawaiian culturally-based intervention for Native Hawaiian male batterers and battered women about which I will probably focus my presentation. She is part of a national movement of women of colour who are engaged in more radical critique of US policies regarding violence against women of colour, incorporating global and international perspectives by and about women of colour. Other areas of interest in which Dr Kanuha has trained and published widely include HIV/AIDS, violence against women, feminist theory, lesbian, gay and transgender issues.

Her involvement with community and national organisations is numerous and includes membership of the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women, the Steering Committees of a national organisation on violence against women of colour (known as Incite!) and the Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence. Dr Kanuha is also a consultant with Praxis International in Duluth, Minnesota where she provides technical assistance to funded rural domestic violence programs.

Dr Kanuha is visiting Australia and New Zealand as part of a study which is researching the social construction of violence, in both pre and post- Western contact, against native Hawaiian women and children in Hawaii. The study is examining culturally-derived sanctions against domestic and sexual violence; restorative and alternative justice principles and practices derived from the similar indigenous cultural settings of the Maori people of New Zealand and the First Nations peoples of the American continent; and the viability of indigenous alternative justice interventions in contemporary Hawaii. Dr Kanuha's visit to Australia aims to integrate her findings with the studies and practices of Australia and New Zealand. She will consult with various Indigenous practitioners in the sexual assault and family violence fields and with Griffith University Criminologist, Professor Kathy Daly.

Both Professor Ascione's and Dr Kanuha's presentations (times to be confirmed) will be video-conferenced to sites around the State. We would welcome your participation in one or both presentations (no cost involved). Please contact Aithne on 4940 7834 or email a.archibald@cqu.edu.au if you would like further details.

Specialised Justice Responses to Family Violence in Canada

Distinguished Visitor Associate Professor Jane Ursel, University of Manitoba

The Centre recently hosted a two day visit from Associate Professor Jane Ursel on 13 and 14 April 2004 and extends its gratitude to the Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences for making Jane's visit possible through the Distinguished Visitors' Program.

Jane is located in the School of Sociology and is the Director of the University of Manitoba's Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse Centre (RESOLVE). She is also a lay benchler with the Manitoba Law Society and serves as an expert witness in inquests and inquiries dealing with domestic homicides.

Jane is the Director of a thirteen year longitudinal study of the Winnipeg Family Violence Court, which is a criminal court responding to 'spouse' abuse, child abuse and elder abuse. The study is unique because of the specialised nature of the court and the period of time over which the data has been collected. Her research and expertise adds a valuable international perspective to discussions around domestic and family violence and criminal justice responses.

During her visit, Jane presented two seminars, met individually with academics, staff and students and led discussions with members of various community services.

Jane's second seminar was primarily for academic staff and students of Central Queensland University and was video-linked across the University's five Queensland campuses. In this seminar, Jane discussed aspects of her research design and methodology and the value of research for policy development and evaluation of practice.

Her first seminar, "*Can Specialised Courts Meet Victim Needs for Justice? The Case for Family Violence Courts*", was presented to a broad audience of academics, policy-makers and practitioners and was broadcast to nine sites around the State from Cairns to the Gold Coast and out to Mt Isa.

This presentation overviewed a new paradigm of criminal justice for responding to issues of domestic and family violence in Manitoba, which included social policy reforms, changes in cultures of intervention, and the creation of a specialised family violence court in Winnipeg. Jane also presented her research findings from a thirteen (13) year study that examines criminal justice responses in Winnipeg both pre and post reform.

In her presentation, Jane argued that:

- Domestic and family violence is a most complex terrain to negotiate in determining what constitutes justice
- The traditional paradigm of criminal justice is not well equipped to respond to cases of domestic and family violence
- Achieving justice in cases of domestic and family violence requires a new paradigm of criminal justice in which goals of intervention and definitions of 'success' are reconsidered

The traditional paradigm of criminal justice is organised to respond to discreet incidences; its responses are shaped by the legal seriousness of the offence and probability of conviction. Domestic and family violence is never a single incident; rather, it is typically a profoundly disempowering process that involves multiple incidents, few witnesses and little physical evidence. A criminal justice response assumes that victims of domestic and family violence share the same goal as the system, that is: public conviction and punishment. However, such victims often have diverse motivations for engaging criminal justice interventions.

Jane referred to the Manitoba response as an example of a new paradigm of justice that better fits the complex nature of domestic violence cases. This new approach asks the criminal justice system to think differently about how it defines success and its goals for intervention. This shift requires a change in the culture of work and asks the system to depart from a one-dimensional focus on *outcomes* and instead engage in a *process* of empowerment of women.

She argues that defining success of police interventions in one-dimensional terms of conviction rates and deterring future violence ignores the complex, cyclic and recurring nature of domestic and family violence. Rather, *safety* and *deterring escalation* of ongoing or imminent violence are more appropriate measures of success of police intervention

Similarly, she argues that the prosecutorial system must abandon conviction as the sole measure of success, and expand its objectives to include measures such as enhancing victim safety and meeting the complex needs of victims and their families.

The new paradigm of justice recognises that Judges have a very difficult mandate. It asks them to remember the multiple complexities that are inherent in a victim's process to secure her safety; that recanting or not being ready to testify does not equate to disrespect for the law; and that she may desire the perpetrator's bail conditions to be varied for a range of reasons.



This approach reminds workers in the correctional system that their work is also part of a larger process and that not everyone who enters an offenders program will change. Further, it challenges workers to not participate with offenders and victims in minimising the violence.

In September 1990, Manitoba's specialised Family Violence Court was launched in Winnipeg. This specialised justice response comprises of three components:

- A specialised unit within the prosecutor's office that employs crown prosecutors who are exclusively designated to prosecute family violence matters from the initial bail hearings through to trial. This system enables the same prosecutor to represent a woman throughout her involvement and, if necessary, across courts
- A Women's Advocacy program, which is composed of counsellors who work with women about safety plans, provide information regarding court processes and convey information to prosecutors when the woman requests a stay of proceedings (a temporary or permanent halting of the prosecutorial process) or variations in bail conditions
- Specially designated courtrooms for first appearances, and screening processes in to expedite processing of domestic violence cases

Policy guidelines for specialist prosecutors were introduced to complement the structural changes and reflect a dual mandate of rigorous prosecution and sensitivity to the victim's needs.

Judges sitting in the Family Violence Court are not specialised, rather they rotate through the court system. The lack of specialisation has not made a difference to the sentencing patterns.

Prior to the establishment of the Family Violence Court the most frequent outcome for a convicted perpetrator of family violence was a, "conditional discharge". In effect, this outcome meant no punishment, no criminal record and no treatment. The sentence most frequently handed down in the specialised Family Violence Court is supervised probation and court-mandated treatment; and the second most frequent sentence is incarceration, the majority being sentenced to between one and six months.

A range of social policy initiatives and improved government funding enabled a new paradigm of justice and changes to the culture of work within the justice system that has redefined goals of intervention and indicators of success for the various components of a specialised justice response. This new paradigm of justice views women as not only 'victims' of family violence, but also actors, strategists and survivors who are engaged in a process of creating safety and who have a right to influence the system's management of their case.

Underscoring this justice paradigm's commitment to honouring victims' needs and wishes, securing their safety and understanding the inherent complexities and cyclical nature of family violence is the continued awareness and reality that women are sometimes fatally wrong in judging the level of risk to their own safety. The importance of partnership with victims throughout the justice process is crucial.

A full summary of Jane's seminar and her presentation slides can be found on the Centre's website at www.noviolence.com.au

Restorative Justice and Gendered Violence

Professor Mary Koss, University of Arizona

The Centre, in conjunction with the Department of Communities' Mackay and Whitsunday Region, hosted a presentation by Professor Mary Koss on 23 April 2004.

Professor Koss is a world-renowned gendered violence researcher and clinical psychologist with the University of Arizona. Her major areas of research include substance abuse, violence among American Indians, sexual assault surveillance and violence prevention program evaluation.

Mary presented a seminar titled, *Restorative Justice and Gendered Violence: Focus on Adult Sex Crimes to a broad audience of academics, policy-makers and practitioners*. The seminar was broadcast to six sites within Queensland (Bamaga to the Gold Coast and out to Mt Isa), and was also video-linked to Adelaide.

Her seminar overviewed a restorative justice based program for adult sex crimes in Pima County, Arizona called RESTORE. Mary referred to evaluation studies, including a study of restorative justice conferencing with juvenile offenders (including sex offences) in South Australia. This study was conducted by Professor Kathy Daly and indicated that juvenile restorative justice practices offers potential for delivering advantageous outcomes to some victims and to the community.

Problems inherent in the standard criminal justice system's response to sex offences include victims lack access to justice, impacts of trials on victims and lack of accountability for offenders:



- Only 18% reports are investigated, 25-50% of these rapes are charged;
- One percent of intimate rapes resulted in incarceration;
- Acquaintance rapes are treated differently;
- Perpetrator had more rights;
- No chance to tell their story;
- Attorney questioning exacerbated self-blame;
- Perpetrator never admitted responsibility or expressed remorse;
- Little moral satisfaction (feelings of vindication, satisfaction with sanctions), but not more post traumatic stress disorders
- Sex offences have more benefits than costs
- Police and public attitudes are negatively influenced by lack of prosecutions and not guilty verdicts
- Victims' needs aren't met—safety, restitution, impact, answers, empowerment



Dr Mary Koss

Mary argued that victims ought to be the primary customers of the justice system. A more ideal process for responding to some sex offences should involve:

Victims

- “Ensure safety and access to services
- Provide choice
- Reduce delay
- Is non-adversarial and validating
- Include input into consequences
- Provide reparations and moral satisfaction”

Offenders

- “Raise costs of offending
- Remove need to deny and maintain innocence
- Maintain social bonds
- Mandate early treatment
- Facilitate remorse
- Avoid life time stigma after reparations have been made”.



The RESTORE program operates through collaboration between the systems of public health, law and prosecution and victim services. It focuses on selected adult sex crimes and is considered to be an experimental pilot program. As such, the eligibility criteria for participation are deliberately narrow and stringent to ensure that survivors' rights and needs are protected and includes:

- “Date or acquaintance rape provided force was minimal, voyeurism, exhibitionism
- Over age 18 years both victim and offender
- First known offence, no prior domestic violence calls
- Offender acknowledges that the act occurred
- Both parties agree to participate”

The program design and stages aim to recognise and respond to the multitude of concerns often held by survivors – for example:

- “May be coerced to participate
- May not want face-to-face meeting
- Confidentiality and informed consent
- Safety before, during, and after conference
- Unequal communication resources
- Attendees reinforce traditional beliefs/patriarchy
- Enforcement of agreements
- Accountability to the community”

RESTORE's ongoing process and outcome evaluation examines, among other things, the impacts for survivors' safety and satisfaction, and effectiveness in preventing re-offending.

Professor Koss's presentation slides and links to her website can be found at the Centre's website: www.noviolence.com.au.

Workshops, Conferences and Date Claimers

11 - 18 July

The Winter Institute for Women - a Feminist Agenda for the 21st Century

Townsville, QLD

Web: www.feministagenda.org.au/winterInstitute/registration.htm

26 - 27 July

Collaborative Indigenous Policy Development

Cairns, QLD

Contact: International Quality and Productivity Centre, Level 6, 25 Bligh Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: 02 9223 2600

Web: <http://www.iqpc.com.au>

27 July

Children and Animals: Kindness and Cruelty

CDFVR, CQU Mackay, QLD

Contact: Aithne Archibald

Phone: 07 4940 7834

Email: a.archibald@cqu.edu.au

Web: www.noviolence.com.au

August (date to be confirmed)

The Social Construction of Violence

CDFVR, CQU Mackay, QLD

Contact: Aithne Archibald

Phone: 07 4940 7834

Email: a.archibald@cqu.edu.au

Web: www.noviolence.com.au

6—8 August

Contemporary Research Perspectives of Child and Family Welfare Practice: *Building Stronger Families*

Mackay, QLD

Contact: Michael Bishop or Erin Mulherin, Mackay Centre for Research on Community and Children's Services

Phone: 07 4944 8600

Email: michael.bishop@communities.com.au; or

erin.mulherin@communities.qld.gov.au

21 August

Living on the Razor's Edge: Solution oriented brief family therapy with violent, suicidal and self-harming adolescents

Brisbane, QLD

Phone: 1800 636 748

Web: www.writtenword.com.au

23 August

Living on the Razor's Edge: Solution oriented brief family therapy with violent, suicidal and self-harming adolescents

Mackay, QLD

Phone: 1800 636 748

Web: www.writtenword.com.au

1—3 September

5th National Infant, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference

Gold Coast, QLD

Web: <http://www.aicafmha.net.au/conferences/goldcoast2004/index.html>

1—5 September

5th International Healing our Spirit Worldwide Summit

Cairns, QLD

Contact: ICSA

Phone: 07 5471 3161

Email: indigenousconventions@wesnet.com.au

Web: www.indigenousconferences.com.au

15—17 September

Home Truths: Stop sexual assault and domestic violence - a national challenge

Melbourne, VIC

Contact: CLEMS, 1 Studley Street, Abbotsford, Vic 3067

Phone: 03 9439 3855

Email: clems.sg@bigpond.com

19—22 September

9th International Conference on Family Violence

San Diego, California

Web: <http://www.fvsai.org/>

19—22 September

15th International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect

Brisbane, QLD

Contact: ISPCAN Congress Secretariat, ICMS, PO Box 3496, South Brisbane Qld 4101

Phone: 07 3844 1138

Email: ispcan2004@icms.com.au

Web: <http://www.congress2004.com>

26—30 September

11th Biennial National Family Law Conference

Gold Coast, QLD

Contact: Conference Secretariat - ICEM, PO Box 1280, Milton, Qld 4064

Phone: 07 3858 5592

Email: f12004@im.com.au

Web: http://www.familylawsection.org.au/11th%20Conf/conf04_intro.htm

28—30 September 2004

Getting it Together: Family Therapy Practice for the Future

Brisbane, QLD

Contact: Organisers Australia

Phone: 07 3371 0333

Email: aft2004@orgaus.com.au

Web: <http://www.orgaus.com.au/aft2004>



Contact Us

Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research

CQU Mackay
PO Box 5606
Mackay MC QLD 4741

Tel: 07 4940 7834
Fax: 07 4940 7839
Email: enquiries@noviolence.com.au
Web: www.noviolence.com.au

Staff

Heather Nancarrow	Director
Aithne Archibald	Administration Officer
Dr Susan Rees	Research Fellow
Lyndon Reilly	Indigenous Research Worker
Sharon Conway	Research Assistant
Michelle Bradford	Education Officer
Clinton Rawsthorne	Multimedia Officer

We encourage readers to contribute to the Centre's Newsletter. If you have any information or articles you wish to publish, please contact Centre staff as per the details below.

If you would like to be included on, or removed from, the Centre's mailing list, please ring Aithne on (07) 4940 7834, or email a.archibald@cqu.edu.au. We are happy for you to reproduce and distribute this Newsletter.

Staff of the Centre, from left to right:
Michelle Bradford, Heather Nancarrow,
Sharon Conway, Dr Susan Rees,
Aithne Archibald, Lyndon Reilly and
Clinton Rawsthorne



The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Queensland Government, Central Queensland University, or Centre for Social Science Research.

Whilst all reasonable care has been taken in the preparation of this publication, no liability is assumed for any errors or omissions.

The Queensland Centre for Domestic & Family Violence Research (CDFVR) receives triennial funding from the Queensland Department of Communities to undertake research and evaluation and produce educational resources pertaining to domestic and family violence. CDFVR is located within the Centre for Social Science Research in the Faculty of Arts, Health and Sciences at Central Queensland University Mackay Campus.



Central Queensland
UNIVERSITY