Domestic & Family Violence in Australia

Is Domestic Violence on the increase?
The SAFE from the START project continues to connect to Australian communities where there is growing concern about the increasing incidence of family violence and the impact on women and children. The latest statistics are alarming and being referred to as a national crisis. This year, the numbers of fatalities has increased from one to two murders a week as a result of family violence. This has jolted the Australian community into action.

A new CHAMPION has been announced - 2015 Australian of the Year - Rose Batty who could not be a more worthy and respected advocate to speak on the effects of family violence on women and children. It has come as a result of her own personal pain and loss that she now devotes her time to "Speaking Out" on family violence on a national platform.

This major focus on family violence has also engaged the media as part of a national campaign to expose what family violence is and how all Australians need to speak up, be aware of the impact and support all victims including children to prevent further injury and deaths.

Governments renewed commitment
All Governments at a State and Commonwealth level have made a strong bilateral stand against family violence. At a Commonwealth level funding for ANVARS and the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children is being implemented.

In Victoria, a Royal Commission at a cost of $41m has commenced, which demonstrates the Victorian Governments genuine intention to implement changes to improve the safety for women and children.

In Tasmania, a historical and political bipartisan Government approach resulted in the Minister, the Hon. Jacquie Petrusma, gaining support from both Labor and the Greens, all tabling motions in state Parliament on White Ribbon Day with all members endorsing the motion. Most other states are also embarking on campaigns to address concerns about the increasing incidence of family violence.

Updates of Family Violence Events
International 3rd World Conference of Women’s Shelters -The Hague, Netherlands

For information re registration refer to website: http://www.wave-network.org/content/3rd-world-conference-womens-shelters-netherlands-2015

The Salvation Army Tasmania— Safe from the Start project won a national HESTA award!

This Award was celebrated at a Dinner on June 25th, 2015 at the Sydney Town Hall.

Nell Kuilenburg, Manager, Safe from the Start project (second left) receiving HESTA Award 2015!

Safe from the Start presented at Conferences 2015

Nell Kuilenburg presented ‘Listening to the Voices of Children’ at Supporting Children & Young People Who Have Experienced Domestic & Family Violence Conference
Perth WA - March 2015

Dr Romy Winter UTAS and Nell Kuilenburg presented ‘Safe from the Start—working with men who use violence and the effect on their children’ at the Child Aware Conference

The Connect & Act to End Violence against women Global Network of Women’s Shelters are hosting an exciting conference bringing together workers from around the world to discuss, plan and act with strategies to bring back to their own country.
NEW Men’s Violence Research Project
Funded through the Tasmanian Community Fund, the University of Tasmania, in partnership with The Salvation Army is conducting a research study: How to educate men who use violence on the impact on their children? Men who commit 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 are motivated to change.

The World Café model has been implemented to engage the community to assist in solving the puzzle of how to raise awareness of the impact of family violence on children.

The key is focusing on positive solutions rather than blame and stigmatisation.

The project outcomes for fathers include:
♦ Have a greater understanding of the harmful impact on children of exposure to family violence
♦ Enjoy improved relationships with their children
♦ Enjoy a more rewarding and enriching parenting experience
♦ Use the evidence gathered by this research project to help them adopt alternatives to violence.
♦ Have a better understanding of services in their community that can support them to become better fathers

The final research report will include a training program, training resource tools and recommendations to Governments to address and include the impact of men’s violence on children in all policy statements and Family Violence Action Plans to address family violence within Australian communities.

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Training 2015
As a result of the ongoing concern about the impact of violence on children, requests to conduct the Safe from the Start one-day training program in all states has increased. The following locations have participated in training this year:
Newcastle facilitated by The Benevolent Society NSW
Wollongong facilitated by The Salvation Army NSW
Perth facilitated by The Salvation Army Perth WA
Wyong facilitated by Hunter Women’s Centre NSW
Derby facilitated by Anglicare Derby WA

Derby - Western Australia facilitated by Anglicare WA attended by 21 participants.

Two children’s books - Safe from the Start resource kit: ‘The Magic Beads’ and ‘On a Dark, Dark Night’ can be read with young children who have experienced family violence.

For further information
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