Increasing Men's Awareness of the Effects on Children Exposed to Family and Domestic Violence

Family Violence Men's Education Project
Final Report | March 2016
Dr. Peter Lucas, Dr. Romy Winter,
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THE SALVATION ARMY

UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Foreword

The development of this report was a collaborative undertaking informed by a series of consultations conducted around Tasmania. The stakeholder engagement process involved consultations with eighty-nine participants from a range of backgrounds including workers from the family and domestic violence sector, police officers, researchers from a variety of specialisations and managers of programs related to the field of enquiry. These stakeholders were from non-government organisations, the business sector, universities and a range of government agencies.

The report draws on the critical insights and experience shared with members of the research team during the community engagement process. The project stakeholders demonstrated strong support for the project and an incredible commitment to working together to solve our research puzzle and contribute

to a reduction of the harms children can experience as a result of exposure to family and domestic violence.

While the report signals the end of this stage of the research project, the insights shared by stakeholders during the community consultation process will form the basis for ongoing discussion about strategies to raise awareness of the possible harms to children through exposure to family and domestic violence.

Executive Summary

- Reducing violence against women and children is a global public health and human rights priority. In Australia, police deal with over 650 family and domestic violence matters each day, and every week one women is murdered by their current or former partner.

- This report details research undertaken in the Australian state of Tasmania, where police attended over 2000 family and domestic violence incidents between July 2014 and May 2015, and over 1,200 children were present at these incidents. These figures only reflect incidents attended by police and so the actual number of incidents is likely to be much higher.

- The consequences of childhood exposure to family and domestic violence are known to be cumulative and intergenerational, and even *prenatal* exposure can potentially have lifelong implications. The risks for children include behavioural disorders, poorer verbal abilities, higher levels of anxiety, increased risk of harmful substance use and a higher risk of premature death.

- This research project was undertaken by the University of Tasmania and The Salvation Army (Tasmania), with a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund. Ethics approval for the research was obtained from the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (H14683).

- The initial stages of the research involved undertaking a narrative literature review of academic and 'grey' literature (government reports, brochures, websites, etc) and utilising a strategic process to identify and engage with relevant stakeholders. The intention was to engage stakeholders to help solve the puzzle of *"How can we increase men's awareness that family and domestic violence has a harmful effect on their children?"*

- This research initially set out to develop and test a best practice model of education to raise men's awareness of the impact of family violence on their children. Early in the research it became apparent that there was little documented best evidence available on which to base such a program, and that relatively few programs had been comprehensively evaluated.

- The main vehicle for engagement was a series of "*World Café*" style events held in Ulverstone, Launceston and Hobart. A total of 72 individuals working in the health and community services sector in government, non-government and private sector organisations participated in these events. Participants in these events confirmed the scarcity of the evidence base and a lack of locally-delivered programs specifically addressing the identified 'puzzle'.

- In addition to the three *World Café* events, focus groups and interviews were conducted with 17 other key stakeholders. Some were included because they could not participate in the *World Café* events, while others had been identified through the consultation process as having particular expertise that could provide the researchers with additional insights into the research puzzle.

- Data and insights arising from the literature review and *World Café* events were analysed by the research team and form the basis of 35 recommendations that appear in Chapters 5 and 6 of this report (and are also listed in the following section, for convenience). These recommendations relate to Awareness Raising, Program Content and Delivery, Resourcing, and Ongoing Research.

List of Recommendations

Following is a list of recommendations arising from the research. In this section these recommendations have been grouped into four broad themes and ranked in order of priority. Details of how specific recommendations have been developed can be found in the relevant sections of the report.

It is recommended:

A AWARENESS RAISING

1. That funding options be explored to enable the development of a comprehensive evidence-based social marketing campaign (using the voices and perspectives of children where appropriate) aimed at raising awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children, as a component of a broad-based whole-of-community response.

2. That multifaceted strategies be developed to raise men's awareness of the possible harms that exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children, with a variety of messages for different groups of men, from diverse backgrounds and delivered in a range of contexts.

3. That relevant stakeholders working in this area collaborate and contribute to the development of a comprehensive evidence-based social marketing campaign about this issue.

4. That investment in awareness raising programs should include support for existing 'grassroots' campaigns by smaller community based organisations, as well as a comprehensive multifaceted social marketing campaign aimed at communicating this message to the wider community.

B PROGRAM CONTENT AND DELIVERY

1. That men's behaviour change programs, both voluntary and mandated, communicate the content and outcomes of their programs more effectively to stakeholders so that other service providers in the sector better understand how they fit within an integrated whole-of-community response to family and domestic violence.

2. That men's behaviour change programs, both voluntary and mandated, should work towards accreditation by an appropriate body and invest in improving evaluation processes to identify specific program components which are effective in raising awareness of the impact of exposure to family and domestic violence on children.

3. That strategies to better integrate men's behaviour change programs into the wider family and domestic violence and child protection sectors should be developed as part of a 'whole of community' response.

4. That course content and materials used in 'manualised' programs, particularly those resources being used in government funded programs, should be made available to researchers to improve the evidence base underpinning these programs and improve program transparency, integrity and community accountability.

5. That interventions targeting men who use violence in family settings be underpinned by a sound evidence-base and that any new interventions have a built in evaluation component to ascertain their effectiveness in bringing about meaningful change.

6. That a range of options be made available to men seeking to address abusive behaviours. These options need to have a sound-evidence base and be subjected to rigorous evaluation processes to determine what components are effective for which men and in what context.

7. That interventions targeting men who use violence involve these men in program development and evaluation consistent with contemporary best practice service delivery and policy development processes.

8. That antenatal and other parenting programs for fathers include information about the support services available in the community to help them deal with a range of emotions related to becoming a father.

9. That 'gender equitable parenting' courses, which can be incorporated into existing antenatal classes or as stand-alone programs, be developed and that such training includes information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

10. The Tasmanian Government's proposed 'Respectful Relationships Program' be supported and this should include the introduction of 'gender transformative' education programs. In addition, specific evidence-based components that raise awareness about the harmful effects exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children should be included in these programs.

11. That proposed 'Respectful Relationships Programs' should incorporate sound evaluation processes regarding strategies for raising awareness of the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

C   RESOURCING

1. That a central repository of up-to-date information about services within local communities be developed and maintained for men seeking to change abusive behaviours and for workers in the family and domestic violence and child welfare sectors.

2. That government agencies, the business sector and relevant non-government stakeholders collaborate to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Tasmanian 'clearinghouse' to support practitioners, service providers and the general public to access current information about locally available services and the latest research into the effects on children of exposure to family and domestic violence.

3. That any proposed 'clearinghouse' also plays a role in disseminating emerging research on therapeutic practices that might translate effectively to working with this population in local contexts.

4. That investment is made in developing the capacity of those currently working in the family and domestic violence sector to enable them to work effectively with men who use violence in family settings, particularly men who have low literacy skills and/or learning difficulties.

5. That additional funding is sourced to work with Indigenous and CALD communities to research and develop culturally appropriate evidence-based resources that raise awareness about the harmful effects exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children.

6. That the business sector, 'not-for-profit' organisations and researchers collaborate to identify education and training needs across different industries and workplaces and to inform the development of appropriate workplace training programs to increase awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family violence on children.

7. That initiatives by 'grassroots' organisations aimed at raising awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on

children be supported and adequately resourced as part of a 'whole of community' response to family and domestic violence.

8. That investment is made in programs and services that specifically focus on raising awareness about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence among men, as well as raising awareness at a whole of community level.

D   ONGOING RESEARCH

1. That senior University of Tasmania researchers from a range of disciplines including nursing, medicine, paramedicine, social work, psychology and sociology establish a 'community of practice' to develop processes for advising government on current evidence-based practice and future research priorities.

2. That further research be undertaken into what specific factors help men who use violence in family settings better understand the impact of exposure to this violence on their children and what factors influence them to seek help to address their violence.

3. That further research be undertaken to determine what specific components of men's behaviour change programs are effective in raising awareness about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence for which men and in what context.

4. That further research be undertaken into how information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence can be incorporated into existing parenting programs, particularly those targeting fathers.

5. That a broad range of evidence-based models for working with men who use violence in family settings be evaluated, including models for working with men with learning difficulties and low literacy skills, for their possible adoption in a range of different local contexts.

6. That research into the knowledge, attitudes and preparedness of 'front line' workers to manage family violence be prioritised to identify education and training needs and to inform the development of evidence-based training programs relating to the potential harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

7. That research into 'second responder' models of intervention for men charged with family and domestic violence offences be undertaken to assess the suitability of such a program in Tasmania, as well as other Australian states, and that any such model includes information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

8. That further research be undertaken to identify how information about the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children can be integrated into both strengths-based and trauma-informed approaches for working with men who use violence in family contexts.

9. That research is undertaken into programs that foster improved communication strategies between fathers and their children to identify options for trialling such programs in local contexts.

10. That further research is undertaken into education strategies that provide young men and boys from diverse backgrounds with alternative models of masculinity and manhood as part of a whole-of-community approach to reducing violence.

11. That research be undertaken to identify possible models for crisis and medium term accommodation for men experiencing homelessness as a result of their use of violence in family contexts.

12. That research be undertaken to assess the viability of a 'male-focused' family violence service that would provide a range of evidence-based programs including support for men who wish to adopt alternatives to violence.

Introduction

Reducing violence against women and children is a global public health and human rights priority (Abramsky et al., 2011, p. 191; Butchart, García-Moreno, Mikton, & World Health Organization, 2010; Cismaru & Lavack, 2011; United Nations Population Fund, 2014; World Health Organization, 2013). Family and domestic violence[1] appears to occur within every culture and amongst all religious orientations (World Health Organization, 2013). Globally it is estimated that as many as nine times more people die each year as a result of family and domestic violence than from civil wars (Fearon & Hoeffler, 2014; Finkenauer et al., 2015).

Violence affects a significant number of Australians every year. The most recent crime victimisation survey in 2011–12 reported 6.4 million incidents of physical or threatened assault affecting an estimated 1.1 million people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013a). However, of those who have experienced violence from a current and/or previous

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1   Throughout this report the term 'family and domestic violence' will be used, consistent with the terminology used in *Children's Rights Report 2015*. This term was considered "*more inclusive of all those who are affected by it, including children*" (National Children's Commissioner, 2015, p. 99).

"We need to recognize that safety planning for women and children must include work with men and work with men must include safety planning for women and children and [we need to] fight for appropriate funding for all of it rather than collude with government rationing practices."

Featherstone & Peckover, 2007, p. 197

intimate partner in their lifetime over three quarters (76%) were women (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013b). In Australia family and domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women. Over 650 family and domestic violence matters are dealt with each day by police in Australia and every week one women is murdered by their current or former partner (Our Watch, VicHealth, & ANROWS, 2015).

One in four Australian women over the age of 15 have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner (Our Watch et al., 2015). Women were more likely than men to have experienced physical assault by a male in their home with almost 62 per cent of women compared to 8 per cent of men experiencing their most recent incident of physical assault by a male **in their home** (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013b). Women are five times more likely to need medical treatment or hospitalisation as a result of domestic family and domestic violence than men (Our Watch et al., 2015). Family and domestic violence is considered a greater risk factor for women's health than smoking, alcohol misuse and obesity (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015).

Research indicates there are higher rates of family and domestic violence in households in which children reside (Morgan & Chadwick, 2009; Romans, Forte, Cohen, Du Mont, & Hyman, 2007). A review of Australian research reported studies that showed between 36-59 per cent of family and domestic violence incidents were witnessed by children (Richards, 2011). The Australian National Children's Commissioner focussed the Children's Rights Report 2015 on the impact of family and domestic violence on children aged 0 to 17 years (National Children's Commissioner, 2015). In the Australian state of Tasmania where this research was conducted, Tasmania Police attended 2,378 family and domestic violence incidents between July 2014 and May 2015 and over 1,200 children were present at these incidents (Tasmanian Government, 2015). Tasmania Police attended an additional 1,657 family arguments during that period (Tasmanian Government, 2015).

Children are present in most violent homes and there is a fifteen fold increased risk of child abuse in a family where violence is a factor (Armstrong, 1998). Child abuse can be an indicator of violence against partners and vice versa (Walby & Myhill, 2000). Various studies have shown that about half the men who abuse their partners are also violent to their children and children may be used as a psychological weapon against the main victim, as well as being at risk of abuse themselves (Saunders, 1995). The range of potential harms for children who are exposed to family and domestic violence are becoming increasingly understood.

Research Method

RESEARCH APPROACH

This 12-month study adopted a collaborative research strategy to engage with stakeholders from a broad range of services and organisations. The approach was informed by action research models which typically employ collective strategies for enquiry, usually undertaken to identify a solution to an identified problem or as part of a change management process (Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Such an approach is considered ideal for when researchers are seeking to develop a deeper understanding of the 'culture' in which the other participants operate while working with these participants to help them better understand the 'culture' of the researchers as they work collaboratively towards a common goal (Altrichter, Kemmis, McTaggart, & Zuber-Skerritt, 2002). While the project initially set out to employ a Participatory Action Research process involving planning, action, observation and reflection to develop and test a best practice model of education about the possible harms to children caused by exposure to family and domestic violence, the early discoveries prompted a change of strategy. The initial investigation of evidence-based resources currently in use for working with men who use violence identified a limited range of resources that might be appropriate for inclusion in a proposed training module. It was resolved that in order to rectify this gap that suitable resources would need to be developed from scratch.

"Much more information is required on what actually works in terms of perpetrator interventions in the Australian context."

Mackay, Gibson, Lam, & Beecham, 2015a

In the interest of understanding the parameters of new training programs and new resources, the research team sought input from stakeholders working in the family and domestic violence and related sectors about what they thought was needed for this purpose. This is consistent with "*the flexible, pragmatic, collective response to problem solving that action research advocates*" (Altrichter et al., 2002, p. 126) and enabled the researchers to focus on bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders in a comprehensive engagement process.

The research sought to draw on the experience and perspectives of stakeholders as part of a process of looking for solutions to the puzzle of how to increase men's awareness that exposure to family and domestic violence can be harmful to children. Such an approach is designed to improve collaboration through a process of fostering ownership of an issue while facilitating engagement and participation by a diverse range of services and agencies that may, otherwise, work in isolation (Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). The overall approach to the research puzzle was informed by a process involving "*the key question of how we go about generating knowledge that is both valid and vital to the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and for the promotion of larger-scale democratic social change*" (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003, p. 3). In addition the project was informed by the 'third generation' research approach adopted in the Project Mirabal study that sought "*to move away from the fatalistic 'nothing works' message to provide more nuanced findings which are useful to policy makers, funders and programmes themselves*" (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015, p. 5).

ETHICS APPROVAL

Approval for the research was obtained from the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee – approval number H14683.

RESEARCH PROCESS

In the initial stages of the research a narrative literature review was conducted including interrogation of electronic databases PubMed, Web of Science and Scopus as well as the Google Scholar search engine. The search focused on identifying relevant meta-analyses, systematic reviews, research reports and literature reviews and thus a comprehensive corpus of academic journal articles was sourced through this process. Electronic searches were also conducted for relevant 'grey literature'. This included government and non-government reports, evaluation documents, newsletters, information brochures and other publicly available materials on government, service provider and research organisation websites.

It was identified early in the project that other organisations, including researchers from the "*Fathering Challenges*"[2] project and the national research organisation, ANROWS, were undertaking research that included developing a comprehensive literature review focusing on 'perpetrator interventions'. For this reason, the researchers focused on identifying resources currently being used in men's behaviour change programs, as well as in other relevant contexts, and in particular identifying the resources aimed at increasing awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children. As part of this process, the Project Officer communicated with service providers and researchers from across Australia, as well as New Zealand, the USA, Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

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2   *The Fathering Challenges in the Context of Domestic and Family Violence Project* is being conducted by a consortium of researchers from Melbourne University, Curtin University and the University of South Australia in partnership with various State Government and non-government agencies. A primary focus of this project is to look at "*the key fathering issues that need to be addressed within MBC, Aboriginal and fathering programs?*" (Diemer, 2015).

It became apparent early in the research that there were few, if any, resources in the public domain that were underpinned by a sound evidence base. Hence the initial project objective of developing a best-practice training module describing how to educate men of the potential damage to children who witness family violence and identifying evidence-based resources currently being used for this purpose had to be reconsidered. The original project plan involved collating evidence-based resources identified through the research process into a new training module that would be trialled among groups of men across Tasmania. Given the lack of suitable resources to develop such a training module, the research team decided to engage with stakeholders to find out what they thought would increase men's understanding of the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. These consultations would form the basis of a needs analysis for resource development in the next phase of the project.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The project adopted a strategic engagement process to collect the data that informed the research. "*Engagement is central to any human interaction where the object is to understand another, develop a relationship, communicate effectively, solve a problem, or bring about change*" (Walsh, Moss, & FitzGerald, 2006, p. 151). Engagement was informed by the Building Effective Engagement Techniques (BEET) framework (Walsh, Lawless, Moss, & Allbon, 2005) ensuring a strategic approach was adopted for engaging with a diverse and geographically dispersed group of stakeholders for the research.

The BEET framework helped the researchers develop a clear statement of intent for engaging stakeholders to help solve the puzzle of ***"How can we increase men's awareness that family and domestic violence has a harmful effect on their children?"*** The researchers were mindful of advice in the literature about not seeking to formulate a solution and then trying to promote this to stakeholders as a form of consultation or engagement (Walsh et al., 2005, p. 125). Having identified the research puzzle, the researchers turned their focus to identifying key stakeholders who could contribute to solving it. The Project Officer initially consulted with services and programs in Tasmania that currently work with men who use violence in family settings. This included both government and non-government organisations working with men participating in behaviour change programs on either a voluntary or mandated basis.

From these initial consultations it became apparent that, due to the limited number of services available to men seeking to change abusive behaviours, a broader range of stakeholders working in family violence, child protection and other child and family focused services would need to be included in the engagement process. The researchers utilised The Salvation Army's existing network of contacts working in the family and domestic violence and child protection sectors to email details of the project to a broad range of stakeholders, including workers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and services working with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) populations. This initial email included an information sheet about the aims of the project and the puzzle we were seeking their assistance to solve (*see Appendix 1*). Posters promoting the project and inviting interested persons to participate in the research were also distributed through The Salvation Army's network of contacts as well as the networks developed during the initial consultations (*see Appendix 2*). Additional promotion of the project was achieved by engaging with local and national media outlets that ran news items about the project. This approach to promoting the research saw awareness of the project reach a wider audience in the community than would have otherwise been possible and helped ensure the stakeholder engagement process was comprehensive.

WORLD CAFÈS

Bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders from across the three regions of Tasmania to help solve the project's research puzzle was a logistical challenge, however, the promotional process of the project outlined above meant there was strong interest in the research from across the state. In order to harness this expertise and level of interest the researchers organised a series of *World Café* (2015) events in the Tasmanian cities of Launceston, Ulverstone and Hobart. The *World Café* concept has been described as "a conversational process that helps groups to engage in constructive dialogue around critical questions, to build personal relationships, and to foster collaborative learning" (Fouché & Light, 2011, p. 28). A total of 72 stakeholders working in the health and community services sector in government, non-government and private sector organisations participated in the *World Cafés* (*see Table 1*). All participants signed a consent form acknowledging their agreement to participate and that details of specific discussions during the event would be kept confidential. Participants included social workers, shelter workers, legal practitioners, financial counsellors, police officers, migrant support workers and alcohol and other drug workers. Most had regular exposure to family and domestic violence through their work. A list of organisations represented in the stakeholder engagement process is attached (*see Appendix 4*).

TABLE 1 – RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS IN WORLD CAFÉS, FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Forum	Number of Participants
North	20
North West	25
South	27
Focus Groups/Interviews	17
TOTAL	**89**

The *World Café* approach adopted in the research involved setting up a room in an informal 'café-style' environment where participants were seated around four tables in groups of four to seven people. At each table there was butcher's paper, 'post-it' note pads, pens and markers; the tables were also covered in paper to encourage participants to get creative through drawing if they were so inclined. In the first *Café* event a member of the research team sat at each table and acted as a "scribe", summarising what participants were saying and checking back that this was accurate. Due to the large number of people wanting to participate in the two subsequent *Café* events, it was decided to have the participants nominate a scribe for this role and, instead, the researchers were able to move between tables and gain a broader perspective of the discussions and engage with a wider group of participants.

An overview of the research project was presented at the beginning of the café event, along with an outline of the *World Café* concept. It was explained how the researchers hoped to harvest the collective expertise and experience of the participants as the *World Café* approach encourages "practitioners to move beyond being recipients of knowledge transfer to having an active role in knowledge creation" (Fouché & Light, 2011, p. 29). One project that used the *World Café* model to solving a research puzzle reported: "The relaxed and informal style of the *World Café* approach encourages more open conversation and promotes creativity" (Burke & Sheldon, 2010, p. 16).

For the first 20 minutes two tables focused on the topic: "What is currently being done to raise men's awareness about this issue?" At the same time the other two tables focused on the topic: "How do we engage men with this issue?" After each table discussed their designated topic for 20 minutes they moved on to the other theme and engaged in conversation about that. When each table had discussed both topics a break was taken for refreshments. During that time participants were asked to look over the comments (harvested from the tables) that had been hung around the walls of the "café" on the butcher's paper. They were also encouraged to add anything else that came to mind by sticking 'post-it' notes with these thoughts next to the relevant comments.

After the break the full group of participants focused on the topic of "what else is needed to raise men's awareness of this issue?" Once this topic was discussed the facilitator brought all the participants together to summarise the discussions and ensure that anything else the participants considered important was reflected in this summary. A commitment was given to the participants to feedback preliminary findings of the research to keep stakeholders informed. In this way the project promoted "sharing of collective knowledge and assumptions, generation of new knowledge and critical thinking and reflection of these ideas" (Hickson, O'Meara, & Huggins, 2014, p. 4) that are considered key features of a participatory research approach.

FOCUS GROUPS/ INTERVIEWS

In addition to the three *World Café* events the researchers conducted a series of focus groups and interviews with other key stakeholders (n=17). Some were included in this component of the research because they could not participate in the *World Café* events, while others had been identified through the consultation process as having a particular expertise that could provide the researchers with additional insights into the research puzzle. Participants in this component of the research were asked a series of questions relating to men's understanding of the possible impact on children of exposure to family and domestic violence. The individual and group interviews included discussion of ideas on how best to engage men with the topic and what strategies would help to raise men's awareness of the issue. Participants in the interviews and focus groups were also asked what they thought a 'perfect education package' about this issue would look like.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data from the *World Cafés* and the focus groups and interviews involved a collaborative approach between members of the research team. The data was transcribed and initially categorised under the topics discussed during the data collection process. Members of the research team then independently analysed the data, looking for key themes evident in their interpretation of the data. The research team then reconvened to share and discuss their findings, identifying key similarities and discrepancies, and reaching consensus on how best to present these findings in the final project report.

After analysing the data from the stakeholder engagement process, the researchers drafted a document outlining the findings of this component of the research. This draft document was circulated to research participants to ensure the document accurately reflected what was discussed during the consultations. Where appropriate, feedback from stakeholders was incorporated into this report.

LESSONS LEARNED

A key component of the initial research design was for researchers to interview men participating in the Challenging Abusive Behaviour (CAB) behaviour change programs run by Catholic Care in Tasmania. The procedure approved by the Ethics Committee for the project meant these men could not be approached directly by the researchers; instead efforts were made to recruit these men indirectly, through the facilitators of the CAB program, however this strategy proved unsuccessful. Similar problems recruiting men participating in behaviour change groups were encountered during a major research project in the United Kingdom (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015). Project Mirabal researchers reflected on the methodological lessons learned during their research and also reported on the challenges of conducting research in a competitive funding environment: "The numbers of men going through DVPPs [Domestic Violence Prevention Programs] were far less than anticipated, and the challenges of changing and insecure funding regimes meant the research could not be prioritised by all sites" (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015, p. 9).

While it may be challenging for many men in these groups to commit to anything outside of the normal curriculum of such programs, it is in the interests of policy makers, service providers and program participants to find out 'what works' in bringing about meaningful change (Sheehan, Thakor, & Stewart, 2012). It is also incumbent on funding bodies to be actively encouraging service providers to engage service users in research that sheds light on questions about what works, for which men, and in what context. Specific components of these programs need to be scrutinised to find out which components of programs work, for which group of men, and in what setting.

CONCLUSION

This research initially set out to develop and test a best practice model of education to raise men's awareness of the impact of family violence on their children. Early in the research it became apparent that there was little documented best evidence available on which to base such a program. In light of this, the Participatory Action Research approach was modified to a participatory research approach using a robust engagement process, third generation stakeholder evaluation (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015) and a *World Café* (2015) process of data gathering alongside focus groups and interviews. A thematic analysis was undertaken of the data gathered and preliminary findings fed back to the research participants for comments. These comments were integrated into the data analysis where appropriate.

The stakeholder engagement process undertaken as part of the research demonstrated the strong interest in developing effective responses to reduce the harmful effects that exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children. The enthusiasm shown by participants in the *World Café* events, who generously shared their ideas and knowledge with the researchers and their fellow stakeholders, was most encouraging. This highlighted the fact that there are significant human resources in this sector that researchers can tap into to help solve research puzzles such as the one that was the focus of this project.

The Impact of Exposure to Family and Domestic Violence on Children

Historically children have been considered 'silent witnesses' and 'invisible victims' of family and domestic violence (Adams, 2006; Fantuzzo, Mohr, & Noone, 2000; Graham-Bermann & Hughes, 2003; Osofsky, 1995; Richards, 2011) whereas family and domestic violence is widely regarded nowadays as a child welfare issue (Featherstone & Peckover, 2007). Evidence of the range of harms experienced by children is continuing to emerge. It is now recognised that children not only have to witness, but merely be aware of violence to be negatively affected, with the term 'exposure' used in the literature to describe this (MacMillan & Wathen, 2014; Richards, 2011). The consequences of childhood exposure to family and domestic violence are known to be cumulative and intergenerational (National Children's Commissioner, 2015). There is debate about whether children exposed to family and domestic violence should be considered victims of child abuse or maltreatment, and there is evidence these children may be at increased risk of physical and/or sexual abuse themselves (Bedi & Goddard, 2007; MacDonell, 2012; MacMillan & Wathen, 2014; Margolin, Gordis, Medina, & Oliver, 2003; Morgan & Chadwick, 2009; Osofsky, 2003).

Australia has developed legal and policy responses to address harms to children in each Australian State and Territory, as well as a *National Plan* (The National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children, 2009). For example, substantial reforms were made in 2012 to the Family Law Act 1975 with the introduction of the Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Act 2011. The reforms were intended to improve the family law system's response to family violence, and better support disclosures of family

violence, child abuse and child safety by parents within the family law system (Kaspiew et al., 2015). The Australian Capital Territory has introduced legislation broadening the definition of family and domestic violence to include offences where children who are exposed to family and domestic violence would be considered to have been directly harmed (Francis, 2015). The *Family Violence Act (Tasmania)* 2004 requires that police inform the Child Protection agency if children are present in the dwelling of a family violence incident. Mandatory reporting is also the law in NSW and the Northern Territory (Campo, 2015a).

One of the challenges of working in this field is the lack of consistency in terminology and definition around family violence. As identified by the National Children's Commissioner in her latest report:

> *The use of varied terms, different definitions and the disparate means of identifying family and domestic violence was raised as problematic in terms of establishing prevalence at the national level and challenging for those working in the field.*
> (National Children's Commissioner, 2015, p. 114)

Prenatal exposure to family and domestic violence is recognised as potentially having lifelong implications for the mental health and wellbeing of children as they mature (Radtke et al., 2011) and exposure to family and domestic violence during pregnancy can lead to poorer pregnancy outcomes and reduced attachment (Hooker, Kaspiew, & Taft, 2016). Children exposed to family violence at younger ages have been found to have more severe problems (Sety, 2011) and the potential for damage increases as a child develops. There is a significant body of research which shows that preschool children exposed to family and domestic violence appear more vulnerable to behavioural, cognitive and social problems, including symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), than children from nonviolent homes (Levendosky, Huth-Bocks, Semel, & Shapiro, 2002; Levendosky, Huth-Bocks, Shapiro, & Semel, 2003; McCloskey & Walker, 2000). Other problems identified in children exposed to family and domestic violence when compared with children from non-violent homes include: attention and conduct disorders (Becker & McCloskey, 2002); poorer verbal abilities (Huth-Bocks, Levendosky, & Semel, 2001); lower self-esteem (Levendosky et al., 2003) higher levels of anxiety (Buckley, Holt, & Whelan, 2007) increased risk of harmful substance use and sexual dysfunction (Anda et al., 2006); increased use of health services (Campo, 2015a) and a higher risk of premature death (Brown et al., 2009).

In the comprehensive Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, which "reinforces the links between childhood trauma and long-term negative health outcomes"(Muskett, 2014, p. 2), the greater the likelihood that children were exposed to family and domestic violence, the greater the likelihood that they were also physically, sexually, or emotionally abused. Among women, the ACE study found a strong graded relationship between the number of adverse experiences they had survived as children and the risk of becoming a victim. Similarly, among men, the study found a strong graded relationship between the number of these types of experiences as children and the risk of subsequently becoming a perpetrator (Groves, 2001).

Elsewhere research has found that conflict which included physical aggression caused much more psychological harm to children than verbal arguing (Cummings, Vogel, Cummings, & El-Sheikh, 1989). These findings provide evidence of the ways in which physical violence, or even threats of violence, overwhelm children's abilities to cope. Children who live with physical aggression are more likely to blame themselves and to have low self-esteem, which affected them in all areas of social functioning.

Exposure to family and domestic violence has been observed to negatively impact children's relationships with their mothers (Levendosky et al., 2003). Mothers perceived that family and domestic violence had a negative effect on their children and reported concerns about traumatic stress responses and aggressive behaviours (DeVoe & Smith, 2002). Children exposed to family and domestic violence reported feeling more lonely and had more conflict with peers (McCloskey & Stuewig, 2001) and often required increased levels of support as a result of feeling pressure to assume 'adult' responsibilities in response to violence against their mothers (Riger, Raja, & Camacho, 2002). Evidence of links between family and domestic violence and maternal depression suggest a mother's capacity to adequately care for her children may also be compromised (Boeckel, Blasco-Ros, Grassi-Oliveira, & Martínez, 2014; Broady, Gray, Gaffney, & Lewis, 2015; Dehon & Weems, 2010; Featherstone & Peckover, 2007; Riger, Raja, & Camacho, 2002). Of particular relevance to this project is research that shows children exposed to family and domestic violence reported feelings of ambivalence (Buckley et al., 2007) or disjunction (Staf & Almqvist, 2015) towards their fathers.

At a wider community level, children in communities that are more accepting of physical punishment of children may be less likely to feel that they have been abused because the behaviours they have experienced are normalised (Fosco, DeBoard, & Grych, 2007; Morgan & Chadwick, 2009). There is also evidence that children exposed to family and domestic violence are more likely to use violence themselves in resolving conflict, including with their intimate partners (Abramsky et al., 2011; Bedi & Goddard, 2007; Edleson, 1999; Ehrensaft et al., 2003; Grych, 2005; Herrera & McCloskey, 2001; Ireland & Smith, 2009; Kovacs & Tomison, 2003; Richards, 2011).

While there is a growing body of research identifying the range of harms associated with exposure to family and domestic violence there is less understanding of why some children are affected more than others and what protective factors promote resilience (Adams, 2006; Campo, Kaspiew, Moore, & Tayton, 2014). There is also a lack of evidence about the most appropriate responses to children exposed to family and domestic violence (Campo, 2015a). Some individuals demonstrate higher levels of resilience and form positive relationships in adulthood despite having experienced maltreatment and a violent home environment in childhood (Edleson, 1999; Higgins & McCabe, 2003). Research also suggests attachment can improve once family and domestic violence stops (Hooker et al., 2016).

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The most recent study into the economic costs of family and domestic violence in Australia estimated that violence against women costs the community $21.7 billion a year with female victims of violence bearing the majority of these costs. The cost to government in terms of expenditure on health and social welfare is estimated to be $7.8 billion a year. It is further estimated that if no further action is taken to reduce violence against women the costs will amount to $323.4 billion over thirty years to 2044-45 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2015).

One study found three-quarters of employed female victims were harassed by their partners at their workplace, and abused women are 2.5 times more costly to the health care system than women who have never been the victims of abuse (Partnerships Against Domestic Violence, 2004). Other impacts of family and domestic violence on workplaces include decreased staff productivity and performance, increased absenteeism and staff turnover and a negative impact on an organisations' image and reputation (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2015). There is also a range of less tangible costs. A study into the economic impact of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in the USA found that children from 'troubled families' negatively impact on the educational outcomes of their peers and increase misbehaviour and disruption in the classroom, demonstrating the harms borne by children exposed to family and domestic violence extend well beyond the privacy of the home (Carrell & Hoekstra, 2010).

POLICY RESPONSES TO FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ending violence against women and their children has become a policy priority for governments at all levels and across many jurisdictions. At an international level, Article 16 of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention requires that member states establish and/or support preventative intervention and treatment programs and stipulates the following:

> *"(1) Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.*
>
> *(2) Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.*
>
> *(3) In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims."*
>
> (Hester & Lilley, 2014, p. 6).

Legal and policy responses have been developed to address the issue in each Australian State and Territory, as well as both a *National Plan* to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (*the National Plan*) and a National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 (*the National Framework*). The Tasmanian Government's *Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020* aims to develop a coordinated, collaborative approach between government, business, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the community to reduce the negative impacts of family and domestic violence on children and identifies family and domestic violence as "*a whole of community issue which requires a whole of community response*" (Tasmanian Government, 2015, p. 37).

A key objective of these State and National plans is to improve the safety of women and children by holding men who use violence accountable while also improving responses that support them to change their behaviour. The *National Plan* identifies "*building the evidence base so that we learn more about 'what works' in reducing domestic and family violence*" (Department of Social Services, 2014, p. 2) and has identified setting "*national outcome standards for best practice perpetrator interventions*" (Department of Social Services, 2014, p. 7) as a priority. The *National Plan* has proposed one of the intended outcomes of current strategies is that "*perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account*" (Council of Australian Governments, 2010, p. 29).

Safe Homes, Safe Families proposes to "*build on best practice examples, both nationally and internationally, to develop effective programs*" (Tasmanian Government, 2015, p. 11) for family and domestic violence offenders and a $2 million commitment has been made by the Tasmanian Government for this purpose. At the time of writing this report no specific detail is available of where this money will be allocated; what processes will be undertaken to determine where it will be allocated; or what evidence will be used to inform any decisions about these allocations.

CURRENT RESEARCH AGENDA

Along with an increasing policy emphasis, in recent years there has also been an increased focus on research aimed at reducing violence against women and children, both in Australia and internationally. Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) was established under the *National Plan* to "*deliver relevant and translatable research evidence which drives policy and practice leading to a reduction in the levels of violence against women and their children*" (ANROWS, 2015a). Priorities for research in this area over the next few years have been identified in the *National Research Agenda to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children* (ANROWS, 2014). *The Perpetrator Interventions Research Stream* is one of the priorities under the *National Plan* (ANROWS, 2015b) and one of the most recent research reports published by ANROWS has identified "considerable gaps in Australian research on [family and domestic violence] and parenting" (Hooker et al., 2016, p. 3).

'*FATHERING CHALLENGES*' PROJECT

A consortium of Australian researchers is currently conducting a research project titled '*Fathering Challenges in the Context of Domestic and Family Violence*' that aims to improve the parenting experience of children whose fathers have used family and domestic violence (Deimer, 2015). The project is investigating how Men's Behaviour Change (MBC) programs address fathering and violence and is seeking to identify the key issues relating to fathering that such programs need to address (violenceagainstwomenandchildren.com, 2015). The literature review that formed part of this research identified that "parenting by men who use violence cannot be viewed in isolation from their violence towards women, since it is informed by common attitudinal characteristics of entitlement to have their needs met and by their own self-centredness" (Diemer, 2015, p. 11).

The *Fathering Challenges* project is one example of an increasing focus on fathering that acknowledges the harms exposure to family and domestic violence can cause children while recognising that family break-up and loss of contact with fathers can also cause children significant distress. Fathers who have used violence in family settings often remain in the lives of their children and it is argued that appropriately trained service providers should work with them to help bring an end to their abuse (Stover & Morgos, 2013). This is particularly important in light of research that has found children who have previously been exposed to family and domestic violence can benefit from maintaining contact with their fathers (Hunter & Graham-Bermann, 2013; Stover, 2015). Tensions remain in this area of research, however, amidst concerns that a focus on therapeutic programs for abusive fathers could be seen as an excuse for men's use of violence (Featherstone & Fraser, 2012). Further tensions exist regarding scepticism among stakeholders about the ability of men who use violence to change their behaviours. Some argue this has "the unintended consequence of reinforcing an emphasis on victim-survivors as those who needed to change" (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015, p. 44).

Current Responses to Family and Domestic Violence

MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAMS

Men's behaviour change (MBC) programs have been established in Australia and across much of the developed the world in recent decades in recognition of the need to address the endemic problem of violence against women (Edleson, 2012; Price & Rosenbaum, 2009). The aim of such programs is for men who use violence in family settings to be held accountable for their violence and to support them to change abusive behaviours towards women (Diemer, Humphreys, Laming, & Smith, 2015). However, there is very little consistency or coordination of MBC programs in this country and "a major Australia wide audit and process evaluation of MBC programs … showed significant (and concerning) variation between states and individual programs" (Diemer et al., 2015, p. 68). This lack of consistency may emanate from the poor evidence base that informs many existing programs. Furthermore, research shows that MBC programs are generally not well integrated into the broader family and domestic violence sector (Diemer et al., 2015). It is contended that MBC programs need to be an integral part of a coordinated whole-of -community response to violence against women in order to be accountable to society (Chung & O'Leary, 2009; Costello, 2006; Kelly & Westmarland, 2015). While it is acknowledged MBC groups offer only a partial solution for the problem of violence against women and children, Chung and O'Leary found that by operating in isolation; disjointed responses resulted in a situation where "women's and children's safety was compromised and offenders were often not held accountable for the violence they perpetrated" (Chung & O'Leary, 2009, p. 9).

A recent systematic review of perpetrator interventions from Europe found that out of almost 10,500 titles, a mere 12 studies "evaluated the effectiveness of a perpetrator program in some systematic manner" (Akoensi, Koehler, Lösel, & Humphreys, 2013, p. 1206). The body of evidence from evaluations is far from robust due to a range of factors including: variations in study design; "a lack of clarity regarding definitions of programme success" (Broady et al., 2015, p. 3); or lack of independence because of the practice of program providers or developers conducting the evaluations (Akoensi et al., 2013). A review of the extant literature published in 2009 concluded that there is "a lack of research evidence for the broad, long-term effectiveness of many of the most common treatments provided for victims and perpetrators of IPV, including the *Duluth* model for perpetrators and shelter–advocacy approaches for working with victims of domestic violence" (Stover, Meadows, & Kaufman, 2009, p. 231).

A recently published review of the literature conducted by Australian researchers found: "There is limited research on the effectiveness of perpetrator intervention programs in Australia" (Mackay, Gibson, Lam, & Beecham, 2015b, p. 35). The Australian researchers concluded: "Of the handful of studies that have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of perpetrator intervention programs in Australia, most showed modest but positive results ... [notwithstanding] ... programs are still worth undertaking as these may have a significant positive impact on large numbers of women" (Mackay et al., 2015a, p. 6).

Much of the published research on IPV perpetrator programs originates from North America yet many of these programs lack rigorous evaluation and cannot be generalised to other legal and cultural systems (Hamilton, Koehler, & Lösel, 2012; Mackay et al., 2015b). What is apparent is that many of the North American programs demonstrate limited 'program effect', however there is some evidence that such programs contribute to an overall reduction in abusive behaviours (Gondolf, 2004). In European Union studies some small overall program effects were reported among participants, however, methodological issues meant that no firm conclusions could be drawn from any of these interventions (Akoensi et al., 2013). What is evident in the literature from both continents, consistent with the findings of Australian researchers, is a dearth of strong empirical evidence demonstrating that existing treatments or interventions are effective in significantly reducing recidivism among IPV perpetrators over prolonged periods (Aaron & Beaulaurier, 2016; Babcock, Green, & Robie, 2004; Haggård, Freij, Danielsson, Wenander, & Långström, 2015).

MEASURING SUCCESS

Measuring the effectiveness of programs aimed at reducing the impact of IPV is a complex undertaking and there is debate about what the aims of such interventions should be and what counts as 'success' (Gondolf, 2011; Laing, 2003; Mackay et al., 2015b; Westmarland & Kelly, 2012; Westmarland, Kelly, & Chalder-Mills, 2010). For some, the primary goal of such programs is victim safety, while for others a reduction in rates of recidivism should be the key indicator of a program's success (Herman, Rotunda, Williamson, & Vodanovich, 2014). Reasons posited for the complexity of evaluating program success include the heterogeneity of perpetrators, the diverse settings in which the programs are delivered and a lack of consensus on how 'program effect' should be measured (Corvo, Dutton, & Chen, 2008; Crockett, Keneski, Yeager, & Loving, 2015; Dixon & Browne, 2003). It is also because evaluations of such programs often fail to measure a range of key indicators such as: the victim's perception of safety; attitudinal and behavioural changes among perpetrators; desistance from non-physical forms of violent behaviour and aggression; and the wider community impact of interventions that could also be considered indicators of success (Bennett & Williams, 2001; Edleson, 2012).

Additional debate surrounds the issue of program standards or quality assurance, with most jurisdictions in the USA having developed a set of standard content for programs that govern those convicted of, or identified as having engaged in violence towards an intimate partner (Maiuro & Eberle, 2008; Price & Rosenbaum, 2009). Program standards generally include a compulsory module on the harmful effects on children of exposure to family and domestic violence in program curricula, a trend that has increased over recent years (Maiuro & Eberle, 2008). There is, however, a lack of agreed national standards or agreed accreditation processes for such programs which was identified as problematic for evaluating the effectiveness of interventions (Department of Social Services, 2014; Mackay et al., 2015b).

In late 2015 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) released the *National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions* (COAG, 2015). These Standards do not set professional practice standards or dictate operational practices but are aimed at measuring the impact of interventions. The standards recognise that the "evidence base for perpetrator interventions is not yet comprehensive" and supports the development of "evidence-based and evidence-building practices within … the perpetrator accountability system" (COAG, 2015, p. 10). These standards also call for evaluative processes to be built into programs to support the development of an evidence base for 'what works'. The standards do not specify that any intervention should include a component about the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

The limited evidence-base on 'what works' in reducing levels of family and domestic violence has ramifications in terms of the quality of the programs delivered and the content of the coursework perpetrators undertake (Akoensi et al., 2013). Research on other types of therapeutic programs indicates treatment responsivity is influenced by a range of factors including: the theoretical underpinning of the program, the implementation and integrity of the program; and the characteristics of the offender sample (Bowen & Gilchrist, 2004). The literature on intervention programs indicates professionals working with perpetrators are keen to understand which components of programs work best at reducing recidivism as there is little evidence supporting one intervention modality over another (Bennett & Williams, 2001; Edleson, 2012).

There is a pressing need for MBC programs to be the subject of well-designed, independent evaluations of program effectiveness - as well as a robust and sophisticated debate around what constitutes 'effectiveness'. Arguably, engagement and other process factors are as important to focus on as 'treatment outcomes' and other variables such as recidivism rates. The latter has certainly received attention in contemporary domestic abuse literature (Chovanec, 2012, 2014). Recent work by Tetley et al. (2011) could be instructive regarding dimensions of engagement and indicators such as treatment completion and engagement with therapeutic processes (Tetley, Jinks, Huband, & Howells, 2011).

Stover and colleagues argue "more attention needs to be paid to the question of 'Which treatment for whom?' Blanket policies requiring specific treatment approaches for all male batterers are not effective" (Stover et al., 2009, p. 231). They reason that assessment of individual needs would facilitate a 'better fit' between individual men and their treatment program. Problems associated with offering homogenous programs for a heterogeneous population of offenders has been recognised in the Australian context (Day, Chung, O'Leary, & Carson, 2009). More generally, programs also need to be "aligned and supported by other parts of the domestic violence and justice intervention systems" (Diemer et al., 2015, p. 68).

It is this whole of community integrated approach that the Tasmanian Government claims underpins its *Safe Homes, Safe Families* initiative (Tasmanian Government, 2015). This integrated approach has been adopted in Scotland as part of what is known as the Caledonian System. This system "incorporates a women's and a children's

service alongside a Scottish Government accredited men's programme which is used by both criminal justice and non-criminal justice mandated men … Importantly, it involves partnership working between the voluntary and community and the statutory sector, and involves a whole system approach to tackling domestic violence rather than a programme" (Phillips, Kelly, & Westmarland, 2013, p. 14).

However, breaking down silos requires more than good intention. The Tasmanian government has had experience with whole-of-government policy measures to combat family violence with its Safe at Home coordinated response, instituted in 2004 which included regional integrated case coordination committees. The newly formulated *Safe Homes, Safe Families* model will, however, include the participation of the non-government sector working in the family violence policy development arena. It has been long argued that the community sector should always have been at the table – however their participation introduces new political dynamics into the mix which may impact on policy outcomes (Winter, 2012).

EXISTING MBC MODELS

Most MBC programs are delivered in what has been described as a 'manualised' group format (Simmons & Lehmann, 2010) and are typically run on a weekly basis of around two to two and a half hours duration for between 12 and 26 weeks (Cunha & Gonçalves, 2014). It could not be determined from the literature if there was any 'optimal' size for such groups. Programs generally run for shorter periods in prisons and community corrections settings. While there is some evidence that shorter programs have higher completion rates and lower recidivism rates, this is not conclusive (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009) and some practitioners argue that 50 hours should be the minimum duration if programs are to effect real change (Vlais, 2012). Which specific components of programs are effective, and how long programs should run to effect meaningful change in participants remain key unsolved puzzles in this area of work (Edleson, 2012).

A survey of IVP perpetrator programs in the United States reported that nearly 95% of programs operate in a group format (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009). Some consider male-only groups the most appropriate forum (Aldarondo & Mederos, 2002) as this setting enables men to share experiences, mentor and support one another and challenge any problematic attitudes and beliefs that might arise within the groups (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009). However, recent research has identified that group dynamics can be adversely impacted by negative peer discussions (Gray, Lewis, Mokany, & O'Neill, 2014). In Price and Rosenbaum's research program, managers were asked whether they followed a uniform approach with all perpetrators, or whether they provided different types of treatment based on some characteristic or subtyping of the client. Almost all programs (90%) reported that they followed a "one size fits all" approach to intervention, and only 10% offered any type of differential treatment to program participants (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009). It has been argued elsewhere that a "one size fits all" approach is inadequate for the diverse group of perpetrators that undertake these programs (Cantos & O'Leary, 2014; Corvo et al., 2008; Crockett et al., 2015). One important consideration for those providing such programs, however, is that group interventions are generally more cost effective to run than one-to-one interventions (Davis & Taylor, 1999).

Common program models include psycho-educational approaches and psycho-therapeutic interventions. The range of approaches identified in a recent European study included cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic and 'pro-feminist' programs (Akoensi et al., 2013). Psycho-educational approaches, typically view violence against women as a deliberate form of power and control by men that is entrenched in patriarchal ideology and notions of male privilege and are often described as 'pro-feminist' models. These programs seek to educate men about gender inequality while requiring them to take responsibility for their violence. Psychotherapeutic approaches

have their basis in psychiatric and psychological approaches to behaviour and typically involve a component of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) (Mackay et al., 2015b). Many program variants mix psychoeducational and cognitive behavioural approaches in some ways, (Langlands, Ward, & Gilchrist, 2009; Mackay et al., 2015b) however, "there is no evidence to suggest that either the psychoeducational approach or the CBT approach to perpetrator programs are more effective than the other" (Mackay et al., 2015a, p. 6).

Elsewhere in the literature interventions include narrative therapy models (Augusta-Scott & Dankwort, 2002; McGregor, Tutty, Babins-Wagner, & Gill, 2009) motivational interviewing (Mackay et al., 2015b) and therapy groups that address family of origin issues (Avakame, 1998; Humphreys, 2014; Tutty, Bidgood, Rothery, & Bidgood, 2001). Research is also emerging on 'second responder' models (Scott, Heslop, Kelly, & Wiggins, 2013) that follow up with perpetrators encouraging them to seek assistance, providing them with referrals and attempting to change their beliefs about family and domestic violence (Mackay et al., 2015b). There is also emerging research into restorative justice approaches (Farmer & Callan, 2012; Mackay et al., 2015b). In Australia there are also programs for specific populations including Indigenous men and men from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, although it is unclear if such programs are any more effective than 'traditional programs' (Mackay et al., 2015b). It is also unclear if any of the models discussed above include specific modules to increase men's understanding of the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

TASMANIAN MBC PROGRAMS

In Tasmania there are limited services available to men seeking to reduce violent and abusive behaviours in family settings. Catholic Care Tasmania operates a statewide Challenging Abusive Behaviour (CAB) Program in Hobart, Launceston and the North West of Tasmania. The CAB program is voluntary and provides an initial assessment, orientation and a 16-week group educational program "for men who have been angry, aggressive or abusive towards their partners and/or children". The programs aims to help men "take responsibility for their behaviour and to learn more positive, safe and respectful ways of relating to their families" (CatholicCare Tasmania, 2016). Individual support is also provided to program participants if required.

The CAB Program has a module that covers the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. The program aims to give participants an enhanced understanding of how their abusive behaviour impacts on their children as well as identifying and developing strategies to enhance parent and child relationships after abuse. A range of resources are used as part of this module including discussions about the effects of family and domestic violence on children and resources covering children's brain development. The program also uses resources that seek to convey to participants the impact of their violence from the perspective of children. No evaluations of the program were available to the researchers.

The researchers met with staff of the CAB program during the project and were provided with an overview of the course content. Specific materials used during the course were not made available to the researchers due to intellectual property issues and the commercial nature of the content. The competitive tendering process, under which services are contracted by governments to deliver such programs, was identified as an impediment to accessing resources being used in the CAB and other similar programs during the research. Researchers elsewhere have also identified this issue: "Many programs protect their curriculum and so it makes it quite difficult to gain a full picture of what's occurring in different group settings in this area. And in many ways that's understandable due to the intellectual property, but it also makes it hard to get some assessment of the area" (Humphreys, 2014, p. 12).

Anglicare Tasmania operates the *Tools For Men Program*, a Hobart-based program that delivers support and counselling to men "to enhance their relationships with their partners, ex-partners, children and step-children" (Anglicare Tasmania, 2016). There is no specific component of this program that covers the possible effects on children exposed to family and domestic violence, but these may be addressed according to the individual man's circumstances.

Court Mandated Program in Tasmania

The Community Corrections section of the Tasmanian Department of Justice operates the Family Violence Offenders Program (FVOIP) for male medium to high-risk offenders who have been diverted from the court system to this mandated program. The FVOIP is based on a model purchased from New Zealand and involves a 100-hour intensive program, delivered in 4 sessions of 2.5 hours per week over 10 weeks in both group or individual formats (Department of Justice, 2015). An adapted model of this program operates within the Tasmanian prison system. Research in the United Kingdom, where a similar model operates within the probation system in that country, found "no published evidence that it works"(Dixon, Archer, & Graham-Kevan, 2012, p. 207).

In 2012-13 the FVOIP had 32 participants statewide, of which 25 completed the program (Tasmanian Government, 2013a). The Tasmanian Government purchases the course content of the FVOIP, as well as ongoing support from the course developers. No evaluations of the FVOIP were identified during the research and specific details of the course content were not made available to the researchers due to the commercial nature of the materials, a common issue in this area of work (Humphreys, 2014), as noted elsewhere in this report.

There is limited data available on sentencing of domestic violence offenders. The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) published a study in 2010 of 20000 cases which showed offenders charged with 'common assault' (n=7351) most commonly received an unsupervised bond, with only 7.2% receiving a prison sentence. A larger proportion (17.6%) of those convicted of assault occasioning actual bodily harm (n=3469) received a prison sentence and 60% of those convicted of recklessly causing grievous bodily harm (124) received a sentence. The average prison term for common assault is 4.6 months while those convicted of recklessly causing grievous bodily harm receive 12.6 months (BOCSAR, 2010). Assuming this conviction rate is constant across other jurisdictions, only a small proportion of offenders enter the prison system and so the community should not be over-reliant on the corrections system being able to provide comprehensive rehabilitation programs.

EXAMPLES OF MBC CURRICULUM

The following section provides a description of program curricula from three MBC programs identified in the initial stages of the research; these were *Caring Dads* (Canada), *Addressing Fatherhood* (USA) and *Challenging Abusive Behaviours* (Tasmania, Australia). It proved challenging to source detail of the content being delivered in behaviour change groups. The commercial-in-confidence nature of many curriculum (Humphreys, 2014) means that only a general outline is able to be provided of one program. The research team purchased copies of another widely used program to determine specific content and, as such, we are able to provide more detail of this program. The third document was generously provided free of charge by developers of the *Caring Dads* program in the hope that it would inform our research and support the proposed development of evidence based resources for adaption in local contexts.

The three programs discussed in this section are:

- *Caring Dads: Helping Fathers Value Their Children* (Canada) (Scott, Francis, Crooks, & Kelly, 2006).
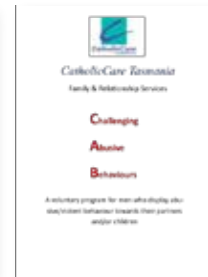
- *Addressing Fatherhood with Men Who Batter: A Curriculum for Working with Abusive Men as Fathers in a Batterers Intervention Program (BIP)* (USA) (Scaia, Connelly, & Downing, 2010).

- *Challenging Abusive Behaviours: A voluntary program for men who display abusive/violent behaviour towards their partners and/or children* (Tasmania) (Catholic Care Tasmania, 2015).

Caring Dads Program

The *Caring Dads* Program manual includes a detailed description of how the program was developed. The document describes how several versions of the 17-week group intervention were piloted "and with feedback from facilitators, clients and referral agents [the developers] made revisions and improvements" (Scott et al., 2006, p. 4) before the final program was agreed upon.

The *Caring Dads* document sets out clear instructions for how programs should be run, detailing the requirements of both facilitators and participants, which includes the writing of a detailed report on each participant. The manual also describes some of the issues that can be encountered by programs seeking to access copyrighted materials, such as videos, to support the learning objectives of various modules.

The 17 sessions that make up the *Caring Dads* Program are divided into 4 sections, with each section having an identified overarching goal. Details of the Caring Dad's Program are included in Appendix 3 of this document.

The documentation for each of the 17 sessions that comprise the *Caring Dads* Program provides details of session goals, the theme of each particular session and the list of materials required. Each chapter of the manual contains clear and detailed instructions about the various exercises participants will engage in during each session, as well as homework to be done prior to the next session. There are also a series of notes intended to support facilitators in the event of a range of possible issues arising during each of the sessions. Resources including handouts for each session and homework tasks are included as appendices in the facilitator manual. Key resources used in this program are the "Nurturing Children" and "Not Valuing Children" 'Wheels' adapted from *Duluth* model resources that are used in a range of other family and domestic violence programs. Copies of these wheels are shown in Figure 1 and 2 below. In addition a link to the Caring Dad's website can be found by following this link - **http://www.caringdads.org/index.htm**. An additional link is provided to a page on the *Caring Dads* website about what children learn from abusive and controlling fathering - **http://www.caringdads.org/m-learn.htm**.

FIGURE 1 – NURTURING CHILDREN WHEEL

LOVE AND CARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN

TRUST AND RESPECT
Acknowledge children's right to have own feelings, friends, activities and opinions • Promote independence • Allow for privacy • Respect feelings for other parent • Believe your children.

PROMOTE EMOTIONAL SECURITY
Talk and act so that children feel safe and comfortable expressing themselves • Be gentle • Be dependable.

CARE FOR YOURSELF
Give yourself personal time • Keep yourself healthy • Maintain friendships • Accept love.

PROVIDE PHYSICAL SECURITY
Provide food, shelter, clothing • Teach personal hygiene and nutrition • Monitor safety • Maintain a family routine • attend to wounds.

NURTURING CHILDREN

GIVE AFFECTION
Express verbal and physical affection • Be affectionate when your children are physically or emotionally hurt.

PROVIDE DISCIPLINE
Be consistent • Ensure rules are appropriate to age and development of child • Be clear about limits and expectations • Use discipline to give instruction, not punish.

ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT
Be affirming • Encourage children to follow their interest • Let children disagree with you • Recognize improvement • Teach new skills • Let them make mistakes.

GIVE TIME
Participate in your children's lives: activities, school, sports, special events and days, celebrations, friends • Include your children in your activities • Reveal who you are to your children.

LOVE AND CARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs
202 East Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802
218.722.2781
www.theduluthmodel.org

FIGURE 2 – NOT VALUING CHILDREN WHEEL

Addressing Fatherhood with Men Who Batter Program

The *Addressing Fatherhood with Men Who Batter* Program kit also details the background and development of the program that involved "adult children of domestic violence, battered women, fathers, experts, and other partners" (Scaia et al., 2010, p. 3). The document outlines the guiding principles and theoretical framework underpinning the curriculum design and how the program is distinctive from other 'batterer intervention programs' (BIPs) in that it incorporates sessions and exercises on fatherhood. The curriculum also includes a DVD with four vignettes and a recording of an emergency services call that can be used as educational when delivering the program. The document makes it clear that it is not a parenting curriculum for men who batter but is intended to supplement existing work being conducted in BIP groups. The document claims the curriculum can be delivered in a variety of ways, including incorporating components into existing BIPs, or as a stand-alone curriculum for use in a fatherhood group following completion of a BIP. There are no details provided in the curriculum indicating how long the program should run.

Four themes make up the core topics in the *Addressing Fatherhood* curriculum, these are:

1.   Examining men's childhood experiences with their fathers

2.   Understanding the impact of battering on children and their mothers

3.   Becoming a more nurturing, child-centred father

4.   Examining how men can be respectful, non-abusive, and more supportive of their children's mother and of the mother–child relationship

The document then presents a series of chapters titled "Tools for Dialogue" under which a series of activities relating to the 4 key themes are detailed. Details of the *Addressing Fatherhood* program are contained in Appendix 3.

A range of exercises are listed under each theme with advice that facilitators should use "whichever exercises best meet the needs and cultural contexts of a group" (Scaia et al., 2010, p. 27). A key component of the program is the 'Fatherhood Log' which is considered a key teaching tool designed to help men "examine their beliefs about fatherhood and parenting" (p. 30). At the end of the document there are a series of handouts that can be used in some of the activities.

In common with the *Caring Dads* program, a resource based on the Duluth 'Power and Control' wheel that illustrates forms of abuse of children is used as a key educational resource in the *Addressing Fatherhood* Program. A copy of this wheel is in Figure 3 below and a link to the website of "Advocates For Family Peace" who developed the *Addressing Fatherhood* program can be found here - **http://stopdomesticabuse.org/products/**. In addition previews of the video vignettes used in this program can be found via this link - **http://stopdomesticabuse.org/dvd-previews/**.

FIGURE 3 – ABUSE OF CHILDREN WHEEL

VIOLENCE

CHOKING   COMMITTING INCEST

TWISTING ARMS   SEXUAL TOUCHING/KISSING

PUSHING

KICKING

HITTING

PINCHING   SEXUALIZING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

VIOLENCE

INTIMIDATION
Instilling fear through looks, actions, gestures, property destruction • Using adult size • Yelling • Being violent to other parent, pets, etc.

USING INSTITUTIONS
Threatening punishment with/by God, courts, police, school, juvenile detention, foster homes, relatives, psych wards.

USING ADULT PRIVILEGE
Treating children as servants • Punishing, bossing, always winning • Denying input in visitation and custody decisions • Interrupting.

ISOLATION
Controlling access to peers/ adults, siblings, other parent, grandparents.

THREATS
Threatening abandonment, suicide, physical harm, confinement, or harm to other loved ones.

ECONOMIC ABUSE
Withholding basic needs, using money to control behavior • Squandering family money • Withholding child support • Using children as an economic bargaining chip in divorce.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE
Put downs, name calling • Using children as confidants • Using children to get or give information to other parent • Being inconsistent • Shaming children.

ABUSE OF CHILDREN

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218.722.2781
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Challenging Abusive Behaviours (CAB) Program

The Challenging Abusive Behaviours (CAB) Program operated by the non-government organisation Catholic Care in Tasmania was the third program considered for this section of the report. Unlike the two programs discussed above, the CAB program is not intended as a dedicated 'fathering' program aimed at increasing understanding of the harmful effects on children of exposure to family and domestic violence. This program is, however, the only one of its kind in Tasmania, in that it works with men in a 'manualised' group format and is intended to reduce the impact of family and domestic violence on women and children by helping men understand and cease or reduce their use of violence.

The CAB program runs for 16 weeks, with flexible entry points where considered appropriate. Each of the modules focuses on a different aspect of family and domestic violence; there are also regular 'review and redirect' sessions during the 16-week program. The CAB Program contains a specific module focusing on the effects of family and domestic violence on children that uses videos, worksheets and other resources as educational tools. As discussed above specific details of these resources were not made available to the researchers due to the commercial nature of the content, and an undertaking was given by the researchers to keep details of the program confidential.

CONCLUSION

The resources identified in this component of the research included a range of materials that are currently being used to raise men's awareness about the harmful effect of exposure to family and domestic violence on children. The *Caring Dads* and *Addressing Fatherhood* manuals both provide a comprehensive overview of the many things that need to be considered when planning to deliver such programs. Importantly, both programs note that such courses are likely to have greater impact when delivered as part of an integrated whole of community response to family and domestic violence. Both also provide detail about the comprehensive consultation process that informed the development of each curriculum. What was not evident in either of these manuals were details about the specific training resources. It was unclear if any of the specific resources used in various parts of the programs had been evaluated to determine their effectiveness in increasing violent men's understanding of the harmful effects on children of exposure to family and domestic violence. One of the lessons learned during the research is that this situation appears commonplace and is an area that requires further comprehensive research to support the development of an evidence base about what works, with which men and in what context.

Contemporary Developments in Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Programs

International Programs

Recent research has reported some promising results from different parts of the world in relation to family and domestic violence programs that include a focus on the possible harmful effects to children exposed to this. Project Mirabal in the United Kingdom (UK), a collaboration between Durham and London Metropolitan Universities, conducted a multi-site longitudinal evaluation of family and domestic violence prevention programs accredited by Respect, the national umbrella organisation for perpetrator programmes and allied services in the UK (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015). The Project Mirabal research found that men who use

> "As yet, there is little rigorous evidence on the effectiveness, or otherwise, of those [programs] that focus on fathers who are domestically violent."
>
> *(Featherstone & Fraser, 2012, p. 262)*

violence in family situations, and participate in a family and domestic violence prevention program, developed a greatly increased understanding of the concept of violence over the 12 month program which "extended, for the most part, to understandings of how children are affected" (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015, p. 33). Details of the materials and resources used in these programs were not available, so it was unclear what specific components helped bring about this increased understanding.

Evaluation of resources that are currently being used to increase awareness that exposure to family and domestic violence can be harmful to children is critical for developing a sound evidence base about 'what works'. This should be a priority for any organisation working with men who use violence in family contexts.

In Canada the *Caring Dads* program is a 17-week group intervention with a specific focus on developing healthy father-child relationships. This program is one of few that are specifically designed for abusive fathers, both mandated by the court system or referred on a voluntary basis through other avenues (Scott & Crooks, 2007). Services adopting the *Caring Dads* model have also been established in several locations in the UK. One of the primary goals of the *Caring Dads* program is "to increase men's awareness of, and responsibility for, abusive and neglectful fathering behaviours and their impact on children" (Scott et al., 2006, p. 13) and five of the program sessions focus on this topic. *Caring Dads* has also demonstrated some promising results as a parenting/fathering program (Scott & Crooks, 2007) but debate remains about how effective the program is in reducing overall levels of violence by men to women (Featherstone & Fraser, 2012).

Other Interventions Aimed at Reducing Family and Domestic Violence

During this project, a number of other programs and models were identified that sought to reduce family and domestic violence, although none of these specifically focus on raising awareness of the possible harms to children exposed to this violence. One approach identified in the literature that appears to be gaining greater acceptance is the "risk, need, responsivity" (RNR) model that targets men who use violence in family situations based on assessment of their calculated risk of reoffending, what their rehabilitation needs are and their learning style and ability (Mackay et al., 2015b). Developed in the 1980s, the RNR model has been used in a variety of settings around the world, with evidence suggesting this model has some efficacy in managing family violence offenders (Mennicke, Tripodi, Veeh, Wilke, & Kennedy, 2015; Stewart, Gabora, Kropp, & Lee, 2014; Stewart & Power, 2014). In the following section a range of other interventions identified through the literature review are discussed.

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY MODELS

The community accountability approach seeks to move beyond an individualistic perspective to address men's violence against women in the isolation of behaviour change group work, instead it promotes the notion that prevention and intervention are community responsibilities that require a whole-of-community response. Such interventions generally draw on public health models of behaviour change, acknowledging the endemic nature of domestic violence, to address the factors that embed and sustain family violence within communities (Stanley, Fell, Miller, Thomson, & Watson, 2012). Community accountability models typically seek to recruit non-perpetrator males as allies in increasing women's safety (Douglas, Bathrick, & Perry, 2008) and use social marketing strategies to effectively reach intended audiences (Gordon, McDermott, Stead, & Angus, 2006; McLaren, 2009). Another component involves using men who have successfully completed a behaviour change

program as community educators about violence against women and adopts a range of strategies to encourage men to engage with difficult and challenging topics (Douglas et al., 2008). *The Strength To Change* project in the United Kingdom city of Hull is an example of such an intervention that has demonstrated encouraging results (Stanley, Borthwick, Graham-Kevan, & Chamberlain, 2011; Stanley, Graham-Kevan, & Borthwick, 2012). The Campaign for Action on Family Violence's "*It's Not OK*" project in New Zealand also reported some encouraging results using a social marketing campaign (McLaren, 2009).

PRO-FEMINIST MODELS

Pro-feminist programs aim to address violent behaviours and aggressive core beliefs and values in offenders. Such interventions are typically delivered in group settings and adopt a 'gendered lens' (Edleson, 2012) that focuses on promoting responsibility for violent behaviours, developing alternative skills to deal with stressors and restructuring underlying justifications, attitudes, and beliefs (Gondolf, 2011). These behaviours, values and beliefs are viewed as an intrinsic feature of patriarchal societies in which men seek to assert power over women (Crockett et al., 2015). Such programs aim to replace violent and abusive behaviour patterns with non-aggressive, egalitarian ways of interacting with intimate partners (Bowen, Brown, & Gilchrist, 2002). Many pro-feminist programs are based on the Duluth Model (Paymar & Pence, 1993).

DULUTH MODEL PROGRAMS

Possibly the most commonly reported MBC model in the academic literature is the *Duluth* model "designed as an intervention program to be applied to men, in lieu of jail time, who had assaulted their female partners" (Corvo, Dutton, & Chen, 2009, p. 324). The *Duluth* model has been described as "probably the most prominent batterer program approach" (Gondolf, 2001, p. 81) and a model that has been adopted and adapted in numerous jurisdictions and in some cases mandated by legislation (Babcock et al., 2004; McGinn, Taylor, McColgan, & Lagdon, 2015; Stover et al., 2009). A survey of programs in the USA found that over half of respondent services (53%) "self-described as *Duluth* model programs" (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009, p. 760) while a European review found over 32% adopted a *Duluth* model (Cunha & Gonçalves, 2014).

Central to most programs that adopt the *Duluth* model is the 'Power and Control Wheel' which seeks to challenge offenders and identify patterns of behaviour that precede incidents of IPV (Babcock et al., 2004). Typically such programs employ strategies such as role-play and rehearsal aimed at restructuring offenders cognitive processes (Bowen et al., 2002). A common feature of *Duluth* model programs is use of the term 'intervention' as opposed to 'treatment'. It is argued that this is part of a strategy to 'depathologise' IPV, thereby avoiding any diminution of responsibility of offenders for their criminal behaviour (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009). In some jurisdictions anger management modules are expressly prohibited from IPV programs on the basis that an inability to control anger could be seen as an excuse for abuse (Price & Rosenbaum, 2009) and do not account for how men who hit their partners are able to deal with anger outside the confines of their homes (Tutty & Christensen, 2005) nor is there any conclusive evidence such programs are effective in ending abusive behaviour (Gondolf & Russell, 1986).

Featherstone and Fraser (2012: p. 261) contend the *Duluth* model assumes singular explanations for why men are violent (Gadd, 2004), despite the heterogeneity of violent men (Cavanaugh & Gelles, 2005) and different forms of violence (Featherstone & Fraser, 2012; Johnson, 1995). Furthermore, the *Duluth* model "is designed to be embedded within a coordinated community response and is not supposed to be a stand-alone programme" (Featherstone & Fraser, 2012, p. 256). With that in mind, and notwithstanding the fact that many individual programs in Australia and elsewhere are based on the *Duluth* model, some commentators and researchers have questioned whether this

can work in a system where family and domestic violence offences do not lead to criminal convictions and where men who use violence in family settings are not mandated to engage with behaviour change programs (Diemer et al., 2015).

Some critics of *Duluth* approaches argue it is a "gender political model" (Dutton & Corvo, 2006:457). They posit that a multiplicity of factors influence IPV which stems from much broader etiological processes including neurological, psychological, situational and cultural influences (Corvo et al., 2009). Dutton and Corvo (2006) consider the *Duluth* model to be ideologically wedded to a notion of male privilege which, they argue, fails to recognise the reality of offenders' situations and that most perpetrators feel no sense of power or control over many aspects of their lives. It is posited by critics that interventions based on the *Duluth* model do not consider issues such as stress, anxiety, substance abuse or a personal history of victimisation as mitigating factors in abusive behaviour (Corvo et al., 2008; Crockett et al., 2015; Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Featherstone & Fraser, 2012). An analysis of the position statement of a leading family and domestic violence service accreditation body in the UK, which is underpinned by a *Duluth* philosophy, also found evidence the organisation's position statement was largely informed by ideological views rather than a sound evidence-base (Dixon et al., 2012).

Theoretical Perspectives on Family and Domestic Violence

The heterogeneous nature of family and domestic violence makes it problematic for a single theory to take into account all the dynamic and static elements that produce violent acts between intimate partners. Family and domestic violence is characterised by a complex pattern of often interrelated issues including individual, situational, psychological and couple relationship factors in the context of a social, political and economic environment such as social conditions, social policy, political events and shifts in social history that are taking place (Winter & Julian, 2005). Some theoretical explanations describe the violence in terms of personal factors which impact on the couple dynamic while others use models including structural or institutional elements that perpetuate the use of violence in the wider social system. And while evidence suggests "men can and do stop using violence in their intimate relationships, no one single theory or model has been developed to explain why and how this process occurs" (Walker, Bowen, Brown, & Sleath, 2015, p. 3)

Intrapersonal theories encompass a range of personal pathologies including physiological or mental instabilities and a related inability to control emotional outbursts. Examples might be obsessive ideation, paranoia, disassociation from feelings, substance use or an acquired brain injury in the perpetrator which leads to poor impulse control; a flawed attachment experience during childhood can lead to hypersensitivity where any feelings of hurt, fear or jealousy are immediately transformed into anger. Low self-esteem, depression and anxiety can feature in the profile of both perpetrator and victim. Individual behaviours can be associated with the reinforcement of violent behaviour against women, such as watching violent movies, using pornography, possessing weapons and a history of criminal activity (Bryon, 2004; Laing, 2004).

Interpersonal theories focus on the dynamic of the relationship. The *Duluth* Domestic Violence Project made important contributions to theory by illustrating how control is enforced using psychological and emotional means in addition to violence through the *Power and Control* and *Cycle of Violence* models (Pence & Paymar, 1986). In 2000, Michael Johnson and Kathleen Ferraro theorised that there were two distinct types of family and domestic violence. The power and control dynamic plays little part in *common couple* violence where either partner may lash out whereas in *intimate terrorism* the violence is motivated by control (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000).

Structural theories investigate how social and economic inequalities can translate into aggression and violence. *Feminist* theories regard family and domestic violence as the result of a patriarchal society where male coercive power and domination over females is promoted and reinforced. For example, pregnancy and postpartum has been identified as a time when women are at increased risk of family and domestic violence. It is theorised women develop a greater sense of self-awareness and autonomy during this time. This resulting sense of independence may been seen as a threat to the man's control in the relationship and he may respond violently to this threat (Campo, 2015b). In *resource* theory, power within an intimate relationship is based on the command of resources, whether financial, emotional or social (Anderson, 2005; Postmus, Plummer, McMahon, Murshid, & Kim, 2011; Williams & Frieze, 2005). When resources are scarce or threatened, aggressive behaviour and violence are tactics used to increase control. In situations where a man perceives that he has lost control in an intimate relationship he is more likely to use violence to restore his power (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Taylor & Jasinski, 2011).

Straus first proposed a *general systems* theory in 1973, in which the system includes individuals, their behaviours and pathologies, their family backgrounds and social spheres, cultural influences and the organisation of the society in which they live to describe the processes that characterise the use, management and stabilisation of violence in family interactions (Straus, 1973).

Social situation/stress and coping theory provides a two-dimensional explanation as to why violence may occur in some situations and not others. On the first dimension lies the position of the couple in the social structure, for example employment or income levels, and on the second dimension is the capacity to deal with stress and includes any coping strategies that may be used. Hence, according to this theory violence is likely to be used to deal with episodes of financial strains in a society where the use of violence is seen as an appropriate response to stress.

Dutton (1985) offered an *ecological theory* that applies to both victims and perpetrators. The ecosystem of a violent relationship has a foundation layer based on intrapersonal psychological factors followed by a family system layer in which the individual experiences such negative actions as abandonment, neglect, and abuse. The next layer contains peer group issues such as education, religious training, alcohol and other drug use, and gender role socialisation. The final layer describes the influence of wider socio-political gender inequalities, media portrayal of subjugation and violence against women, and racial/ethnic/cultural prejudices. For example, boys are expected to both give and take physical violence as part of routine male conditioning. Adult men are expected to control their violence and the amount of control that is expected has varied over time and historical period, but nonviolence has rarely been a social norm. *Life path* theories also take into account the changes in personal and environmental effects over time.

Social learning theory has been utilised to explain how the use of violent behaviour is transmitted between generations. Children learn how to relate to other people within the context of their own family. When they see violence used as a means of resolving problems, they learn violence as a fundamental way to solve problems with other people. Debra Kalmuss (1984) found that repetitive exposure to violence in the emotionally loaded environment of the family predisposed children to use violence, and adult victims of family and domestic violence were six times more likely to have been subjected to violence as children.

GENDERED APPROACHES TO REDUCING FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

A range of interventions have been implemented that seek to tackle the role of gender in family and domestic violence, in particular hegemonic masculinities that serve to perpetuate gender inequality (Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015). Much of this has come about as recognition that "we have no choice but to address men and masculinities if we want to stop violence against women" (Flood, 2006, p. 26). This is particularly the case for men who are fathers and use violence in family situations where it is considered vital that "work should be informed by insights from the men and masculinities literature around how constructions of hegemonic masculinity interweave with local gender orders and are played out within the exigencies of particular life histories" (Featherstone & Peckover, 2007, p. 197). Research from the United Kingdom found the dynamics of both abuse and change are gendered: that those men who changed did so through developing different ways of being men in relationships with women and children" (Kelly & Westmarland, 2015, p. 11). A comprehensive review of violence prevention programs among men and boys published in *The Lancet* found that "effective interventions with men and boys address masculinity; that is they explicitly address the norms, behaviours, and relationships associated with ideals of manhood ... [such interventions] seek to transform gender norms and promote more gender-equitable relations between men and women" (Jewkes et al., 2015, p. 1583).

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

Gender transformative approaches are another promising community intervention that "address the gender and power structures at the root of a host of harmful behaviours and therefore can effect positive changes beyond the stated program goals" (Fleming, Lee, & Dworkin, 2014:1033). Evidence suggests that gender-transformative programs serve to reduce the perpetration of violence against women (Dworkin, Treves-Kagan, & Lippman, 2013). Gender transformative programs move beyond the level of the individual to "address the interpersonal, socio-cultural, structural and community factors that influence gender-related attitudes and behaviours" (United Nations Population Fund, 2010, p. 14).

Gender transformative programs involve critical reflection on individual attitudes, institutional practices and social norms that support and perpetuate gender inequalities and have been identified by the United Nations Population Fund as "the gold standard" for work with men and boys (United Nations Population Fund, 2010). One example of a gender transformative approach would be a series of forums for young men designed to encourage critical reflections about gender and socialisation while simultaneously operating a multi-media campaign aimed at transforming how their peers, parents and others in the community perceive gendered social norms (United Nations Population Fund, 2010).

While some of the limitations of gender transformative approaches have been discussed in the literature (Dworkin, Fleming, & Colvin, 2015) there have been some promising results from smaller projects that led researchers to conclude "within the evidence base, gender-transformative programs have been found to reduce inequitable attitudes toward women, rework the norms of masculinity that harm health, and promote positive health changes for both women and men" (Fleming et al., 2014:1033).

SOCIAL NORMS APPROACHES

A *social norms* approach is another intervention that demonstrates some promise in helping reduce recidivism among men who use violence in family situations. One program used motivational enhancement therapy as a means of presenting to perpetrators misconceptions in their understanding of the extent of family and domestic violence in the community, an approach shown to be successful in changing behaviours in other areas such as problematic substance use (Neighbors et al., 2010). The social norms approach involves workers examining with clients their perceptions of the extent of family and domestic violence in the community. The research project found men engaging in family and domestic violence tended to overestimate the extent to which other men engaged in this behaviour. The rationale is that when presented with data about the actual extent of family and domestic violence, men can be engaged in discussion about how people tend to perceive that other people engage in the same sorts of behaviours they do, and that when behaviours have a stigma attached to them it can be difficult to determine what others are doing. If such behaviours were part of a person's individual experience and family history then they also tended to overestimate the extent of those behaviours. The logic behind this approach is that when presented with these normative misperceptions clients may be motivated to change behaviour (Neighbors et al., 2010). How such an approach might incorporate information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence would require further research.

A Broader Understanding of Men's Violence

Some authors believe it is useful to approach our understanding of male perpetrated family and domestic violence in a more nuanced, gender inclusive way (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011) than inferred by, so-called, pro-feminist models. For example, Goldner *et al's* (1990) 'both/and' statements provide a useful framework for thinking through the competing ideologies that pervade community and professional understandings of violence.

For example:

- Violence is a crime and requires social control *and* there are therapeutic interventions that can change men's violent behaviour
- Men choose to be violent as a means of dominating and controlling women *and* some men experience their violence as impulsive and describe feeling out of control and powerless
- Men's violence to women can be understood within the construction of patriarchy *and* men's violence to women is a choice made by individual men (Costello, 2006, p. 43)

There is also a need to be mindful of the power of language - and the importance of not defining people by, or reducing them to, their violent behaviour. Just as some 'anger management' programs have been criticised for focusing on "changing the emotion of anger rather than on the behaviour of violence" (Costello, 2006, p. 39), we should be wary of the judgement implied in programs that are named and marketed as being for 'abusers', 'perpetrators' or 'batterers'.

In an analysis of the discursive construction of fathers who use violence in family settings, Featherstone and Peckover (2007) argue that engaging men as fathers is crucial in efforts to reduce family and domestic violence. They contend that "the construction within contemporary policy discourses of violent men as offenders is not only problematic for criminal justice agencies to achieve in practice, but it also blurs and distorts understandings of and responses to violent men's involvement in the everyday lives of their families" (Featherstone & Peckover, 2007, p. 187).

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACHES

There is a growing body of evidence that strengths-based approaches, which adopt the language of positive solutions rather than focusing on problematic behaviours, show promise in effecting meaningful change among men who use violence in family contexts (Aguirre, Lehmann, & Patton, 2011; Asay, DeFrain, Metzger, & Moyer, 2015; Curwood, DeGeer, Hymmen, & Lehmann, 2011; Langlands et al., 2009; Lee, Greene, & Rheinscheld, 1999; Lee, Uken, & Sebold, 2004, 2007). An innovative program from Hull in the United Kingdom, *Strength To Change*, adopted an approach that minimised stigmatisation and blame, instead emphasising that seeking help to change abusive behaviours was a strength rather than a sign of weakness (Thomson, Stanley, & Miller, 2013) thereby challenging traditional constructs of masculinity (O'Brien, Hunt, & Hart, 2005). Men in a Canadian strengths-based behaviour change program reported that program content that focused on 'why' they offended was less helpful than content that focused on 'how to move on' from that behaviour (Tutty, Jesso, Ogden, & Warrell, 2012). Further research into strengths-based approaches, and how this approach might be used to raise men's awareness of the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence is required.

ARE MEN AWARE OF THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN?

There is limited literature relating to what fathers know about the impact of family and domestic violence on children. Stover and Morgos (2013) reported mixed findings from their research into this topic. One study they identified reported a majority of men entering MBC programs indicated concerns about the impact on their children of their violence while another larger study found that few men thought their children were affected by exposure to family and domestic violence. Researchers looking at violent fathers in the United Kingdom found little evidence of research "that specifically interrogated their views of themselves as fathers and the meanings they ascribe to their violence and abuse in this context" (Featherstone & Peckover, 2007, p. 191) and an evaluation of a multi-agency pilot program in the UK found there was minimal engagement with fathers relating to how family and domestic violence impacts on their children (Peckover, Golding, & Cooling, 2013).

Research from Australia also reported mixed findings in relation to men's awareness of the impact on children of exposure to family and domestic violence (Broady et al., 2015). The Australian study interviewed men attending a behaviour change program, some participants reported they were unaware of the potentially harmful effects of their violent behaviour on their children while others had "come to realise the impact that their behaviour had on their children, or could have in the future" (Broady et al., 2015, p. 9). This research also found that, when made aware of the possible harms to their children, many of the men expressed a desire to change their abusive behaviours leading the researchers to conclude this might be an effective approach for engaging men in interventions addressing their abusive behaviour.

FOCUS ON CHILDREN AS CATALYSTS OF CHANGE

Recent research from the UK has shown that a strong motivating factor for encouraging men to seek treatment and engage with programs is learning about the impact of their abusive behaviour on their children's perceptions of them (Stanley, Fell, et al., 2012). This research found that understanding the impact of exposure to family and domestic violence on children could serve as a catalyst for abusive men to work towards becoming a 'better father' (Stanley, Graham-Kevan, et al., 2012). An evaluation of a *Caring Dads* program in Wales reported: "The main mechanism of change for the programme, as reported by the men respondents and corroborated by facilitators and external professionals, was that the men were able to identify the impact that their behaviour has on their children" (McCracken & Deave, 2012, p. 7).

Researchers in the USA also found that awareness of the harmful effect of family and domestic violence on their children was a primary motivator for men to engage with behaviour change programs (Schmidt et al., 2007). Similar findings were reported among a group of fathers who used violence in family settings and had co-existing alcohol and other drug use problems (Stover, 2013). A desire to maintain a close relationship with their children was identified as a strong motivating factor for men in one US program called '*Strong Fathers*' which sought to restore a sense of personhood in fathers participating in behaviour change programs (Pennell, Sanders, Rikard, Shepherd, & Starsoneck, 2013). Similar findings have been reported from diverse sites in Australia and Finland where fathers identified love for their children and a desire to maintain relationships with as them a strong motivating factor in helping them cease using violence (Broady et al., 2015; Veteläinen, Grönholm, & Holma, 2013).

Research has also demonstrated the positive contribution that fathers can make to children's development and family cohesion. Children with highly involved fathers experience positive outcomes in, cognitive/educational socio-emotional and behavioural domains (Tehan & McDonald, 2010). For some researchers this positive portrayal of fathers signifies a shift from a discourse in which men are commonly constructed as a 'threat' in family and community service contexts (Featherstone, 2003). As such, the potential for adopting a strengths-based approach that focuses on the positive contribution fathers can make in a child's development shows promise for developing programs aimed at increasing men's awareness of the possible harms exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children.

Stakeholder Consultations – What is currently being done?

"Many of us who are working in the sector don't even know much about the range of harms."

What do men know about possible harms of exposure to family violence?

During focus groups and interviews stakeholders were asked what they thought men in the broader community know about the harmful impact that exposure to family violence has on children. Stakeholders generally agreed that there was a widespread lack of understanding of the various harms that children can experience when exposed to family violence.

A number of people working in this area remarked that even though they know a little about the range of harms they are not entirely sure what the damage might entail "*it depends on who they are and the work they do – those working in the area would know a lot but those in the general population probably don't have a good understanding*". Another community sector worker echoed this view "*there's not much awareness among men. Many of us who are working in the sector don't even know much about the range of harms. So in the general community most would have little or no idea about the harms*".

A commonly held perception of participants was that "*most men only have a superficial understanding, at best, of the harms*" and "*men don't know much about the harms because it's not put out there enough what they are*". Another observed "*there's a real lack of awareness, men don't consider the problem of children witnessing violence as being harmful for their development*".

Research participants commented on the intergenerational nature of family violence and how men who grew up in families where violence was common accepted this as a normal part of everyday life "*a lot of men think that family violence is normal – especially when they grow up around alcohol – and they probably don't think about what it does to kids … I've been in jail with men who have been in for family violence and they think it's normal. A lot are surrounded by violence and think it's just the way it is*". This point was reiterated by a community sector youth worker "*we see the intergenerational impact in our work. Like one young woman was being abused by her partner but because she grew up in that sort of environment it was just accepted that it's normal and what everyone experiences*".

Several stakeholders expressed concerns that there was a belief in the wider community that very young children are so young they are not adversely affected by exposure to family violence. One worker observed that the view held by many of the men they had worked with was "*oh well, they're only a baby so they're not going to be scarred for life*". This person recommended a greater investment in raising awareness of child development so that people could more easily understand that exposure to family violence can harm children, even if they are not witness to violence.

Some participants considered the fact that men who conform to rigid gender stereotypes and have not traditionally taken an active role in the nurturing and care of children was, in part, responsible for this general lack of awareness "*one of the limitations of men's understandings about the impact of family violence, I suspect, comes about as a result of the lack of direct involvement that men have in the care of children*". This person, who has worked in the family and domestic violence area for a number of years, went on to say "*there's some research that shows the greater the level of care that men have, in terms of taking care of their children, the less likelihood that they will be violent and abusive towards either the child or the mother*".

Another common observation among participants was of a general lack of understanding about the positive impact that men as fathers can have on child development and that the role of fathering needed to be more widely promoted. Part of the problem stemmed from the fact that "*men as fathers can be alienated in a way from their children because we don't engage men very well at that stage in life. We don't provide support to them when children arrive.*" Stakeholder discussion also touched on traditional constructs of masculinity and how many men have been socialised in a way that has left them struggling to get in touch with their emotions and feelings "*I would see it as part of a disconnect men have with care, emotional labour, and it's a common complaint from women that men are not emotionally tuned-in, either to them or the needs of their children*".

Summary

It was evident from the *World Café* events, as well as the interviews and focus groups, that stakeholders considered most men in the community know very little about the range of possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. Several participants noted that, even though they worked in the community sector, they too, did not fully understand the range of harms and considered this general lack of awareness an important priority that could be addressed in the short term.

Recommendation

- That funding options be explored to enable the development of a comprehensive evidence-based social marketing campaign (using the voices and perspectives of children where appropriate) aimed at raising awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children, as a component of a broad-based whole-of-community response.

What is currently being done to raise awareness of harms?

Stakeholders identified a small number of programs and services currently available in Tasmania aimed at raising men's awareness of the range of harms that exposure to family violence can have on children. These programs comprised both voluntary and mandated programs in both the community services non-government sector and government agencies. Participants also discussed how the Tasmanian Government's 'Safe at Home' integrated criminal justice response to family violence served to raise awareness of family violence in the community, although none identified any specific components that focused on educating the community on the range of harms children may experience from exposure to violence in family settings.

CHALLENGING ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR (CAB) PROGRAM

Many participants at the *World Cafés* identified the Challenging Abusive Behaviours (CAB) Program, run by Catholic Care (formerly known as Centacare), as one intervention available in Tasmania, although most reported being unsure of the specific content of the program. Some expressed a view that it was "*hard to get men to commit to CAB programs*" and this was seen as a major barrier to engaging men on the issue of the harms caused by exposure to family violence. One participant, who was familiar with the CAB Program, felt there was "*not enough funding, besides is there any evidence it works? Is there follow up to reinforce learning?*" These concerns were shared by a number of participants at the *World Cafés*. One person commented that funding had been made available through the Tasmanian Community Fund to run a CAB program in the Georgetown area but the program did not eventuate. They were unsure why the program did not run but suspected it may have been, in part, due to difficulty of men identifying their behaviour as abusive, compounded by the lack of anonymity afforded to people in rural and regional communities.

MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Participants discussed the increase in media attention to family and domestic violence in recent times; they felt this was largely due to the work of Rosie Batty in her role as Australian of the Year in 2015. There was a sense that while this media attention was welcome and served to raise awareness of the issue "*more awareness needs to be accompanied by more money*". Some felt that the current media focus had served to put a spotlight on the issue of family violence and the impact on women "*but the kids are left out of the picture*". In the Tasmanian media the 'Man Up' campaign run by the Sunday Tasmanian newspaper was also mentioned by several participants as an initiative that served to raise awareness about family violence, however not one person identified any specific component of this campaign that focused on the harmful effects on children. Some participants expressed

concerns about campaigns such as 'Man Up' with one person arguing "*it reinforces harmful gender stereotypes*" while another suggested "*it's lazy, where's the evidence behind the initiative?*". The White Ribbon Foundation was also identified as an initiative aimed at raising awareness of family violence issues however participants felt it to be "*very tokenistic and corporate*". Another contributor commented that "*it had made a start but hasn't capitalised on it*". One participant stated there were significant costs for schools hoping to become part of the White Ribbon Schools Program, costs that many schools could not afford. No participants were aware of any specific component of White Ribbon's work that focused on the harms that children exposed to family violence might suffer.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS

A number of smaller, locally-based programs were identified by participants in the *World Café*s but it was not clear if any of these programs had a specific focus on raising men's awareness of the potentially harmful effects of exposure to family violence on children. The locally based programs identified by stakeholders included:

- The "Breaking the Silence" Advocacy Group operating in the Bridgewater/Gagebrook area of Hobart;
- The "Empowering Parents Empowering Communities" (EPEC) program operated by the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation;
- The "Mentors in Violence Prevention" and "Face Up To It" (FUTI) programs that operated in the Clarence Plains area in the south of Tasmania;
- The "Relationships Abuse of an Intimate Nature" (RAIN) Program in North West Tasmania; and
- The "Getting Smart" Program operated by the Salvation Army's Bridge Program.

The *Safe from the Start* Program, a train-the trainer course provided by the Salvation Army (Spinney, 2013), was identified by a number of the stakeholders as one program that did focus on the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. As many of the participants at the *World Café* events were contacted about the research through the Salvation Army's network of contacts in the sector this was not surprising.

COURT MANDATED OFFENDER PROGRAMS

In relation to mandated programs such as the Family Violence Offender Intervention Program (FVOIP) run by Community Corrections in the Tasmanian Department of Justice, a number of stakeholders questioned if the compulsory nature of such programs reduced their potential to bring about meaningful behaviour change. No participants were aware of any evaluations having been conducted of the program, nor were they aware of any components of the FVOIP that focussed specifically on the harmful effects of exposure to family violence on children.

Summary

The research participants expressed the view that there were very few services or programs aimed at raising men's awareness of the range of harms that children exposed to family and domestic violence. A few smaller local community-based programs that provided a range of family and domestic violence related services were identified by stakeholders, several because they had some association with those services, however, none of the services or programs identified had a specific focus on raising awareness of the possible harms to children caused by exposure to family and domestic violence. Several participants also discussed the CAB Program run by Catholic Care and the FVOIP run by Community Corrections. Most were unsure of the content of the programs, or how effective they were in bringing about change. Many felt there should be greater transparency about such programs, especially if they were considering referring clients to one of these, or when working with families of men mandated to the FVOIP. Others discussed how such programs needed to be more closely integrated with other services in the family and domestic violence sector, as there was a sense they were currently operating in isolation.

Several stakeholders were familiar with the Salvation Army's "Safe From The Start" Program which does focus on the harms to children, however, this was not surprising given a number of participants had undergone training as part of that program. The limited services identified by stakeholders working in this area highlights the need for greater investment in raising awareness of the possible harms that children exposed to family and domestic violence can suffer. Support for those smaller organisations already working in this area to increase their capacity to do more work in this area was identified as a sound "grassroots" approach, however, there was a sense among participants that raising awareness of the issue also needs to target the broader community.

Recommendations

- That investment is made in programs and services that specifically focus on raising awareness about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence among men, as well as raising awareness at a whole of community level.

- That investment in awareness raising programs should include support for existing 'grassroots' campaigns by smaller community based organisations, as well as a comprehensive multifaceted social marketing campaign aimed at communicating this message to the wider community.

- That men's behaviour change programs, both voluntary and mandated, communicate the content and outcomes of their programs more effectively to stakeholders so that other service providers in the sector better understand how they fit within an integrated whole-of-community response to family and domestic violence.

What is the best way to get the message across to men?

Stakeholders were asked what they considered to be the best way to get the message across to men that exposing children to family violence was potentially harmful. There was recognition by participants that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach would be ineffective and it was agreed a range of approaches was needed. "*[You] must have multiple approaches for different blokes, they're not a heterogeneous group hence the trouble most programs have in bringing about change*" was a typical response.

Consideration of the context in which messages were conveyed was deemed critical for success as well as the audience being targeted by any proposed interventions. As one participant noted "*[it] depends on the target audience. Perpetrators often don't accept notions of gender inequality and uneven power structures so [interventions] need to adapt to individual circumstances*". Another considered the need to tailor information for men from disadvantaged backgrounds as they felt that "*[current approaches] don't seem to work that well, particularly for the disadvantaged*" yet one stakeholder added: "*It's not only men in lower SES categories that use family violence – it's across the board and needs a range of responses*".

Many stakeholders recommended the need for a strengths-based approach in any initiatives: "*use a strengths based approach that talks about what men can do to provide a safe environment for children*". This approach had been used in other contexts by some stakeholders with one suggesting: "*If you build on their role as fathers you can highlight all the amazing things they can do – and you talk about positives and modelling good behaviours*". Others felt that there needed to be an increased focus on more positive aspects of fathering because "*we know that men who are more involved with their children have better health outcomes and that their children have better health outcomes, but we don't tell men that*". The promotion of positive aspects of being a father was a recurring theme "*I think that anything that promotes a positive message is good – if it's just say no it alienates people – instead of saying just stop this it has to offer up positive alternatives about what you could do instead*". A similar comment was made by another participant advocating for a strengths-based approach "*I think anything we want to do that has the aim or intention of addressing the negative aspects of male behaviour needs to recognise the value of being a dad – as potential – what's in it for you if you change your behaviour?*" One participant discussed how in their work with men who use violence they had used the men's relationship with their daughters as a tool for engaging them about respectful relationships with women "*I will use men's relational interest in terms of opening up a discussion, but we have to move another step to more broad concern about the wellbeing of all women. Once you've got the relational interest then you need to make that wider*".

Mindful of the need to tailor interventions for particular audiences, one stakeholder with many years' experience in this field suggested "*a 'whites of the eye' face-to-face approach [might be effective] but this is not suited for all. This could be done by other men to challenge existing beliefs / behaviours. This might work well in occupational contexts that are predominantly male like the building industry*". Another supported the need for a multiplicity of approaches, acknowledging that there needed to be a range of options available to individuals: "*A lot of men might be comfortable talking about their stuff side-by-side rather than face-to-face, say while out going for a walk, so counselling options that include going for a walk instead of sitting across a table. The typical counselling model doesn't necessarily work for a lot of men. Some might want to do it that way and there might be others who say I don't want to go for a f__ walk with you, I want to sit down and talk*".

Several people suggested using children's voices could be an effective strategy for getting the message across to men about the harms of family violence "*incorporate children's stories to bring home the negative ramifications of family violence*" was a typical comment, "*bring kids into the picture as, when and if appropriate*" was another. It was felt such an approach would also be suitable when developing interventions targeting younger men "*those just turned 18 or those around year 11/12 [it would be good] to use peers who can talk about their own experience of family violence*".

Several stakeholders suggested involving young men in antenatal classes represented a good opportunity for healthcare workers to engage them on the topic while another expanding on this idea remarked "*one of the best ways is to encourage a greater level of direct care for children by men*".

Another stakeholder who had worked with men from challenging backgrounds suggested one way of raising awareness with men about the potential harms to children exposed to family violence would be "*role plays that promote alternative options for responding to situations, not for all but effective for some*". This person discussed how, in their experience, interventions for men that use humour to get a message across can be very effective, however, given the sensitivity of this topic the use of humour might not be appropriate in this instance. This person also felt that "*hands-on learning experiences, especially for men with low literacy skills*" would be useful and that "*kinaesthetic learning was also good for engaging those men disengaged from traditional education systems*". They reported also having "*used rappers to some good effect in the past with young men with challenging behaviours*". Others also suggested humour might be a useful means of getting the message across to men but acknowledged the sensitivity of the topic meant this would need to be done with great care.

The use of appropriate language when developing interventions was also raised by a number of stakeholders during the consultations. One participant felt that the language used in some current family and domestic violence campaigns had undermined men's role as fathers, in a sense alienating them, and that more inclusive language would engage more men in the topic. "*The message 'Stopping violence against women and **their** children' denies males that paternity. I think we have to be very careful of that because our language is exclusive and it's like if you're not going to acknowledge my role as a dad then why should I participate? So it needs to be inclusive*". Another stakeholder shared the view that the current discourse had served to alienate some men as the messages appeared to ignore the fact that only a small minority of men use violence: "*When we talk about family violence we need to talk about SOME men instead of just men. Men who choose to use violence instead of just perpetrators – we are naming it up as a choice, so therefore there's an alternative*". On the other hand, some stakeholders felt that certain men might be more receptive to more challenging approaches "*confronting men about the harms is most effective, for some they need to be shamed before they will take on messages*".

Another suggestion made by several stakeholders involved developing training programs for frontline workers such as police, nurses and paramedics who deal with family violence on a regular basis. One stakeholder proposed "*Maybe even train the police to do a brief education/information session if they are involved in an incident, as part of efforts to defuse volatile situations – but this needs to be done properly as the man might not be receptive at that time*".

The concept of a compulsory respectful relationships curriculum in all schools was widely acknowledged by stakeholders as a vital strategy in helping reduce family violence. One stakeholder lamented the lack of opportunities available to engage with men and boys about gender and gender violence issues: "*There's only two sites really where men get to talk about issues of gender. One is when they've been physically violent to their partner and they are in a behaviour change program, or they're doing a gender studies course at University. There's no opportunities in the workplace unless it's a professional development course ... or when they are setting up a White Ribbon program*".

Summary

Stakeholders discussed a range of approaches that they considered could be effective in communicating the possible harms to children that exposure to family and domestic violence can cause. A consistent theme in the data was that a multiplicity of approaches was needed due to the heterogeneity of the target group. Participants discussed how an approach that might work for one group of men might not necessarily work for others, and that the context in which messages were delivered was a key consideration. Another key message from the stakeholder engagement process was that a strengths-based approach that focused on the positive aspects of fathering was likely to be more effective in communicating this message. The development of specific education and training programs for frontline healthcare and community support workers, to equip them to effectively communicate information about the harms of exposure to family and domestic violence was also supported.

Recommendation

- That multifaceted strategies be developed to raise men's awareness of the possible harms that exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children, with a variety of messages for different groups of men, from diverse backgrounds and delivered in a range of contexts.

What influences men to seek help?

Participants in the interviews and focus groups were asked what they thought influenced men who used violence to seek help. Analysis of the data from the stakeholder engagement identified two key themes in this area. Stakeholders identified a range of factors they felt motivated violent men to change their abusive behaviours, as well as different ways in which men might seek help: "*The way men seek help is different – there's a lot of 'testing the waters' informally with friends and acquaintances in a subtle way – so he might talk about there's this guy I know sort of thing – just testing it out on other blokes first – so he's not being perceived as being weak*".

Some talked about how contemporary constructs of masculinity impacted on help-seeking behaviours. One discussed how fathers were trying to balance a redefined masculinity that included 'traditional' characteristics such as strength with more contemporary masculinities that valued empathy and nurturing. They saw this "*pressure to be everything to everyone*" took a toll on some men: "*Men typically don't understand there's an issue until a lot further down the track – others might have recognised it – and ironically, for some I think it's been about putting other people first*". Another felt that conflicting views on what being a man and a father is all about meant "*some seek help because they are scared of some of the emotions they are experiencing*".

Several people talked about how men often did not recognise they had an issue with violence until they were given some sort of ultimatum, or in some cases mandated to by the legal system. "*Mostly out of self-interest such as threats by a wife or partner she will leave, or else mandated by court diversion*" was a typical response. Some questioned the effectiveness of mandated community programs in bringing about meaningful change, but there was support for making such programs widely available in the prison system "*they should have them so all men in prison can access them*". The view that evidence-based programs in the prison system were an essential component of any 'whole of community' response was a recurring theme in the discussions.

For men experiencing issues with their use of violence who were contemplating accessing support, participants spoke of the need to develop a range of evidence-based responses and how a 'one size fits all approach' is not effective for motivating men who use violence to change. Some talked about the need to be clear about the benefits of engaging in behaviour change programs to men who use violence: "*What's needed is some sort of 'hook' to get them in – what return on investment is there for men?*" and that any such interventions were tailored to meet individual men's needs: "*We need to meet people 'where they are at' in terms of desire to change [and we] need to use tools/props they are familiar with*".

The notion that men who use violence often need genuine motivation to make such changes was a recurring theme in the discussions: "*The loss of family would be a prime motivator for men to want to change. If they were violent or abusive and the partner said they would leave unless they got help*". Some felt many men who use violence were only likely to change if there was a real threat of criminal sanctions: "*Being mandated by the courts, as an alternative to prison, would also be a strong motivator – even if it's just being seen to be doing the right thing*". Motivation to change abusive behaviours out of concern for the impact this had on children was seen as one factor that might engage a man in seeking to change: "*Sometimes the catalyst is simply the woman saying to the man if you don't stop this behaviour I'm leaving you. So the men want to preserve the relationship – often men go through periods of remorse and regret following their use of violence – so sometimes the catalyst will be self-interest. Sometimes it will be because they are charged or sentenced, so sometimes it's the punitive thing. For some it will be remorse at the impact their violence has on their partner and children*". This was confirmed by one stakeholder in the focus groups:

"My kids are a big motivator for me to keep things good, but if you want help you've got to put your hand up and ask for it. My kids kept asking – when are you getting your own home dad? – and that kept me going and doing all the things I had to do. I had lots of friends that had stable housing and I wanted that for my kids. I want to build a decent home for my kids so that when they grow up they can say "my dad helped me" - where before I didn't care."

One research participant talked about how there was some concern in the family and domestic violence sector that using the impact of exposure to violence on children as a motivator for change was not without its detractors: *"Some have said that to use the impact of violence on children, suggests that the impact of violence on women is not motivation enough, that means that the victimised woman gets marginalised and that you're trying to elicit concern from the violent man only indirectly because of how it impacts on their child. So what does that mean for the level of empathy for the woman who has been abused?"* While this stakeholder considered that a compelling argument they were mindful that *"others would say 'well anything that works' anything that acts as a catalyst to get the man to shift is a good starting point"*.

Summary

Views on what influenced men to seek help for the use of violence in family settings ranged from acting out of self-interest to save a relationship, to men coming to the realisation that their abusive behaviour negatively impacted their children. Again, questions were raised about the effectiveness of mandated programs; the perceived lack of transparency of such programs was again noted as a concern. Research participants cautioned that for men contemplating changing abusive behaviours there needed to be a broad range of evidence-based options available as a 'one-size-fits-all' approach would not attract many men who might benefit from such a program.

Recommendations

- That a range of options be made available to men seeking to address abusive behaviours. These options need to have a sound-evidence base and be subjected to rigorous evaluation processes to determine what components are effective for which men and in what context.

- That further research be undertaken into what specific factors help men who use violence in family settings better understand the impact of exposure to this violence on their children and what factors influence them to seek help to address their violence.

What skills do men need to change abusive behaviours? What is the best way to support men to develop those skills?

Another area explored during the research was the skills that men who use violence in family environments need to develop to help them refrain from violence, and what is the best way to support these men to develop such skills. Participants in the research offered a range of suggestions relating to both the personal skills required as well as ideas for how to support them develop these. As with many of the recommendations made by stakeholders, there was recognition that a multifaceted approach was needed "*[because] everyone's got a different story – some it's alcohol or [other] drugs and others it's been growing up in violence. So you need a different approach for everyone.*" The need to develop flexible and supportive responses that considered low educational attainment among men seeking help to reduce their use of violence was widely acknowledged by participants "*[men] with low educational attainment who disengaged from the school system early because it was too rigid. For many it's a case of "'what next' – they failed at school so are set up for repeated failures.*"

Some felt that many men who used violence struggled with a range of emotional issues including low self-esteem, often as a result of exposure to intergenerational family violence: "*We need to instil a sense of self-esteem by providing a sense of context – where they fit in family, community, society*". Elsewhere participants identified a range of emotional skills men could develop to help them reduce their use of violence including "*learning how to read emotions and the signs in themselves that they are getting angry or upset*" and "*[men who use violence] need cognitive skills to help them understand how to deal with behaviour*". Some felt it would help these men to engage in "*a mix of one-to-one counselling as well as in a group setting so they learn to feel comfortable expressing emotions, especially in front of other men*" another suggested that "*peer-based programs probably help as men might listen to others*".

Stakeholders also talked about the need for men's behaviour change programs to address anger issues and to "*teach them skills to avoid being violent, such as time out skills, and teach men that violence is a choice you make and you can choose not to be violent and that it's not acceptable*". A range of strategies were proposed to support men to develop these skills including "*getting them to keep a journal or diary of their feelings and emotions and how they felt they dealt with situations*". One participant mused on whether qualities such as empathy and emotional literacy were skills that could be taught "*I'm not sure if it's a skill so much as a greater emotional literacy, I guess it can be seen as a skill, empathy, is that a skill? It's a human quality whether you can teach it as a skill I don't know*".

Others suggested a program of organised activities such as father and children events aimed at fostering improved communication strategies between fathers and their children: "*Maybe have community working days where men can get together with others, and their kids, and work on community projects. Sell it like they are giving something back to the community by participating, but also helping their relationship with their kids.*" One stakeholder thought that such programs had potential "*to encourage greater involvement in direct caring roles [which] is an underutilised violence prevention strategy.*"

Some participants felt there was a lack of awareness among men about the range of supports available to them in the community, particularly for young dads who might be feeling overwhelmed by their role as fathers, and that a key strategy for helping develop them develop these skills was to "*teach them about supports that are available to help them with parenting as many are not aware*". Understanding what services were available to men who were seeking help with violence issues was recognised by some participants in the research as challenging, even for

those working in the sector. In the *World Cafés* a lack of up-to-date information about where men can get help to address their use of violence was a recurrent theme, as was discussion about the limited options available to refer these men to. This finding is significant in terms of policy and funding implications and is an area that should be prioritised for further research.

Summary

The need to develop a broad range of flexible and supportive responses for men seeking help to reduce their use of violence was widely acknowledged by participants. Whether this is in the form of one-to-one counselling or group work, there was a view that many more options than are currently available were needed. It was considered essential that factors such as low educational attainment, cultural and linguistic diversity and Aboriginality are recognised when developing any such responses. Stakeholders talked of the need to ensure any programs recognised that often men seeking to access such services needed support to develop a range of skills, including empathy and emotional skills, for them to benefit from their participation. Stakeholders also expressed concerns about the lack of awareness among men, as well as in the broader community, about the limited range of support services available to men seeking to change abusive behaviours.

Recommendations

- That a central repository of up-to-date information about services within local communities be developed and maintained for men seeking to change abusive behaviours and for workers in the family and domestic violence and child welfare sectors.

- That a broad range of evidence-based models for working with men who use violence in family settings be evaluated, including models for working with men with learning difficulties and low literacy skills, for their possible adoption in a range of different local contexts.

- That research is undertaken into programs that foster improved communication strategies between fathers and their children to identify options for trialling such programs in local contexts.

- That antenatal and other parenting programs for fathers include information about the support services available in the community to help them deal with a range of emotions related to becoming a father.

What else is needed?

Participants in the research identified a need for early intervention with young men and boys to develop improved communication skills as a key strategy in reducing family violence. Again the idea of a respectful relationships curriculum was identified as a means of teaching boys at an early age how to develop the skills necessary to adopt responses other than violence in their relationships. "*Get them in schools when they're younger. And not using only a woman – there needs to be a man too. They need qualified and accredited co-facilitators.*" There was also a sense among participants that this needed to be done from kindergarten through to year 12 as a core part of the school curriculum.

As was discussed earlier in relation to current efforts to raise men's awareness of the harms that exposure to family violence can have on children, several people talked about campaigns such as 'Man Up' being run in the *Sunday Tasmanian* as being problematic. Some remarked how exhorting men to simply "man up" in response to family violence was a simplistic response that only served to perpetuate harmful perspectives of masculinity: "*the Man Up campaign, it has the most aggressive masculine image of this man, and he's pointing to say 'man up' against violence and the dilemma with this is, that particular type of masculinity is what I see as the heart of the problem. And so it's fraught and self-defeating in my view!*" Another remarked on a previous campaign with a similar message: "Real Men Don't Bash" *– that's the same issue. You can be a real man and be non-violent, yet the heart of the problem is 'real men'. It's a contradictory message.*"

Another participant considered it essential we move beyond concepts of masculinity and manhood that were a key topic in contemporary discourse relating to violence against women. They felt that more emphasis needs to be placed on what they considered to be basic humanist principles:

> "*Rather than trying to construct a positive masculinity and a positive manhood we need to create a moral selfhood that is not reliant on living up to the expectations of manhood – and that would suggest a very different type of educational approach – but this kind of "manning up" it's so fraught as an educative strategy. It reinforces the notion of traditional masculinity*".

Recommendation

- **That further research is undertaken into education strategies that provide young men and boys from diverse backgrounds with alternative models of masculinity and manhood as part of a whole-of-community approach to reducing violence.**

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This section of the report has discussed some of the findings from the stakeholder engagement process undertaken during the research. In this section the focus has been on identifying what stakeholders know of that is currently being done to increase men's awareness that exposure to family and domestic violence can be harmful to children. The research identified a perceived lack of knowledge about these harms, both among men who use violence in family settings and in the wider community. Some stakeholders reported that, even though they work in the health and welfare sector, they are probably not fully aware of the latest research in this area. This highlights the need for increased efforts in raising awareness of this issue.

Stakeholders also reported that although they are aware of the Challenging Abusive Behaviours program and the Family Violence Offender Intervention Program that currently work with men who use violence in family settings, they are unsure of the content of these programs and whether or not the programs are effective in bringing about meaningful change. Concerns were expressed about a lack of transparency of existing programs, and stakeholders considered it essential that such programs be open to greater scrutiny in order to make them accountable as part of a whole-of community approach to family and domestic violence.

The research identified concerns among stakeholders about adopting a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to programs that seek to bring about behaviour change in men who use violence in family settings. Participants in the research emphasised the heterogeneous nature of the target group required an array of approaches, both to engage men with the issue and, for those who use violence, to engage meaningfully in evidence-based programs tailored to their individual circumstances.

The research has identified significant gaps in this area in existing efforts to address family and domestic violence and has made recommendations for addressing these. The following section of this report elaborates on what the research participants told us was needed to raise men's awareness of the possible harms that exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children. Ideas for an education program intended for this purpose, as proposed by the participants are also discussed.
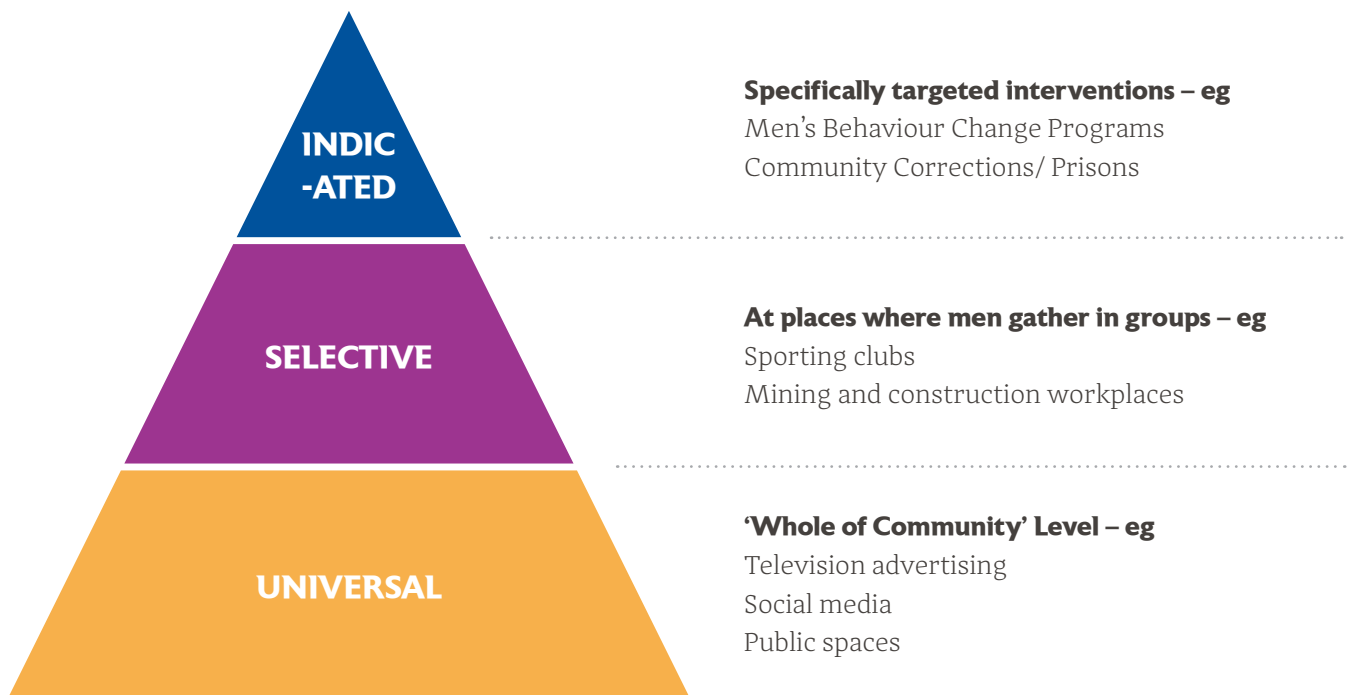
Stakeholder Consultations – What else is needed?

What stakeholders told us is needed to raise men's awareness of the issue

In the early stages of the research it became apparent that achieving the research project's original aim of identifying evidence-based resources that were currently being used to raise men's awareness would be challenging. While the researchers were able to identify a range of resources currently being utilised in a variety of contexts across a range of jurisdictions, it was difficult to determine the evidence base underpinning these resources or whether any evaluations had been conducted to determine if they were effective in increasing men's understanding of the impact on children of exposure to family and domestic violence. Recent research into 'perpetrator interventions' in Australia identified the need for "*further research into the development of best practice evaluation principles and guidelines for interventions*" (Mackay et al., 2015b, p. 50). This research identified similar issues in regard to the resources located as part of the process of collecting materials currently being used in men's behaviour change programs. A collection of some of the resources identified over the course of the project can be found via the following link - **UTAS/TSA - Family Violence Resources**. This is not intended to be a comprehensive collection but aims to demonstrate some of the resources currently available, mostly in the public domain, which may be considered useful in the Tasmanian or National context.

During the consultations the researchers sought input from stakeholders into formulating recommendations to inform the next stage of any project aimed at developing such resources. For the purposes of this report the recommendations have been classified into three broad categories using a modification of Gordon's (1983) classification framework:

- **Universal** – These are interventions that operate at a broader community level and include campaigns aimed at reaching the widest possible audience through media such as television, Facebook and advertising in public spaces.

- **Selective** – These are more targeted interventions that seek to raise awareness of the issue in settings and contexts where men are likely to gather in groups such as sporting clubs or in male dominated industries such as mining and construction.

- **Indicated** – These interventions are specifically targeted at men in behaviour change programs or men who are in the criminal justice system for family and domestic violence issues.

INDIC-ATED

Specifically targeted interventions – eg
Men's Behaviour Change Programs
Community Corrections/ Prisons

SELECTIVE

At places where men gather in groups – eg
Sporting clubs
Mining and construction workplaces

UNIVERSAL

'Whole of Community' Level – eg
Television advertising
Social media
Public spaces

Additionally, where possible, these recommendations for future actions have been classified into short, medium and long-term categories to inform the development of a 'tiered' implementation process. Such a process would require appropriate resourcing to work towards measurable benchmarks over an extended period of time.

Short-term (next 12-24 months)
'Community of Practice'
Social marketing campaign

Medium-term (2-5 years)
Workplace education programs
Respectful relationships in schools
Training frontline workers

Long-term (5+ years)
Requires 'intergenerational change'
Starting at early-childhood
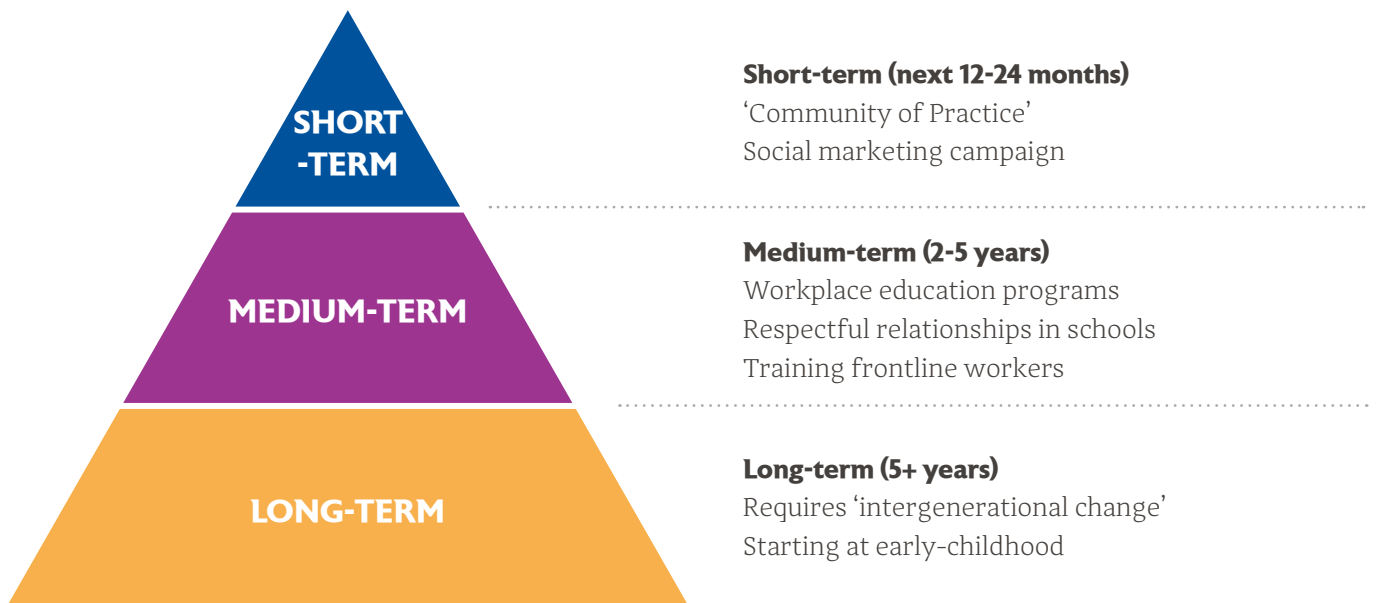
What's needed at a 'whole of community' level? (Universal Interventions)

A key objective of the *Safe Homes, Safe Families Action Plan* is to develop a '*whole of community*' response where government agencies, businesses, community based organisations and individuals work in partnership to reduce to family violence (Tasmanian Government, 2015). Stakeholders recommended a range of possible interventions that could be adopted as part of a 'whole of community approach' to raise awareness of the harms that exposure to family violence can have on children.

SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS (UNIVERSAL)

Several stakeholders considered it a priority to communicate to policy-makers evidence about what is currently known to be effective in raising awareness of the potential harms to children exposed to family violence. Recent Australian research has concluded 'much more information is required on what actually works in terms of perpetrator interventions in the Australian context' (Mackay et al., 2015a, p. 12) and participants in this project considered it important that research be conducted into 'what works' in Tasmanian contexts so that local interventions could be informed by a sound evidence-base. Research projects such as this were considered an ideal avenue through which to convey evidence about what has been found to be effective and what future research priorities should be. Stakeholders were of the view that politicians were more inclined to take note of research developed by universities or affiliated institutions than research from other sources, such as project reports from service providers or advocacy groups. There was a sense that researchers from universities had a duty to communicate evidence to decision makers "*academics need to promote to governments what initiatives are working in international contexts*". Several stakeholders proposed the formation of a 'community of practice' in which senior academics would collaborate to facilitate the transmission of key evidence about 'what works' to policy makers, as well as identify priorities for future research. Communicating findings from research such as this project was identified as an action that was achievable in the short term. For such an initiative to be sustainable in the long-term, institutional support from governments and research institutions is critical.

Recommendation

- That senior University of Tasmania researchers from a range of disciplines including nursing, medicine, paramedicine, social work, psychology and sociology establish a 'community of practice' to develop processes for advising government on current evidence-based practice and future research priorities.

MEDIUM-TERM INTERVENTIONS (UNIVERSAL)

Through the consultation process a number of initiatives that could be achieved at a 'whole of community' level within the next two to five years were identified. These initiatives would typically require a more strategic approach and a commitment from government to appropriately resource them.

Include children's perspectives to raise awareness through a multifaceted media campaign

A recurrent theme arising during the consultations was the need to bring the voices of children to the forefront of any efforts to raise awareness about the possible harms resulting from exposure to family and domestic violence. Stakeholders talked about how advertising and marketing campaigns that used children to convey a message were very powerful and, in their view, more likely to be effective. Participants felt that any campaigns intended to bring about sustainable change would be more influential if the message came from children – "*children's voices need to be heard*" and "*listen to what the children say*" were typical of the views expressed during the community consultations. Another participant suggested "*we need to look at what the child needs from the parent and have this information fed back to the parent(s)*". One stakeholder proposed a campaign utilising children's voices and containing what they considered to be succinct but powerful messages, "*Let's include kids voices – 'I don't see dad anymore', 'my dad is in prison', 'we don't have visitors', 'my dad cries when I see him, 'my dad gets angry' and so on*". The *Fathering Challenges* project, currently being conducted by a consortium headed by researchers from Melbourne University, has also highlighted the absence of children's voices in much of the research on this topic (Mackay et al., 2015b). That project has a research sub-theme aimed at identifying strategies to include children's voices in family and domestic violence research. It is anticipated this will form an evidence-base to inform future interventions.

The concept of a coordinated campaign using television, social media platforms such as Facebook and advertising in public spaces was raised by a number of the stakeholders. Participants emphasised the need to ensure any intended initiatives "*use a range of new technologies to engage young people*" and that any campaigns "*use apps and social media to communicate with young people*". While some were aware of a range of campaigns seeking to raise general awareness of family and domestic violence, none of the participants could recall any specific campaigns intended to raise awareness of the harms exposure to family and domestic violence could have on children: "*family violence publicity typically shows effects on adults, usually women, and kids are overlooked*" and "*national programs do not focus on the effect of family violence on children*" were some of the comments made in the workshops. Some considered this lack of focus on the effects of family and domestic violence on children to be a significant gap in current efforts to reduce the problem. This was one identified need that stakeholders considered could be addressed as a medium-term response, subject to appropriate resourcing.

Stakeholders emphasised the need for any proposed campaigns to be well coordinated, with a clear and consistent message as "*people are overwhelmed with information*", but there was support for "*an over-arching national campaign raising awareness, as some don't see family violence as harmful to children*". One stakeholder suggested any such campaigns "*should sit in a suite of work – linked to marketing of support services*" so that men not only had awareness of the effects of exposure to violence on children but were also provided with information about appropriate support services if they wanted help to address their use of violence. Others urged that "*we need to keep non-physical violence in the frame*" as emotional and financial abuse were issues they encountered regularly in their work but felt these were often overlooked in discussions about the impact on children of family and domestic violence.

Recommendation

- **That relevant stakeholders working in this area collaborate and contribute to the development of a comprehensive evidence-based social marketing campaign about this issue.**

Research Clearinghouse

Another recurrent theme arising during the consultations was the idea of a central repository of up-to-date information on the latest family and domestic violence research that would include a portal to a range of evidence-based resources that could be used by the general public and support workers alike. One stakeholder remarked – "'*If I'm a dad – where do I go?' We are in the sector and don't really know*". It was suggested such a resource could serve as a 'clearinghouse' and would include current information about local services while also showcasing the most recent research on a range of family and domestic violence related topics. "*Tasmania needs to have its own family violence centre / clearinghouse – along the lines of the national one [ANROWS] but with local level details*". Stakeholders identified that "*the ability to find resources and services in a timely manner is an issue*" and that "*issues with professionals not knowing about services*" was indicative of the need for such a service. It was also suggested that "*local 'hubs' to coordinate different services*" would complement any such initiative and that "*understanding local cultural contexts and communities*" was critical. Specific detail about what any such resource might look like was not elaborated on during the consultations and is an area for possible future research.

Recommendations

- **That government agencies, the business sector and relevant non-government stakeholders collaborate to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Tasmanian 'clearinghouse' to support practitioners, service providers and the general public to access current information about locally available services and the latest research into the effects on children of exposure to family and domestic violence.**

- **That any proposed 'clearinghouse' also plays a role in disseminating emerging research on therapeutic practices that might translate effectively to working with this population in local contexts.**

Develop capacity for early intervention by 'front line' workers

Greater investment in the training of 'front line' health professionals including doctors, nurses and paramedics, so they are aware of the latest evidence about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence, was also identified as a possible means of raising men's awareness about this issue. These workers were seen as a potential resource for 'early intervention' that could educate parents, including fathers, if family and domestic violence was suspected. It was recognised, however, that "*doctors and other health workers need information about referrals and programs*" if they are to be effective in this role. Child protection workers were also seen as key resources in this sector as "*the threat of loss of children can be a motivating factor for change*". Several stakeholders suggested additional training for front line workers would provide "*potential for a diversion/ early intervention program*" as part of an integrated 'whole of community' approach to the problem. One participant suggested any such initiative could consider adopting a 'second responder' model similar to programs trialled in Canada that have shown some encouraging results (Scott et al., 2013). Under this model, 'front line' workers refer men charged with family and domestic violence offences to specialist services providing intensive individual counselling and support. It was envisaged such a model would include an intervention where, if deemed appropriate, offenders engage in sessions focusing on the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

Recommendations

- That research into the knowledge, attitudes and preparedness of 'front line' workers to manage family violence be prioritised to identify education and training needs and to inform the development of evidence-based training programs relating to the potential harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

- That research into 'second responder' models of intervention for men charged with family and domestic violence offences be undertaken to assess the suitability of such a program in Tasmania, as well as other Australian states, and that any such model includes information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

Role of the 'business sector'

Stakeholders recognised the business sector as an important avenue for raising men's awareness of this issue. It was noted how businesses and organisations can sign up to become accredited '*White Ribbon Workplaces*' as part of a national strategy to improve the safety of women in the workplace (White Ribbon, 2015). The National Children's Commissioner argues the business sector "*whether directly or indirectly, impacts on the rights of children on a daily basis ... [and] are now major actors in protecting children and advancing their rights*" (National Children's Commissioner, 2015, p. 62). As such the business sector plays, an important part in 'whole of community' approaches aimed at reducing the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. In the consultations it was recommended that "*[researchers and the business sector] could collaborate in developing a workplace training program*" about the effects on children of exposure to family violence.

Recommendation

- That the business sector, 'not-for-profit' organisations and researchers collaborate to identify education and training needs across different industries and workplaces and to inform the development of appropriate workplace training programs to increase awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family violence on children.

LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS (UNIVERSAL)

A clear message emerging from the stakeholder engagement process was that investment needs to be made now in order to bring about "*long-term generational change*" that will increase men's awareness of the harmful impact that exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children.

Respectful Relationships in Schools

Participants in the research talked about the need for education systems to introduce programs relating to 'respectful relationships' as an over-arching principle of the school curriculum, beginning with early childhood education. Such programs were seen as essential for "*challenging traditional roles where women are subservient*" and to help young men and boys "*develop a 'toolbox' for dealing with strong emotions*". One stakeholder remarked, "*until we change the structures that create and promote violence nothing will ever really change*" and advised the researchers to be mindful of this when developing any resources as a result of this project. It was considered starting in the early years of education would "*target children to help break the cycle*". There was a strong view expressed that such programs must "*not be a one off and need to be continually reinforced to execute change*" as part of a long-term, intergenerational, intervention. Stakeholders considered an evidence-based respectful relationships curriculum would be essential for engaging young men and boys about the harms exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children. But any such interventions needed to be part of "*an all-schools approach … integrated into the curriculum*".

Developing respectful relationships has been identified as an intended outcome in *Taking Action: Tasmania's Primary Prevention Strategy To Reduce Violence Against Women And Children 2012-22*. The stated objective in this strategy is to "*use evidence based best practice programs to build people's capacity to develop respectful relationships*" (Tasmanian Government, 2013b, p. 21). More recently, as part of the Family Violence Action Plan the Tasmanian Government has announced it will invest "*$355,000 in developing and delivering a new Respectful Relationships Program*" (Rockliffe, 2015). The program is intended to span from kindergarten to year 12 in all government schools and be introduced within three years; support for non-government schools has also been flagged as part of this initiative.

Recommendations

- The Tasmanian Government's proposed 'Respectful Relationships Program' be supported and this should include the introduction of 'gender transformative' education programs. In addition, specific evidence-based components that raise awareness about the harmful effects exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children should be included in these programs.

- That proposed 'Respectful Relationships Programs' should incorporate sound evaluation processes regarding strategies for raising awareness of the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

INDIGENOUS AND CALD COMMUNITIES

Efforts were made to include the views of Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in our consultations, however the scope of the project prevented comprehensive targeted engagement with these communities. Organisations providing services to these communities were consulted in the planning process for the community workshops, however, no workshops specifically for these communities were conducted due to logistic and resourcing issues. Representatives from both communities participated as individual stakeholders in the workshops and focus groups. The researchers were reminded by these participants that "*cultural understandings are important*" and there was a need to recognise that "*trauma history is a factor*" for many in Indigenous and CALD communities.

Recommendation

- That additional funding is sourced to work with Indigenous and CALD communities to research and develop culturally appropriate evidence-based resources that raise awareness about the harmful effects exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children.

What's needed for men in the community? (Selective Interventions)

SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS (SELECTIVE)

There was a strong message conveyed in the consultations that any proposed interventions aimed at raising men's awareness of the range of harms that children exposed to family and domestic violence can experience "*need to be inclusive of men*" and it was essential that services "*work with men to find out what they want?*" Utilising established, readily identifiable campaigns such as 'White Ribbon' was seen as a possible short-term means of raising awareness among men in the broader community of the harmful effects of exposure to family violence on children. However, several participants spoke of the need to also adopt a community development approach whereby members of smaller 'grassroots organisations' such as the 'Breaking The Silence Advocacy Group' be appropriately resourced to enable them to continue their work developing community level responses. There was a view that "*community ownership is essential for uptake and success [and to] bring about culture change*". There was a sense that successful engagement on this topic relied on involving 'grassroots' organisations from the outset in developing any proposed interventions. However, one stakeholder cautioned, "*don't [just] target low SES groups - you need to take care with stereotyping*".

Recommendation

- **That initiatives by 'grassroots' organisations aimed at raising awareness of the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children be supported and adequately resourced as part of a 'whole of community' response to family and domestic violence.**

MEDIUM-TERM INTERVENTIONS (SELECTIVE)

Several stakeholders argued that while it is important men are held accountable for violence against women and children there must be a shift in the way men seeking support to change abusive behaviours are portrayed. Typical comments included the need for an "*emphasis on something more broad and positive than 'abusive men' or 'perpetrators'*". Widespread support for a strengths-based approach to the problem was evident among stakeholders and many were familiar with this model from their work and training in this field. One participant suggested that "*positive messages about the benefit to children*" might be a way of engaging with men on the topic.

There was also a view that interventions aiming to involve men more in parenting roles would serve to help raise awareness, but such interventions have to "*engage dads [and] find out what they want*". One participant said "*just getting men in the door*" of parenting programs could be challenging and innovative strategies were needed to effectively engage with them on the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence - "*feed them and provide childcare so they can engage with services*". One participant posited that "*people want to know how 'to do' relationships but aren't taught.*" Further complicating this was that "*most support services are only open 9-5 when most dads work*". Another suggested "*helping men develop relationship skills [and] understanding empathy and attachment [and] how we get on with people*" would serve to increase men's understanding of the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. Specific programs providing "*education for young dads (15-25)*"

was also identified as a potential way to increase their awareness of this issue. One participant argued "*men are not accepted as an integral part of parenting*" and much of their role in parenting was viewed as "*little more than babysitting*". Such entrenched attitudes and norms were seen as a challenge when seeking to engage men about parenting issues.

Stakeholders also suggested "*there needs to be multiple points of engagement – if there is a man who is thinking of using violence, where can he go or who can he call for support?*" Several participants talked about the need to tailor responses to suit individual needs, rather than adopting a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Some advocated for the establishment of a dedicated health and support service for men as a potential avenue for raising awareness among men of the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. Others talked about establishing "*crisis and medium term accommodation for men*" going through family separation where workers could support them while working to increase their awareness about the harmful effects of exposure to family violence on their children. While it was acknowledged such proposals would require significant resourcing within a competitive funding environment, it was considered important to "*address a lack of support for men*" seeking to adopt alternatives to violence. "*Government funding for a male-focused family violence service*", properly integrated with other services, was proposed by another stakeholder who considered such a commitment would demonstrate "*genuine engagement at government level*" and "*political will*" which they considered imperative for developing effective 'whole of community' responses to reducing the harmful effects on children of exposure to family and domestic violence.

Recommendations

- That further research be undertaken into how information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence can be incorporated into existing parenting programs, particularly those targeting fathers.

- That research be undertaken to identify possible models for crisis and medium term accommodation for men experiencing homelessness as a result of their use of violence in family contexts.

- That research be undertaken to assess the viability of a 'male-focused' family violence service that would provide a range of evidence-based programs including support for men who wish to adopt alternatives to violence.

LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS (SELECTIVE)

Many proposals for long-term interventions intended to raise men's awareness of the possible harms exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children were similar to those suggested for the 'whole of community' level. There were, however, some important discussions relating to the intersecting concepts of gender, masculinity and being a father and how competing discourses regarding these topics was challenging when seeking solutions for bringing about long-term change.

While some participants encouraged the use of "*well known sports figures to promote the message*" believing many men would listen to messages from them about the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence, others talked about the need to present a "*diversity of male role models*" in order to tackle entrenched belief systems some considered many sports celebrities represented. One participant felt an important step in reducing gender-based violence would be to have a "*[whole of community] conversation about the role of men in contemporary society*" as they considered current concepts of masculinity contributed to the intractable nature of family and domestic violence in our community. They also proposed that 'gender transformative' models of education which seek to break down the social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender imbalances (United Nations Population Fund, 2010) be made a central part of any planned respectful relationships curriculum. Another participant proposed using "*role models and community champions*" who were easily recognised and with strong community connections as "*ambassadors' for children's safety*". It was suggested such campaigns could address topics including the important role fathers' play in children's development, the challenges of fatherhood and "*conversations about what it means to be a great dad*".

Another long-term strategy proposed during the consultations for raising awareness of the harms exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children was to increase men's understanding of gender equitable parenting. One stakeholder proposed a need to work towards "*a culture change around parental roles, [some] men will say 'I have to babysit', when it's a parental obligation*". Such a cultural shift was considered essential for developing sustainable efforts to raise men's awareness and to build on gender transformative interventions such as proposed respectful relationships education in schools.

> "*[We] Have to recognise the 'construction' that mothers are assumed to be responsible for children's emotional welfare – men don't think of themselves as having emotional responsibility or impact*"

Recommendation

- That 'gender equitable parenting' courses, which can be incorporated into existing antenatal classes or as stand-alone programs, be developed and that such training includes information about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence.

What's needed for men who use violence? (Indicated Interventions)

During the consultations stakeholders talked about the limited options available to refer men to in relation to family and domestic violence issues, this was most evident outside of Hobart which is consistent with the findings of research by ANROWS that found "*support can [be] limited for those perpetrators residing in rural and remote areas in Tasmania*" (Mackay et al., 2015a).

SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS (INDICATED)

Many participants in the research talked about the need to hold men who use violence in family settings accountable while recognising many men were open and amenable to change. Developing targeted interventions for this group of men was considered an important step in reducing the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. Ensuring any proposed interventions were underpinned by a sound evidence-base was considered paramount; although it was acknowledged the current lack of evidence meant any proposed interventions should, in the interim, be rigorously evaluated through appropriately designed research. Given the limited evidence about what is effective in bringing about behaviour change it was considered paramount that in the short-term there is a need to "*engage with men to find out what we are doing wrong*" when developing responses for men who use violence.

Trauma informed counselling that explored men's own experience of violence was identified as a potential key to helping them understand how exposing their own children to violence could cause them harm. One common theme from the consultations was the need to recognise that many men who use violence in family settings may have also been exposed to family and domestic violence themselves. To engage with men on this topic "*respect and compassion are needed – often they are traumatised themselves*". While recognition of past trauma was considered important, a number of stakeholders were concerned that such an approach could be seen as an excuse for violence and workers needed to ensure men who use violence were held accountable. One stakeholder cautioned "*take care with language not to alienate [men], but still emphasise it [family and domestic violence] is not 'normal' behaviour*" while another advised "*be mindful of language, using violence is a choice. Don't treat men as helpless*".

Stakeholders also talked about the need to develop improved processes to intervene early with men who use violence in family settings, as "*responsiveness is important to reduce frustration*". Timely and integrated responses were considered essential in situations where couples experiencing family and domestic violence did not want to end their relationship and interventions needed to recognise the "*connectedness of parents who want to stay together*". It was also considered critical for younger men with children who had limited life experience that initial interventions needed to focus on "*realising that parenting and being in a relationship - it's not just about you anymore!*"

Recommendations

- That interventions targeting men who use violence in family settings be underpinned by a sound evidence-base and that any new interventions have a built in evaluation component to ascertain their effectiveness in bringing about meaningful change.

- That interventions targeting men who use violence involve these men in program development and evaluation consistent with contemporary best practice service delivery and policy development processes.

MEDIUM-TERM INTERVENTIONS (INDICATED)

Men's behaviour change (MBC) programs were widely discussed during the consultations. As one of the key objectives of this project was to develop evidence-based resources to be used in such programs, there was discussion about a perceived lack of transparency of existing programs, both mandated and voluntary. "*But do they work?*" was a typical comment made during the consultations. Several stakeholders expressed concern about a lack of clear evidence to indicate MBC programs, particularly mandated ones, were successful in reducing violent behaviour and there was a view expressed that "*[MBC] programs need to be transparent and accountable and working on measuring outcomes*" and that "*long term evaluations are needed*" to develop a sound evidence base about what works, for which men, and in what context. Others talked about difficulties finding out about specific content of these programs, which made it difficult to determine if they were suitable for some of their clients.

The research identified a lack of transparency and a reluctance to share specific details of existing programs in Tasmania for the purposes of research. It was indicated this was due to the 'intellectual property' of the program content and the commercial nature of this content in an environment of competitive tendering. This issue had also been identified in other jurisdictions (Humphreys, 2014). This proved to be an impediment to the researchers in their efforts to identify specific program content and the evidence-base underpinning resources currently being used to raise awareness of the harmful effects exposure to family and domestic violence could have on children.

The development of a uniform accreditation process for such programs was identified as essential for improving program accountability as well as the measurement of outcomes. Concerns were also raised about where such programs sat in terms of an integrated 'whole of community' response to family and domestic violence. Some stakeholders considered MBC programs to be situated outside of the more 'mainstream' family and domestic violence services and strategies to improve integration of such programs was critical. This has been recognised in recent Australian research that argues: "*Placing intervention programs within a wider system is crucial in terms of holding men accountable for their behaviour and for the voices and perspectives of women and children to inform the development of programs*" (Mackay et al., 2015b, p. 28).

Recommendations

- That men's behaviour change programs, both voluntary and mandated, should work towards accreditation by an appropriate body and invest in improving evaluation processes to identify specific program components which are effective in raising awareness of the impact of exposure to family and domestic violence on children.[3]

- That course content and materials used in 'manualised' programs, particularly those resources being used in government funded programs, should be made available to researchers to improve the evidence base underpinning these programs and improve program transparency, integrity and community accountability.

- That strategies to better integrate men's behaviour change programs into the wider family and domestic violence and child protection sectors should be developed as part of a 'whole of community' response.

LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS (INDICATED)

Stakeholders consulted during the engagement process included practitioners with a history of working with men who use violence in a variety of contexts. Several discussed how men who use violence in family settings often had a range of challenging psychosocial issues that required long-term therapeutic approaches. A strengths-based approach was considered appropriate when working with men with problematic violent behaviours "*we need to foster positive messages through encouragement – but this needs regular sessions with clear goals for each session – and with highly skilled facilitators*". It was recognised in the consultations that working with men who use violence in family settings was extremely challenging and it was perceived there was a dearth of suitably qualified and experienced people working in this field. Investment in developing expertise in this sector was considered a priority, but one that would take some years to achieve due to current shortages. Additional detail relating to stakeholders views on what should be included in programs that work with men who use violence in family contexts is included in the following section of this report.

Recommendation

- That investment is made in developing the capacity of those currently working in the family and domestic violence sector to enable them to work effectively with men who use violence in family settings, particularly men who have low literacy skills and/or learning difficulties.

....

3 COAG released a document at the end of 2015 that sets out a proposal for national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions. (Council of Australian Governments, 2015)

What would a perfect education package look like?

As discussed elsewhere in this report, it became apparent early in the project the original objective of identifying evidence-based resources to inform the development of a best-practice training module describing how to educate men of the potential harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence would prove challenging. Through necessity the research team adopted a different strategy; instead exploring with the research stakeholders what they thought should be included in any proposed education package. As many of these stakeholders had experience in developing and/or delivering training on a range of topics, they were seen as a valuable resource to inform such a process.

Several stakeholders focused their responses on ideas relating to broad-based 'social marketing' campaigns, rather than specific training modules for selected audiences. These stakeholders considered addressing a perceived lack of understanding in the wider community of the harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence should be a priority for any proposed intervention. It was suggested once awareness had been raised in the wider community, the focus could then be shifted to developing specific training modules for 'indicated audiences' such as participants in men's behaviour change programs or 'selected audiences' such as in sporting clubs or male dominated workplaces. Some considered social marketing campaigns were best developed by people with expertise and experience in this field "*we need to look at what else has worked before, rather than how are we going to make a start, as there are things out there that have worked before*". It was felt that research projects such as this could aim to inform such social marketing campaigns but 'creative components' were best left to experts in this area.

A consistent message from stakeholders was that any community education campaign needed to be "*multifaceted, with carefully crafted messages. Some campaigns can get things terribly wrong and be a complete waste of resources*". One participant recommended any proposed campaign "*needs to have lots of messages so it reaches different people – you can't just do one thing and think that'll be enough. There's lots of different people with different problems so you need different categories that suit different blokes*". Some participants talked about the need to develop sustainable campaigns that "*engage people so they take the message on board*". It was recommended that such campaigns "*need to be done over a long period and have a consistent message that people recognise – but also needs to be 'edgy' so that people don't become bored by it*". One participant proposed, "*something quirky would be good [such as] clever use of social media*".

It was suggested any social marketing campaign would benefit by utilising "*some prominent men to champion it*" and one stakeholder proposed "*get someone like Tino Carnevale [Gardening Australia presenter] who does some work at the prison. He gets on well with the blokes and he has kids too*". One participant even proposed developing a themed campaign "*maybe even use a superhero type character that people could remember. Family Violence Man! 'Family Violence Stops With Me' needs to be a key message where men are seen to be taking a stand to stop family violence wherever they see it*". Several stakeholders suggested the use of humour might help raise awareness but acknowledged the nature of the topic meant this would need to be done with a great deal of sensitivity "*using humour can be good, as long as it's done properly*". It was also considered important that any social marketing campaign "*also needs to be done in schools as part of a generational approach to bring about long-term change*". One participant suggested, "*get kids to help develop things because they are the harshest critics – if it's not going to work the kids will tell you*".

Several stakeholders reflected on social marketing campaigns they considered had made a meaningful impact. One suggested engaging with men in places where they gathered might be effective "*something in pubs would be good – urinal posters often grab your attention*". Others shared this view; "*those messages in urinals and bathrooms – that's where I would like to see things as well*" and "*posters in pubs and clubs that reiterate the messages from any TV ads would be good to reinforce the message*" were some of the suggestions made. While the use of a variety of social media platforms was encouraged, one participant noted, "*most of the men would be likely to watch TV so that should be the priority media for any campaign*". Another advised that any proposed education campaign needs to ensure men with low literacy levels can understand the messages being presented. It was suggested animation might be a useful way of getting such messages across to this audience:

> "*Develop an animation that shows how a computer gets its memory filled up over time – even when we try and erase contents. Compare this with a child's brain and how it fills up with the things it's exposed to. If this was done using good animation it would be a really simple way to get the message across in a way that most men could understand*".

Several people discussed a recent campaign that had used a recognisable identity "*something like the Danny Green 'coward punch' campaign that has a simple message but makes a real impact. Using well-known identities might help grab people's attention*". There was, however, considerable debate about the merits of promoting 'traditional' models of masculinity to raise awareness of the issue as some considered this as potentially perpetuating stereotypes they considered were the root cause of family and domestic violence. During the consultations stakeholders expressed diverse views regarding gender inequality and the social structures that serve to reinforce and perpetuate family and domestic violence. Some participants regarded challenging existing social structures that sustained gender inequality as a key step in raising awareness about the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence "*privileged groups tend not to see themselves as privileged and so part of the process of running an educational campaign aimed at stopping men's violence has to be challenging men's privilege*".

One participant suggested:

> "*We need some sort of 'watchdog' role that calls people out when they make disparaging comments about women. We need to take people like [political leaders] to task when they make comments about women and ironing or the likes – they need to be taken to task over such comments. Whenever there's people in power making inappropriate comments there needs to be a response that it's not ok*"

In relation to the project's initial objective of developing an evidence-based training module it was stressed that "*any educational programs need to have clear details about aims/objectives for each individual session with highly skilled facilitators*" and work towards supporting men to develop "*a range of tools and options ... and to help them identify stressors they need to be mindful of*". It was proposed that communicating "*clear and specific information about the impact on children of a harmful environment, including family violence*" had to be the priority for such an intervention. One stakeholder cautioned that an important consideration when working with men who use violence in family contexts was the "*need to develop strategies to break through the narcissistic tendencies that are a common feature among this group*".

A number of stakeholders talked about the importance of adopting "*a trauma-informed approach*" when working with men who use violence in family settings as a number of stakeholders pointed out "*often they are traumatised*

themselves". It was regarded as critical that any proposed interventions recognised "*the need to foster the ability in those being targeted to have the requisite learning skills so they better understand the harms to children*". It was also discussed how men who use violence had often become disengaged from the education system at an early age, many would have poor literacy skills and learning difficulties and there was a "*need to foster affect regulation in those individuals and equip them with the skills necessary to bring about positive change*". It was suggested "*[using] peers or 'champions', people who have graduated from any such program and have come out the other side, to talk about how it has turned their life around*" would also be a valuable component of any proposed education module.

Some participants were familiar with 'Duluth-model' programs for men seeking to change violent behaviours and considered elements of such a model to be one possible component of any intervention aimed at increasing awareness of the harms exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children. One stakeholder talked about the need to provide a variety of responses to meet the diverse needs of individual men:

> "*[Duluth-model programs] help some men understand, or make sense of family violence but there needs to be other approaches as well, that engage men in different ways and are more open to alternative views because there are a lot of men who are just like 'f__ you! I'm not participating in that'*"

Stakeholders cautioned that a "*one-size-fits-all*" approach would not be effective and any proposed interventions needed to cater for "*a range of learning styles*". Problems related to "*running homogenous domestic violence programs for a diversity of male offenders*" (Day et al., 2009, p. 220) have been discussed in the literature on this topic. These problems are further exacerbated by the practicalities of running such programs in prison and community corrections settings (Day et al., 2009).

One stakeholder considered there was a need for an innovative education module that would "*break through the mire of much of the other stuff that's around – give them something to aspire to – a light at the end of the tunnel*" in order to effectively engage with men on the topic. Participants in the research urged "*you need to make it attractive to change behaviour*" and rather than focusing on "*blaming and shaming*" it was considered important that any education package "*adopt that strengths based approach*" and utilise "*something with a positive outlook that highlights the rewards and increases motivation to engage with behaviour change*". The researchers were advised an important consideration for any such programs was recognising they "*need good administrative support and governance so skilled facilitators can focus on [module] objectives*". Some talked of their experience facilitating group education programs with limited resources or support infrastructure, factors they considered detrimental to program outcomes.

Recommendations

- That further research be undertaken to determine what specific components of men's behaviour change programs are effective in raising awareness about the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence for which men and in what context.

- That further research be undertaken to identify how information about the harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children can be integrated into both strengths-based and trauma-informed approaches for working with men who use violence in family contexts.

Conclusion

The World Café events and the interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders provided insights into what they felt would contribute to raising awareness of the possible harmful effects of exposure to family and domestic violence on children. The experience and expertise they shared with the researchers has informed the development of this project report. The suggestions they made have been incorporated into the report and a complete list of recommendations developed from these has been included towards the beginning of this report.

Raising awareness among men that exposure to family and domestic violence can be harmful to children is a complex issue for which there is no 'quick fix' solution. Stakeholders consulted during the engagement process gave a clear message that a comprehensive multi-faceted response is required to bring about sustained change. During the consultation process participants discussed the need for increased and appropriate levels of resourcing in this area of work to support the three levels of proposed intervention – *universal, selected and indicated* – discussed in this report.

There was also a strong message from participants that there needed to be improved integration of men's behaviour change programs, both voluntary and mandated, into the wider family and domestic violence and child welfare sectors. Such programs also need to improve their accountability to the wider community through greater transparency and a commitment to rigorous evaluation processes that seek to establish what works, with which men, and in which context. Several stakeholders talked about how this lack of transparency meant they could not make referrals to such programs with any confidence as they were unsure exactly what these programs did.

It is intended the findings of this research will inform the development of a wide reaching social marketing campaign to increase awareness of the possible harms to children exposed to family and domestic violence. This was a key message coming from stakeholders and challenged some of the research team's preconceived ideas that these harms were widely understood. Any such campaign needs to consider the evidence from similar social marketing campaigns (Gordon et al., 2006; Stanley et al., 2015) that have been implemented elsewhere, with some promising results, in places such as New Zealand (McLaren, 2009) and Hull in the United Kingdom (Stanley, Fell, Miller, Thomson, & Watson, 2009).

It is also intended that the recommendations contained in this report will inform further research in this area, while contributing to the evidence base on which future policies and funding allocations are determined. Resourcing is critical to improving responses to family and domestic violence and, as was noted at the beginning of this report: "*We need to recognize that safety planning for women and children must include work with men and work with men must include safety planning for women and children and [we need to] fight for appropriate funding for all of it rather than collude with government rationing practices*" (Featherstone & Peckover, 2007, p. 197).

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Appendix 1 – Stakeholder Engagement Document

Family Violence - Men's Education Project

Background:

The Salvation Army and the University of Tasmania are collaborating to develop evidence-based resources aimed at reducing the harmful effects on children resulting from exposure to family violence. Our goal is to work with stakeholders across Tasmania to best solve the following puzzle:

How can we increase men's awareness that family violence has a harmful effect on their children?

Currently we know that:

- Over 2,400 Tasmanian children were present at family violence incidents involving police in 2010-11
- Exposure to family violence can cause a range of long-term harms to children
- Children exposed to family violence are more likely to be violent themselves.
- Exposing children to family violence is increasingly being viewed as a form of child abuse
- There are limited services available to men in Tasmania to support them change violent behaviours

If we were successful in finding a solution:

Our children would:	Our fathers would:	Our community would:
Feel safe, cared for and nurtured in their homes and communities	Have a greater understanding of the harmful impact on children of exposure to family violence	Be regarded as a leader in making children feel cared about and safe at home
Enjoy improved relationships with their fathers	Enjoy improved relationships with their children	Be proactive in limiting childhood trauma associated with exposure to family violence
Experience less trauma resulting from exposure to family violence	Enjoy a more rewarding and enriching parenting experience	Provide a safe and supportive environment in which our children can realise their potential
Have improved health and wellbeing	Use the evidence gathered by this research project to help them adopt alternatives to violence.	Be supportive of interventions aimed at improving men's responses to challenging situations
Be less likely to use violence in their everyday lives	Have a better understanding of services in their community that can support them to become better fathers	Be taking important steps in reducing intergenerational violence

Where to From Here?

This document is intended to raise awareness of our project and its goals to our stakeholders. In order to generate solutions to this puzzle the research team will develop a literature review of existing men's behaviour change interventions, identify evidence-based best practice resources and engage with stakeholders in a strategic manner to develop an innovative training package that can be used to educate men about the harms resulting from children's exposure to family violence. The project will adopt a community development approach and engage men to own the problem of men's violence against their partners and children.

Appendix 2 – Invitation to Participate

Want to Help STOP Family Violence?

The Salvation Army
is working with the **University of Tasmania**

to solve the puzzle of how to raise **men's** awareness of the harms exposure to **family violence** can cause **children**

We would like to hear **your** *views on what* **you** *think might help*

If you would like to participate in a short **1-to-1 interview** *or focus group please contact* **Dr Peter Lucas** *on*
(03) 6226 4795 *or by email at p.v.lucas@utas.edu.au*

THE SALVATION ARMY | TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FUND | UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA

This project has been funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund
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The Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee - Ethics Ref No: H0014683

Appendix 3 – MBC Curriculum

CARING DADS PROGRAM

Goal 1 – To develop sufficient trust and motivation to engage men in the process of examining fathering

Session 1 – Orientation/Introduction

Session 2 – Considering fathering

Session 3 – Developing discrepancy: Helping men make the choice to do things differently

Goal 2 – To increase men's awareness of child-centred fathering

Session 4 – Child-centered fathering

Session 5 – Building relationships with our children

Session 6 – Listening to children

Session 7 – Fathers as part of families

Session 8 – Eliminating barriers to better relationships

Session 9 – How are children different from adults?

Goal 3 – To increase men's awareness of, and responsibility for, abusive and neglectful fathering behaviours and their impact on children

Session 10 – Recognizing unhealthy, hurtful, abusive and neglectful fathering behaviours

Session 11 – How am I responding to my children's needs?

Session 12 – Problem-solving in difficult situations

Session 13 – Relationship with my child's mother

Session 14 – Decreasing denial and minimization

Goal 4 – Consolidating learning, rebuilding trust and planning for the future

Session 15 – Rebuilding trust and healing

Session 16 – What about discipline

Session 17 – Wrapping Up

ADDRESSING FATHERHOOD PROGRAM[4]

Theme 1: Men's childhood experience with their fathers

Exercise1: A father should ….

Exercise 2: Strengths and weaknesses as a father

Exercise 3: Beliefs about fathering

Exercise 4A: Tell me about Grandpa

Exercise 4B: Tell me about Grandma

Exercise 5: Marcus's Story (Video vignette)

Exercise 6: My father's influence on me

Exercise 7: What is it like to be your father's son?

Exercise 8: Was I abused as a child?

Theme 2: The impact of battering on children and their mothers

Exercise 1: The impact of violence against women on children

Exercise 2: Using art to understand battering

Exercise 3: Using children's poems and stories to understand battering

Exercise 4: Building empathy for children

Exercise 5: "Let's play house" (Video vignette)

Theme 3: Nurturing, child-centred fathers

Exercise 1: Becoming a father

Exercise 2: A model of manhood and fatherhood

Exercise 3: Ending the intergenerational cycle of battering

Exercise 4: Becoming more nurturing, child-centered fathers

……….

Exercise 5: Yelling … What's the intent? What do children hear

Exercise 6: The Argument (video vignette)

Exercise 7: Discipline, abuse or punishment?

Exercise 8: The Don't Blame Game

Theme 4: Respect, nonviolence, and support for mothers and the mother-child relationship

Exercise 1: Becoming a more supportive and respectful parenting partner

Exercise 2: Harm to the mother-child relationship

Exercise 3: Woman abuse is child abuse

Exercise 4: Supporting the mother-child relationship

Exercise 5: Building empathy for the woman as the mother

Exercise 6: "What are you really trying to say, Dad?"

Optional Exercise: Using popular media and educational videos

CHALLENGING ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR (CAB) PROGRAM [5]

1.   Abuse (General introduction)

2.   Abuse (Effects on women)

3.   Abuse (Effects on children)

4.   The Pattern of Abuse

5.   Accountability

6.   Time Out & Other Strategies

7.   Feelings

8.   Thinking & Self-Talk

9.   Communication

10. Change

11. Relationships

12. Well-Being

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5   Note – The CAB program includes a 'refresher' / 'review' session every 3-4 weeks.

Appendix 4 – Participating Organisations

Below is a list of the organisations that participants in the stakeholder engagement process were from.

Anglicare Tasmania

Breaking The Silence

Catholic Care Tasmania

Department of Education

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Human Services

Department of Justice

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Department of Social Services

Launceston Family Relationships Centre

Legal Aid Tasmania

Men's Resources Tasmania

Red Cross

Relationships Australia

SHE (Support, Help and Empowerment Inc.)

Tasmanian Community Fund

TasCOSS

The Salvation Army (Tasmania Division)

Tasmania Police

TasTAFE

University of South Australia

University of Tasmania

Yemaya Women's Support Service

National helplines

Kids help line 1800 55 1800
Mens line Australia 1300 78 99 78

Tasmanian helplines

Family violence response and referral line 1800 633 937 (24/7)
Family violence counselling and support service 1800 608 122
Sexual assault support service (03) 6231 1817

In the case of an emergency always call the police 000