2014 News

Tribute to Erica Bell

Friends and colleagues of Dr Erica Bell were greatly saddened to learn of her unexpected passing on 26 July, 2014. The Salvation Army acknowledges the key role Erica played in the establishment of the award winning Safe from the Start project in 2006. Erica conducted the initial ‘States of Mind’ research that covered the impact of family violence on young children and conducted a number of subsequent project evaluations. She built the very successful partnership between UTAS and The Salvation Army and will be remembered as believing in the mission of our organisation and for her passion for improving the lives of children who have been hurt through witnessing family violence. She will greatly missed by all her colleagues and friends.

Domestic & Family Violence in Australia

For people working in family/domestic violence services there is increasing concern when we hear the alarming news of two young children killed by their father, a mother killed by her partner in front of her child, and a child killed by his father on an access visit on a public sports ground in a matter of weeks within Australia. These events call for a renewed urgent focus by Commonwealth and State Governments, the community and law enforcement to seriously question how these very sad events can still happen in 2014.

Australia has a National Domestic/Family Violence Action Plan 2010-2020 and a newly established National Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women based in Victoria. The aim of the Foundation is to address violence with a coordinated national voice, collaboration of the sector, gain the explicit support of the community and endorsement of government.

Whilst community education and awareness is evident there is a concerning silence in relation to owning the problem. The community must place the safety of children first and foremost in all responses to domestic and family violence.

Safe from the Start has continued to educate communities about the effects of violence on young children exposed to domestic and family violence. Most parents, including both mothers and fathers who are violent, are shocked to learn that witnessing domestic violence can affect their brain development and predisposes them to addiction or adopting violent behaviour themselves later in life.


NEW Men’s Violence Research Project

The Salvation Army, in partnership with the University of Tasmania, has been funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund to conduct a research study: ‘Men who use violence and educating how their violence impacts on their children’. This study will include:

- Mapping the scope of men's change abusive behaviour (CAB) programs in Australia
- How these programs can address educating abusive men about the impact of violence on their children
- A training module that can be incorporated into CAB programs within Australia
- A brochure for men re how to relate to their children’s needs and how to repair the damage
- Recommendations to Governments to include the impact of men’s violence on children in all Action Plans and policy statements including child protection, justice, mental health & alcohol and other drug addiction programs
- Statements from children affected by living with violence and how the voices of children can be heard by men who use violence.

For further details contact Nell Kuilenburg on 03 62288405

Success of Aboriginal Children’s Book

‘Little Jack the Wallaby’ has been widely distributed to Aboriginal services and those working with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children. It is now included in all Safe from the Start resource kits. The book has been reprinted three times with almost 3000 copies distributed throughout Australia.

The two newly published books: ‘When Daddy Hits the Table’ and ‘When Mummy Shouts’ are Aboriginal stories written by Tasmanian author Mary Koolhof and Auntie Eva Richardson and illustrated by Janet Fenton.

These books were written as a pair to acknowledge that both parents can display angry behaviour. The story starts by affirming that the parent loves them but also shows children living with an angry or violent parent can be scared and that by talking with a teacher at school, or to a grandparent who listens, it can help in the situation.

Books can be ordered via website
www.salvationarmy.org.au/safefromthestart

A child who lives with violence is forever changed, but not forever ‘damaged’ - and there is a lot we can do to improve their future prospects.” (Baker/Cunningham, 2007)
New Training Resource

An Australian DVD resource produced by LifeCare NSW, ‘Not in My House’, is now used in all training sessions. This is a series of short dramatised videos about how domestic violence harms women, children and relationships, regardless of cultural background.

The DVD is an excellent tool to highlight cultural aspects of domestic violence and can be used in men’s change behaviour programs and by other professionals working in domestic violence programs. The three scenario’s include:

• an indigenous family where the children are sent out of the room, they hide under the verandah but still hear the violence

• a family from another culture where violent behaviour and control is used daily within the marriage

• a working mum is controlled through cyber bullying behaviour, tracked through constant texting and following her to catch her out.

www.bcs.org.au/LifeCare/domesticviolence.aspx

Other News

Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Safe from the Start Project—The Phoenix Centre (a torture and trauma support service within the Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania) was funded through a Tasmanian Community Fund Grant, to conduct an action research CALD project. In partnership with The Salvation Army, the project identified CALD appropriate resources and developed a training module which will be integrated into current Salvation Army Safe from the Start training.

Dr Angela Spinney and Dr Pamela Leach conducted two days of training in Hobart & Launceston during June 2014. The final report can be accessed on the Safe from the Start website: www.salvationarmy.org.au/safefromthestart

Conferences

Safe from the Start continues to draw interest from a wide scope of service sectors including Child Protection, Domestic/ Family Violence Services, schools, children’s services, foster care, early childhood centres, counselling and therapeutic services, TAFE’s, child care, sexual assault services and students undertaking social work or psychology study.

International Indigenous Domestic Violence Conference - Cairns QLD - 8-10th December 2014.

Judith-Rose Thomas, a Tasmanian Aboriginal artist and illustrator of ‘Little Jack the Wallaby’ Aboriginal book and Nell Kuilenburg will present a Safe from the Start workshop at the conference.

www.indigenousconferences.com/

Training Evaluation

An evaluation of the National Child Aware training program was conducted by UTAS (Assoc. Prof Erica Bell) in 2013. The final report recommendations included integrating a greater awareness of Indigenous and Culturally & Linguistically Diverse families affected by family violence. Report available on website: www.salvationarmy.org.au/safefromthestart

New publication 2014

Family Violence from a Global Perspective – A Strengths-Based Approach. This interesting book is the first major text to focus on family violence in 17 different cultures providing a unique international perspective to reduce the incidence of violence.

From Surviving to Thriving: understanding and helping children experiencing family violence. This training resource is for professionals working with children experiencing family violence. www.benevolent.org.au/think/doing--things--differently/understanding--and--helping--kids--living--with--trauma--and--violence

Safe from the Start training 2014

Cairns: Thursday 11 December 2014—if you wish to attend training in Cairns please email jo.east@aus.salvationarmy.org

Cooktown: Friday 12 December 2014

Services or people wishing to register to attend training in Cooktown please email reception@cooktowndcc.org.au

New Resources for Children

“My brother Sam” is written for children who might be affected by sibling bullying or know someone who is. The story addresses bullying behaviour and encourages children to discuss their feelings and to seek help from someone they trust in order to feel safe.

“My Proud of our Feelings”

This book addresses a different emotion on each page and asks questions that help children learn to accept and appropriately express their emotions. It also helps stimulate discussion and interaction between children and adults.