Highlights in 2015

The SAFE from the START project continues to raise awareness of the effects that domestic and family violence has on children and how as a community we can influence, intervene earlier with support and increase the safety of children where violence is occurring. The latest statistics are alarming as the media continues to report incidents about children and women being killed, injured or traumatised by family violence. In 2015, the number of fatalities of women has increased from one to almost two murders a week as a result of family violence. This has continued to engage the Australian community to challenge governments and the community to respond more effectively.

The 2015 Australian of the Year - Rosie Batty has continued to speak up about the importance of a ‘whole of community approach’ to reduce the incidence of family violence and to improve the safety of children.

HIGHLIGHTS
There have been many memorable highlights in 2015 with the Commonwealth and State governments endorsing the National FV Action Plan and implementation of state plans. Announcements for new state and Commonwealth funding opportunities for new projects is also a great start to the new year.

World Conference of Women’s Shelters

It was a privilege to attend and present the Safe from the Start project at the International 3rd World Conference of Women’s Shelters in The Hague, Netherlands on November 5-9, 2015.

The Connect & Act to End Violence against Women conference was a very exciting and inspiring experience attended by over 1000 delegates from all over the world with 45 Australian representatives.

The Safe from the Start project was presented with the Tony the Turtle Project presented by Kristine Evertz and Anneke Umans from Blijf Groep in the Netherlands.

Link to Listening to the Voices of Children: Tony the Turtle Project http://worldshelterconference.org/en/presentations/904/ (Session #FM9—Friday)

Below: Kristine Evertz & Anneke Umans presenting Tony the Turtle Workshop

Above: A Safe from the Start kit was donated to the Association for Women’s Sanctuary & Development, Ethiopia - Salvation Army Manager, Nell Kuilenburg with Maria Munur from Ethiopia receiving the kit.

Australian delegates meeting with Minister Michaela Cash at the conference!

The Conference plenary sessions and workshops included family violence experts, researchers and practitioners from around the world who shared best practice programs, innovative new approaches and strategies, new research and successful restructures of services that care for and support women and children to be safe and free from family violence. The conference was officially opened by Her Majesty Queen Maxima of the Netherlands and also attended by Princess Mary of Denmark who gave a moving presentation.

Australia’s Minister for Social Services Hon. Michaela Cash gave an inspiring and passionate Plenary Presentation showcasing the best of Australia’s programs and an overview of the National FV Action Plan 2015—2020. The Australian delegates were invited to a special meeting to meet the Minister to discuss current issues and share experiences.

New Shelter model in NL
A new women’s shelter approach has been implemented by the Blijf Group in response to women’s feedback about their shelter experience. This includes the issue of domestic violence is no longer hidden in an undisclosed location. An Oranje Huis is now visible and recognisable. In addition there is also a Domestic Violence Support Centre within the shelter, which means that all services are available collectively under one roof. An Oranje Huis is a place for advice, coordination, support and shelter and provides direct help for all family members (including men) emotionally impacted by the domestic violence.


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For a direct link to all conference presentations http://www.worldshelterconference.org/en/presentations/904/

FM 9 “Safe from the Start” is an evidenced based early intervention program that aims to improve the lives of children who have witnessed domestic violence.

Tony Turtle is a puppet that, like the children, lives in the shelter. Tony talks to the children about the power of doing nice things and memories.

Two approaches from different parts of the world. Organisations: Blijfgroep NL and Salvation Army Australia
**Men’s Violence Research Project**

The Salvation Army in partnership with the University of Tasmania, has conducted a research study titled: **“How can we increase men’s awareness that family violence has a harmful effect on their children?”**

This research conducted by Dr Peter Lucas commenced in 2015 and aimed to identify evidence-based resources currently being used in men’s behaviour change programs and other similar groups to increase men’s awareness about the possible harms that exposure to family and domestic violence can have on children. The intention was to develop a best practice education module, based on these resources, which could be used in a variety of settings.

The research showed that men who use violence against their partners are more likely to stop when they understand the impact on their children. Most fathers do not wish to harm their children and when informed of the damage can be motivated to change.

Research participants perceived a general lack of awareness about the issue in the wider community and made recommendations for how this could be addressed, including a proposal for a multi-faceted social marketing campaign. Participants also described what they thought should form the basis of any proposed best practice training module developed to raise awareness among men who use violence in family situations.

The final research report will be launched 26 April 2016 and a proposal for an action research project to trial new training strategies and resources has been lodged.

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**New Publications, Research, Websites**

**Caring Dads Helping Fathers Value their Children:** A Canadian program with information and resources  
www.caringdads.org

**Children’s exposure to domestic and family violence** Monica Campo CFCA Paper No. 36 - 2015  

**Engaging Men and Boys in Domestic Violence Prevention: Opportunities and Promising Approaches, 2013**  
www.preventdomesticviolence.ca

**Stereotypical Assumptions about a Perpetrator of Abuse**  
www.sophiasvoice.ca

**No to Violence** website: www.ntv.org.au

**Safe from the Start Resources**

**Donations and Grants**

The Salvation Army is very grateful for the ongoing support from local Tasmanian foundations, private sponsors and Commonwealth and State Government Departments. In the past year we have received a **2A4 Grant** that paid for the production of the Duluth Wheels and USB flashpens for training and a **Tasmanian Community Fund** grant for the UTAS men’s research project.

We gratefully acknowledge this support!