

Portrait II

WOMEN & GIRLS IN GREATER SYDNEY

BUILDING SAFETY & INDEPENDENCE

A REPORT FOR SYDNEY WOMEN'S FUND - FEBRUARY 2015



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Community
Foundation



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Message from Sydney Women's Fund Advisory Council

This project follows on the groundbreaking *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney*.¹

The Sydney Women's Fund Advisory Council is honoured to have commissioned a second Portrait report in our series of comprehensive reports on women and girls in Greater Sydney.

The widely published statistics regarding violence against women in Australia are alarming and require response from community, government, corporate and philanthropic sectors.

Sydney Women's Fund's response to this ever present social issue in commissioning this report is to collate and present statistics and current actions being taken to combat violence against women and their children as an up to date evidence base for granting and advocacy on this issue.

The report has concluded that the biggest threat to safety is not random street violence, but violence perpetrated by partners and family, largely at home.

Despite the resources, research and policies implemented, there has been little if any reduction in the rates of domestic and family violence.

A report by the NSW Department of Family Services, *Women New South Wales – Snapshot 2014* has found the rate of domestic violence has remained constant since 2005 and the incidence is much higher for Aboriginal women. Underreporting remains a significant issue, because of the fear of further violence by the offender.

Better data is critical to assist the monitoring of target groups, particularly data about those women who are most likely to underreport, in order to develop strategies targeted at these groups.

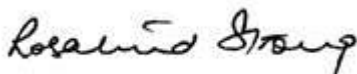
This second *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney* was commissioned to investigate the current situation and how philanthropy and leadership from Sydney Community Foundation and Sydney Women's Fund might contribute to increasing the safety and independence of women and their children and to preventing violence.

Portrait II furthers the aim of Sydney Women's Fund, to develop an agenda for social change philanthropy for women that is informed, strategic and monitored.

We will use the report to:

1. Inform and educate the community of Greater Sydney.
2. Promote philanthropy and giving to increase the safety and independence of women and children.
3. Facilitate action to gather better data to support funding to prevent violence and educate decision makers in public, private and non profit arenas so the future for women and children and our entire community can be better.

The Sydney Women's Fund acknowledges the dedicated and outstanding research of the Miller Group team led by Libby Darlison, and the assistance of the Reference Group who guided and informed this work.



Rosalind Strong AM

Chair Sydney Community Foundation and Sydney Women's Fund Advisory Council

¹ Ziller, A. and Delaney, E. (2012), *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney* commissioned by Sydney Women's Fund.

Message from Sydney Community Foundation

The terrible truth that has at last captured the attention of Australians is that each week in Australia, a woman loses her life at the hands of someone she knows, a family member, a partner or former partner.

This was the message of Natasha Stott Despoja AM, Australia's Commissioner for Women and Girls when she launched the national campaign 'Our Watch' in 2014 to stop violence against women and girls, and to enable all women and girls to live fulfilling and happy lives.

Her call that this violence is happening on our watch and that we need to stop it resonated with me.

This second *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney* was commissioned to enable philanthropy and leadership from Sydney Women's Fund.

Sydney Women's Fund has a number of roles. Its charter is to support every woman and girl to thrive. Building safety is essential.

The first *Portrait* report, identified the relative need of women and girls in Western Sydney. *Mapping Philanthropic Investment in Western and South Western Sydney*² uncovered that only 2% of philanthropic giving was donated to support grassroots organisations in Western Sydney as compared to national averages for NFP's who received 10% of philanthropic funding.

This research led to Sydney Community Foundation's partnership with the New South Wales Government to deliver a place-based program for women and girls in Western and South Western Sydney.

Portrait II: Women and Girls in Greater Sydney - Building Safety and Independence was commissioned by Sydney Women's Fund in 2014 and written by a research team led by Libby Darlison, of the Miller Group, with Lee Cupitt as researcher. The scope was set with the careful guidance of a Reference Group whom I wish to thank. Their valuable input brought decades of experience from the field to this report.

In 2013, NSW Police reported at the White Ribbon Conference that in 2011-12 only 35% of incidents of domestic were reported.³ Even so there were 135,000 domestic and family violence incidents reported to NSW police alone. This means 400,000 incidents affecting women and children in NSW annually.

Portrait II shines a light on successful programs and new approaches to combatting violence in Australia. It shares ideas that could be adopted and adapted from one state of Australia.

Violence against women and children is not unique to Australia although it is shocking to read:

"One in six women has experienced physical abuse by a current or former partner" as quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald on Australia Day 2015 when anti-violence campaigner Rosie Batty, whose child was murdered on an access visit with his father, her former partner, was made Australian of the Year.

² ACA Research and Sydney Community Foundation (2013). *Mapping Philanthropic Investment in South Western and Western Sydney*.

³ Assistant Commissioner Mark Murdoch speaking at White Ribbon Conference in May 2013.

Portrait II Five Key Actions for Sydney Community Foundation's Women's Fund

1. Advocacy for philanthropy to support violence prevention and increasing safety and independence through carefully targeted giving.
2. Support for innovation in prevention programs for young boys, youth and men to improve relationships based on respect, changing attitudes to women and to violence.
3. Advocacy for services to meet the dramatic growth in homeless women over fifty who need women's support services across Greater Sydney.
4. Encouraging service providers in Greater Sydney to convene and collaborate to better meet current needs.
5. Investigating *The Day to Count*; a single day of counting all reports of violence across Greater Sydney as a government and not for profit partnership action.

Increasing Safety for Women and Preventing Violence must become an increased focus of philanthropic giving in Sydney.

Billions are granted from Australian philanthropists each year. JBWere estimate \$4 billion is invested in private philanthropic funds in Australia.⁴ Their report states 42% of the private philanthropy funds in Australia are in NSW.

We call on philanthropists to give to support women and children experiencing violence in all its forms. The human cost of violence at home is devastating. The broader social impacts work against the kind of community Sydney Community Foundation seeks to foster: a city where everyone can participate, contribute, belong and feel safe.

This report refers to the financial implications of domestic violence. Research conducted by KPMG in 2009, *The Cost of Violence Against Women and Their Children* found that violence against women and children cost the Australian economy in 2009 an estimated \$13.6 billion.

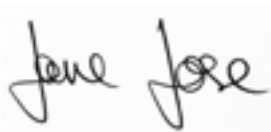
The KPMG Report found that without appropriate action an estimated three quarters of a million Australian women will experience violence in the period 2021-22, costing the Australian economy an estimated \$15.6 billion.

What is shocking and sad is that this *Portrait II* confirms the majority of violence happens at home and is witnessed by children.

It is an issue that affects Aboriginal women and children in larger number than across other groups in the community, yet *Portrait II* notes it crosses socio-economic boundaries, occurs in a range of ways and in every kind of relationship. Secret truths of violence in families are often hidden because of shame.

I thank everyone who has contributed to this report. I particularly wish to thank Libby Darlison and the members of the *Portrait II* Reference Group for their candid advice and critical review.

This is a problem we need to solve together. Philanthropy can help make Sydney a better place to live for all of us and safer for the most vulnerable – women and children.



Jane Jose
CEO, Sydney Community Foundation

⁴ McLeod, J. (Dec 2014). JBWere, *The PAF Report- record fund numbers and distributions*.

Geography Greater Sydney

For this report we define Greater Sydney as all of the Sydney Metropolitan Area, comprising diverse communities that ring Global Sydney. It extends from Campbelltown in the south to the Northern Suburbs, Gosford and the Central Coast in the north and to Penrith in the west.

East to west it extends from the coast to the Blue Mountains and north to south from the Hawkesbury River to the Illawarra Escarpment.

Alison Ziller, author of *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney 2012*, wrote in that report; “while the idea of Greater Sydney exists, a definition of it that is widely used does not.”

Executive Summary

This Report was commissioned by Sydney Women's Fund (SWF), part of the Sydney Community Foundation (SCF), to review the research, and the initiatives flowing from that research which address the fact that many women and girls continue to experience a range of gender-based disadvantages and risks to safety, including rising rates of domestic and sexual violence and homelessness.

SWF has already undertaken research which demonstrates that, in Greater Sydney, there is a strong gradient of gender-based domestic violence⁵, with the highest rates occurring in local government areas with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage. More recent research suggests however, that domestic and family violence, while possibly manifesting differently, is not specific to any one group or class of women - although particular groups of women - particularly indigenous women - remain overrepresented in the statistics.

SWF wishes to build on the work it has already undertaken to identify and to implement - with its government, philanthropic and non-government partners - initiatives for improving the safety and independence of women and girls in the Greater Sydney area.

The Report summarises recent research on safety for women and girls in Australia and concludes that the biggest threat to safety is not random street violence - but violence perpetrated by partners and family, largely in the home - i.e. domestic and family violence. The research outlines the many 'at risk' target groups and many of the current policies, strategies and initiatives - both government and non-government - in place, or about to be implemented.

The Report argues that domestic and family violence remains the dominant issue in the ability of women and girls to live without control and domination, due to threats of intimidation and acts of violence. It identifies innovative yet practical initiatives that SWF might undertake to extend its work in the field of improving safety and independence for women and girls in Greater Sydney.

The recommendations suggested for consideration cannot be done by SWF alone. SWF will have the greatest impact on improving safety for women and girls by working with its philanthropic, government and non-government partners to implement initiatives that are innovative, evidence-based and that address the purpose and priorities of all partners. It is also suggested that initiatives meet specific criteria and extend over a three year period - as a minimum - to ensure continuity and sustainability and to measure ongoing impact.

Recommendations for initiatives to support women and girls include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Improving relationships based on respect - with **young people**
- Improving access to services - particularly **for older women, Aboriginal and CALD women**
- Extending **support services** for women at risk of or experiencing domestic violence
- Working with **men and boys**
- Strengthening national **data collection**
- Improving **coordination of services** in a particular region or regions
- Additional training on safety and on sexual ethics for **workers**
- Addressing **online abuse** impacting on perceptions of safety
- Creating a **crowd funding** initiative to raise funds and awareness

⁵ See *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney*. Ibid.

1.0 Introduction

Portrait II – Looking at Safety

Sydney Women's Fund (SWF), is extending the research study it conducted in 2012 - *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney*⁶. The Portrait presented an initial profile from published data of issues in the lives of women and girls in Sydney. The Study states plainly that **'The story of women and girls in Greater Sydney is a story about inequality'**. Inequality impacts on all women and girls, but as the Portrait demonstrates, its impact is felt more on some groups than others because of geographic, cultural and socio-economic disadvantages, including lack of access to supports. *Portrait I* also found there is a strong gradient of gender based domestic violence across Greater Sydney, with the highest rates occurring in local government areas with the greatest socio-economic disadvantage.

More recent research⁷ suggests that domestic violence cuts across socio-economic boundaries. Women with greater socio-economic advantage may experience more emotional, psycho-social and less physical violence, and may also be less likely to report incidents. **Either way, being female remains the major risk factor in becoming a victim of domestic and family violence.**

Risks to women's and girl's safety are present in both the private and the public domains. However, one area of risk that remains a challenge for everyone wishing to contribute to the safety of women and girls, particularly the most disadvantaged of the 3 million women and girls living in Greater Sydney, is the challenge of reducing rates of *domestic and family violence*⁸.

Sydney Women's Fund can play a valuable role to improve safety for women and girls. This report enables SCF and SWF to use an evidence base to deliver philanthropic funding to advocacy, projects and programs that directly reduce violence against women and girls and provide increased safety. As a facilitator SWF has compiled this report with input of decades of expertise from women leaders in the field of women's safety. A collective approach is seen as most likely to achieve the greatest results in shifting the needle to improved safety for women and girls and is now a national focus. The recommendations of this report require partnerships. The report identifies those areas where the Sydney Women's Fund might best focus its influence and energy. No one organisation operating alone will achieve major change on this ever present and urgent problem.

6 *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney* argues that 'while the idea of Greater Sydney exists, a definition of it does not'.....'there is no agreed boundary to the idea of Greater Sydney'. For the purposes of this Report we have defined Greater Sydney as all of the Sydney Metropolitan Area. It comprises the diverse suburban communities that ring Global Sydney from Campbelltown in the South to the Northern suburbs, Gosford and the Central Coast in the North and Penrith in the West.

7 See for example:

Powell, A. (2014), *Gender, culture and class collude in violence against women, The Conversation*; Berg, K. (2014), Cultural Factors in the Treatment of Battered Women With Privilege: Domestic Violence in the Lives of White European-American, Middle-Class, Heterosexual Women *AFFILIA: Journal of Women and Social Work (AFF)*; Mouzos, J. and Makkai, T. (2004) Women's Experiences of Male Violence: Findings from the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS), *Australian Institute of Criminology, Research and Public Policy Series, No. 56*.

8 Australian women are most likely to experience physical and sexual violence in their home at the hands of a male current or ex-partner. The 2.5 percent increase in incidents of domestic violence over the past two years meant it was one of only two major crime categories to go up in the latest NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research figures. The other increase was for fraud.

2.0 Context

2.1 Prevalence of Violence Against Women and Girls

Domestic and family violence remain the most common form of violence impacting on the safety of women and girls in Australia. *The 2013 National Attitude Survey Towards Violence Against Women* (Vic Health, 2014)⁹ found that more than one in three women in Australia (39%) aged over 18 have experienced violence at the hands of a man since the age of 15 (ABS 2013); 32% have experienced physical violence, and 19% have experienced sexual violence (ABS, customised report, 2014).

One in five (22%) Australian women aged 15 to 64 have also been the target of sexual harassment and in an Australian survey of 400 pregnant women, 20% had experienced violence during pregnancy (Walsh 2008).

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is not just about physical violence. Domestic violence includes: emotional abuse, verbal abuse; social abuse (isolation from family and friends); economic abuse (controlling financial choices); psychological abuse; spiritual abuse (denial and/or misuse of religious beliefs); physical abuse and sexual abuse. These forms of abusive and manipulative behaviours are about maintaining power and control of women by male abusers. (Mullender and Morley 1994).

Whereas men's homelessness is primarily caused by factors such as mental illness and substance abuse, domestic violence is the main contributor to women's homelessness. In 2009-10 Australian women constituted the overwhelming majority (96%, n=31,800) of homelessness service clients for whom domestic violence was identified as the main pathway into homelessness.¹⁰

2.2 Who is Most At-Risk?

To understand women's and girl's exposure to violence, it is important to look at the research which identifies those groups most at risk.

The most comprehensive report on the issue of violence and high risk groups was recently published by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) *Groups and Communities at Risk of Domestic and Family Violence* (Tayton et.al, 2014). While underscoring the fact that none of these groups is homogeneous, the Report identifies high 'at-risk' groups in the Australian context as:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women
- Women with disabilities and mental ill health
- Young women,
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ)
- Women living in regional, rural and remote (non-urban) communities.

⁹ The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey was developed by VicHealth in partnership with The University of Melbourne, the Social Research Centre and experts across Australia, and supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services as part of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*.

This is the third survey of its kind, with the first undertaken in 1995 and the second in 2009.

¹⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2011, p. 256.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women

While the availability of statistics and research on the extent and nature of family violence in Indigenous communities is patchy there is a growing body of evidence - summarised by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety - to reduce violence against women and their children (ANROWS) - showing that Indigenous women experience higher rates of domestic and family violence than other women.

For example:

- Indigenous females are five times more likely to be the victims of homicide than non-Indigenous females.
- 55% of the 60 Indigenous homicide victims were killed in a domestic homicide which includes 42% that were intimate partner homicides.
- Based on the results of the Australian component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (2004) found that found that:
 - 20% of Indigenous women experienced physical violence in the last 12 months, compared to 7% of non-Indigenous women.
 - 12% of Indigenous women compared to 4% of non-Indigenous women had experienced sexual violence in the previous year.
 - 25% of Indigenous women compared to 10% of non-Indigenous women had experienced some kind of violence in the previous year.

According to research included in a recent overview of domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia¹¹ (2014) *'Indigenous people experience violence at rates that are typically double or more than those experienced by non-Indigenous people, and this can be much higher in some remote communities. Indigenous women in particular are far more likely to experience violence, and to endure more serious violence than non-Indigenous women. For example, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) data from 2001–2010 indicate that the rate of domestic assault reported to police is more than six times higher for Indigenous women and more than four times higher for Indigenous men when compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts'*¹².

Like other 'at risk' groups there is strong evidence that suggests Indigenous women are likely to underreport their experience of domestic violence, for all or some of the following reasons:

- Fear of repercussions and consequences, particularly in small, interconnected and isolated communities where anonymity cannot be maintained
- Fear and distrust of police, the justice system and other government agencies. Many Indigenous people experience anxiety when they are compelled to engage with police and welfare agencies
- Cultural considerations and coercion—the interconnectedness of Indigenous society and the rules and obligations that are part of it may also operate against disclosure; factors such as shame and responsibility for maintaining families may lead to Indigenous women internalising their suffering, and,
- Lack of awareness of or access to support services

¹¹ Phillips, J and Vandenbroek, P (2014) *Domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia: an overview of the issues*, Parliamentary Library, Research Papers, 2014–2015

¹² Ibid.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Women

There are few organisations in Greater Sydney specifically assisting CALD women experiencing domestic and family violence¹³. The majority of organisations that do provide such a service must also provide a range of other services such as all aspects of health care – including preventative health care – employment, education and training. Services are stretched and two key services, NESW Housing Network and Immigrant Women's Speak Out are at risk of losing their funding in the near future.

In 2011, in a national update¹⁴ of challenges for CALD women experiencing domestic and family violence, services around the country working with CALD women on these issues were asked about current and emerging issues for their clients. The issues identified confirmed those that had already been identified by researchers and services providers for many years. They included: a lack of proficiency in English; family and community pressure to keep the family together; lack of support networks; a lack of understanding of their rights and where to go for help; and a lack of financial support. It is particularly this last factor that is of grave concern to support services and advocates working with CALD women.

CALD women who are victims of domestic and family violence, and who are without income support, are also at high risk of homelessness, as they may be unable to access the private rental market and are reluctant or do not have the financial resources to access refuges and supported accommodation.

For these reasons alone CALD women may not report incidents of domestic violence – however this is particularly the case for those women on temporary visas.¹⁵ (Allimant, 2011 and 2005); There is also research that indicates that women from CALD backgrounds are reluctant to report violence against them because of the threat of deportation (Lay, 2006; Taylor & Putt, 2007). Many women fear they may be sent back to their country of origin and face further, and perhaps increased, persecution. Their lack of access to accurate information compounds the fear (Blackburn, 2005).

Women with a Disability

While comprehensive information about domestic and family violence experienced by people with a disability is limited, available research suggests that women with a disability experience significantly higher levels of violence than other women, and face greater challenges accessing support and assistance. For example:

- Violence against people with a disability, especially women with a disability, is far more extensive than violence amongst the general population.
- Ninety percent of Australian women with an intellectual disability have been subjected to sexual assault, domestic violence and other forms of violence, than other women and girls
- There is no national, coordinated legislation to prevent and address violence against people with a disability, including family/domestic violence.¹⁶

¹³ For example while all Women's Health Services provide assistance to CALD women experiencing domestic and family violence they are not a specialist CALD service such as the Immigrant Women's Health Service.

¹⁴ See Pham, A. 2011 National Update : A glance at services supporting migrant and refugee women experiencing domestic and family violence, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House, Newsletter 44, Autumn 2011.

¹⁵ Women from CALD backgrounds who have been sponsored to come to Australia or hold a visa with limited rights may have no access to health care or income support and may not be eligible to work while their applications for residency are being considered, which may take months or years. See M Bonar and D Roberts, A review of literature relating to family and domestic violence in culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia, Western Australia Department for Communities, Perth, 2006 and Morgan and H Chadwick, Key issues in domestic violence, Summary paper, no. 7, Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), Canberra, December 2009, p. 1, viewed 28 October 2010, http://www.aic.gov.au/documents/5/6/E/%7B56E09295-AF88-4998-A083-B7CCD925B540%7Drip07_001.pdf

¹⁶ Australian Government (2012) 'Responses by Australia to the recommendations contained in the concluding observations of the Committee following the examination of the combined sixth and seventh periodic report of Australia on 20 July 2010.' CEDAW <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/CEDAWC.AUL.CO.7.Add.1.pdf>

Drawing on commissioned and other research, Women With Disabilities Australia has developed and published a Fact Sheet that clearly demonstrates the 'at risk' status of women with a disability with regard to the experience of domestic, family and sexual violence.¹⁷

Some of the key findings include:

- More than a quarter of rape cases reported by females in Australia are perpetrated against women with a disability.
- Ninety percent of Australian women with an intellectual disability have been subjected to sexual abuse, with more than two-thirds (68%) having been sexually abused before they turn 18 years of age.
- Women and girls with a disability have far less chance of being believed when reporting sexual assault, domestic violence, and other forms of violence, than other women and girls.
- Women and girls with a disability have far less chance of being believed when reporting sexual assault, domestic violence, and other forms of violence, than other women and girls.

Recently, coordinated by Women With Disabilities Australia, more than 95 organisations in the Australian disability and community sector publicly endorsed a proposal for a national inquiry into violence, not only, but especially sexual violence against people with a disability.

Older Women

Again, although the research is limited, it appears that age is becoming an increasing risk with respect to exposure to domestic and family violence - especially but not only, financial abuse of older people, and older women in particular. Evidence suggests that the majority of older people who are victims of physical, sexual or financial abuse are long term victims of abuse, often perpetrated by a partner who is in a duty of care relationship with the victim (WESNET 2000). This situation is particularly challenging for older women partly because up to 90 percent of abusers of older people are close family (Kurrie, 2004) and because the relationship between abuse of older women and homelessness is growing. (McFerran (2010)

Boldy's (2002) research on elder abuse in Western Australia found that between one fifth and one-quarter of elderly abuse incidents are committed by the victim's spouse or partner and both Boldy and Perri et. al. (2008) found that risk factors include diminished decision making capacity and disability.¹⁸

Compounding this situation is research suggesting that older victims, along with those who are married and victims of assaults that did not involve weapons or serious injury, are less likely to report (Grech & Burgess 2011).

Older females seeking social and public housing are much more likely (40%) than their younger counterparts to cite domestic violence as their primary reason for seeking supported accommodation (Lai, 2003). An ABS report¹⁹ (2006) found that 26 percent of women aged 55 years and over had experienced violence from their current partner, and older women are much more likely to be long term victims of domestic and family violence (Morgan and Chadwick 2009).

¹⁷ Fact Sheet: Violence Against Women With Disabilities Prepared by Carolyn Frohmader, Women With Disabilities Australia, Australian Civil Society Delegation to the 53rd Session of the Committee Against Torture, Geneva, November, 2014

¹⁸ National Campaign to End Violence and Abuse against People with Disability in Residential and Institutional Settings: 'Letter to the Australian Prime Minister, Hon. Tony Abbott' (January 2015)

¹⁹ See ABS personal Safety Survey (PSS) 2006

Young Women

ABS and the *International Violence against Women Survey (IVAWS)* data indicate that younger women are more likely to have recently experienced violence than older women. The ABS 2012 Personal Safety Survey found that 13 per cent of women aged 18 to 24 years had experienced violence in the 12 months prior to the survey, a rate decreasing with age to less than 2 per cent of women aged 55 years and over. The 2005 survey found a similar proportion of young women (12 per cent) experienced at least one incident of violence in the previous 12 months.

While the IVAWS survey employed broader definitions of violence, the pattern was the same: younger women were victimised disproportionately. Current intimate partner violence in the previous 12 months was highest for women aged 15 to 24 years (5 per cent), dropping to 1 per cent of women aged 55 to 69 years.

Earlier research found that about one in three young people aged 12 to 20 years who had had a boyfriend or girlfriend, reported physical violence in their personal relationships. Reports of such physical violence increased with age to 42 per cent of women aged 19 to 20 years. While rates for men were similar, women were at least four times as likely to have been frightened by the experience. Young women also reported sexual assault at almost five times the rate of young men—14 per cent compared to 3 per cent—with figures highest amongst women aged 19 to 20 years (20 per cent).

In the *2009 National Survey on Community Attitudes to Violence against Women*, young people indicated that they had a strong understanding of the criminal nature of domestic violence. However they were less likely than older respondents to understand complex aspects of violence in relationships such as the range and seriousness of behaviour that constitutes domestic violence, if and when it can be excused, and who is most likely to have this experience. They were also more likely than older people to agree with some misconceptions about sexual assault, for example that it is usually perpetrated by strangers.

More worrying in this age group is earlier research (2001) which indicated that pro-violence attitudes and acceptance of some violence in a relationship as normal were held by young men and that these attitudes were greatest in the youngest age group (12 to 14 years) and decreased with age. There is current research which suggests that this attitude has changed little, if at all, over the past 10 years.²⁰

Family breakdown is the most common reason why young girls leave home. This puts them at immediate risk of violence on the streets. Service providers dealing with young people, especially young women and DV cannot meet the demand for services.

The Young People and Domestic Violence Survey (2001) found young people had witnessed similar levels of physical violence against both their parents, with 23.4% of respondents reporting at least one act of physical violence against their mother/stepmother and 22.1% against their father/stepfather (National Crime Prevention 2001, pp. 96-97). This pattern was reflected in young people's own relationships, with 36% of young women and 37% of young men having experienced physical violence from a dating partner. However, respondents were more likely to report witnessing more serious forms of male parental violence towards their mothers/stepmothers than vice versa.

In the light of these facts, the sector dealing with vulnerable young people in NSW is advocating to the NSW Government to focus more strongly on prevention and early intervention initiatives and programs.

²⁰ Interview with Youth Action (formerly YAPA) the peak body in NSW representing the interests of young people, Youth Action and White Ribbon are about to publish the largest piece of research on the attitudes to domestic and family violence and sexual assault since 1999. Over 3,600 young people were surveyed nationally. It was not possible to include the research results in this paper as they have not yet been publicly released. One of Youth Action's greatest concerns however is the continuing poor attitude of young men towards domestic violence and the perpetuation of myths such as 'men are better at all things than women' and women like men who are in charge'.

With respect to family and domestic violence this means a focus on the expansion of 'respectful relationship' programs in schools and in other settings such as those NGOs with a focus on young people.²¹ Youth Action points out that *'of the nearly \$1.6 billion the NSW Government spends each year on vulnerable youth, less than 17% is spent on early intervention and prevention programs. While the \$1.3 billion spent on Out-of-Home Care and Statutory Child Protection is necessary to respond to young people in crisis, the limited percentage allocated to Targeted Earlier Intervention contradicts the overwhelming evidence of international and Australian research. This research demonstrates that early intervention and prevention programs are fundamentally better long-term solutions for helping vulnerable youth'*²²

Youth Action has recently partnered with White Ribbon to undertake a large piece of research on the experience of and attitudes of young people towards domestic and family violence.²³

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) People

Historically domestic violence in the LGBTIQ community, has not had a high profile or a strong research focus²⁴, however it is an issue which is now well recognised as no less important in terms of its damaging effects in this community, as in any other. For example more than one-third of women identifying as lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex have been in a relationship where their partner abused them. (Pitts et al 2006)

Given the 'diversity of genders' in this group, and, as Fileborn(2012) points out, because most large scale surveys do not take into consideration participant's sexuality or gender (other than according to a male/female binary, where the sex and gender identity are often conflated) it is difficult to gauge the full extent of sexual violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities.²⁵ LGBTIQ people also experience a broader range of sexual and gender-based violence including: homophobic and transphobic violence; gender-based violence and violence in same-sex relationships, than heterosexual people.

As with other 'most at risk groups' there are limited services available for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) people and diminishing funding sources.

The AIDS Council of NSW (ACON) has received federal funding to develop and run an anti –violence program (AVP) which provides assistance for LGBTIQ people experiencing domestic or family violence, or other forms of violence such as homophobic or transphobic violence. As part of this Project ACON works with and trains a variety of services including the NSW Police Force, other government agencies, and mainstream and LGBTIQ community organisations. The AVP also runs campaigns and programs promoting community safety, engaging communities and responding to community needs. Examples include; This is Oz, volunteer Ambassador projects , Safe Place and the Speak Up reporting campaign.

Funding for the AVP is due to finish in June 2015 and at this stage there are no other funding options available.

21 One such successful program is Love Bites – a school-based domestic and family violence and sexual assault prevention program for 15-17 year olds delivered by the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN). Other prevention programs – especially those that aim to engage younger children, both in school and in other locations, are discussed throughout this Report

22 Youth Action NSW 2015 Election Campaign – Early Intervention and Prevention

23 Ibid.

24 See Jeffries S & Ball M 2008. *Male same-sex intimate partner violence: A descriptive review and call for further research*. eLaw Journal 15(1): 134–179. https://elaw.murdoch.edu.au/archives/issues/2008/elaw_15_1_Jeffries_Ball.pdf

25 See Lhmond & Saurel-Cubizolles, 2006; J Todahl et al. 2009, in Fileborn, B. *Sexual violence and gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, intersex, and queer communities*, ASSA resource Sheet 2012).

The other service that provides assistance for LGBTIQ people experiencing family and domestic violence is the Inner City Legal Centre (ICLC). The Inner City Legal Centre (ICLC) is a non-profit community based legal centre that has been providing free legal services to LGBTIQ communities – in particular, but not only, free domestic violence court assistance.

The ICLC does this work through its Safe Relationship Project which is funded from the Public Purpose Fund (PPF).²⁶

A small LGBTIQ Interagency, chaired by the LGBTIQ officer from the City of Sydney, has been established. The Interagency has recently undertaken a large LGBTIQ DV survey to assess the extent of domestic and family violence in the community and the impact it is having.²⁷

Women in Remote and Rural Areas

Although the focus of this Report is on women and girls in Greater Sydney, it is important to note that women living in remote and rural areas are a high risk group with respect to domestic and family violence. For all women living in remote and rural areas, access to independent services can be limited due to their geographical isolation, and the limited availability of resources in local areas (NSW Office for Women's Policy 2008). This is even more so for Indigenous and CALD women, and women with disabilities, for the reasons cited above.

An extensive literature review (2002) on the 'epidemiology of violence in rural and remote Australia and resources to the management of violence' commissioned by The Health Advisory Committee (HAC) of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) found that in relation to violence in rural and remote Australia overall, the literature indicated that:

- Domestic/family violence in all its forms accounts for by far the greatest proportion of violence in rural and remote Australia;
- There are higher rates of domestic/family violence in rural and remote Australia than in other areas, particularly in Indigenous communities.
- Women in rural and remote Australia experience domestic violence at greater rates than men;

The remoteness of some areas attracts only few trained professionals which limits the availability of important services and inhibits service delivery. It also raises issues with respect to maintaining confidentiality and safety (NCRVWC 2009a). These factors together serve to compound the isolation victims already experience as part of the abuse.

Survivors of Childhood Abuse

In Australia the ABS has collaborated with the International Violence Against Women Survey (2004) published by the Australian Institute of Criminology. The Survey found that women who experienced abuse during childhood were one and a half times more likely to experience violence in adulthood than those who had not experienced abuse during childhood.

Overall, women at the highest risk for domestic and family violence lack effective services, or where those services do exist, their access is limited. Many also experience a double disadvantage as they fall into two or more high risk groups, e.g. older women with a disability or Indigenous women living in remote areas as examples.

²⁶ The Public Purpose Fund is a fund which provides money from interest from solicitor's Trust Funds, however, given that interest rates are very low and unlikely to rise in the near future there is little money coming in from the PPF to fund the Safe Relationship Project

²⁷ As with the White Ribbon – Youth Action research, the results of the LGBTIQ DV survey will be published shortly after this Report is completed and could therefore not be included.

3.0 The Landscape

Summary of Current National Initiatives for Women's Safety

Australian Government Policy

The Australian Government's Policy Framework on violence against women - *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Children 2010-2022* - was developed by the Department of Social Services and consists of two Action Plans.

The First Action Plan: *Building a Stronger Foundation 2010-2013* - laid a foundation for long-term change nationally. It included the establishment of essential national-level infrastructure to inform future policy. The key initiatives included the establishment of:

- Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety - to reduce violence against women and their children (ANROWS);
- Our Watch, and;
- The Line Social Marketing Campaign.

In addition Australia's first national professional telephone and on line counselling service for people experiencing domestic violence and sexual assault was established²⁸.

The Second Action Plan, *'Moving Ahead 2013-2016'* (2014), recognises that domestic and family violence and sexual assault cannot be considered in isolation. The Plan aims to strengthen links with other national reforms to achieve a holistic response to reducing violence against women and children.

The Plan contains five national priorities and 26 actions that all governments agree are critical in reducing violence against women and children. The national priorities are:

1. Driving whole of community action to prevent violence
2. Understanding diverse experiences of violence
3. Supporting innovative services and integrated systems
4. Improving perpetrator interventions
5. Continuing to build the evidence base

Research undertaken for the latest *National Community Attitude Toward Violence Against Women Survey 2013*, (NCAS) showed there has been a consistent improvement in attitudes to domestic violence since the publication of the first survey in 1995. The 2013 survey demonstrates that the majority of Australians have a good knowledge of violence against women and do not endorse attitudes supportive of violence. However, despite overall improvement, young people's attitudes remain an area of concern. **Young people were found to have more accepting attitudes to violence – particularly young men.** The survey also found that negative attitudes to gender equality significantly correlates with attitudes to violence.

In addition to current research into prevalence, attitudes and service delivery, a significant study is underway by the Department of Finance and Administration on the prevalence and impact of domestic violence in Australia. The study looks particularly at the impact on women with disabilities and women of Aboriginal and Torres Strait background. The study will review policy frameworks, assess factors that contribute to domestic and family violence and identify ways in which the federal government can best support behavioural shifts. The researchers are due to report in 2015.

²⁸ Men can also use this service to report domestic violence or sexual assault.

A report into the financial implications of domestic violence was conducted by KPMG in 2009. **The KPMG Report - “The Cost of Violence Against Women and Their Children” found that violence against women and children cost the Australian economy an estimated \$13.6 billion in 2009.** The KPMG Report found that without appropriate action an estimated three quarters of a million **Australian women will experience violence in the period 2021-22, costing the Australian economy an estimated \$15.6 billion.**

The KPMG Report also states that if the National Plan of Action 2010-2022, resulted in an average reduction of violence against women and children of just 10 percent by 2021-22 this would result in a saving of approximately \$1.6 billion. These figures are likely to be indicative only as the Report captures **reported** incidences of violence - **unreported** incidences are not included.

The extent of underreporting is unknown and of major concern.

Using ABS data, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research found that less than half of all respondents who had been the victim of a domestic assault in the previous 12 months reported the incident to the police. Older victims, those who were married to the perpetrator, and victims of assaults that did not involve weapons or serious injury were less likely to report to police.

“Safe at Home” is a recently implemented national strategy that is part of an integrated, multi-agency approach. The Strategy enables women and children to stay home while the perpetrator is removed. All Australian jurisdictions can require the perpetrator to find other accommodation, while leaving women and children in their home, thus reducing the threat of homelessness.²⁹

Recent National Initiatives

In 2013 Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety - to reduce violence against women and their children (ANROWS) was established. ANROWS is an independent not-for-profit company established as an initiative under the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022. ANROWS' purpose is 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.’*³⁰

ANROWS's core funding (\$3 million per annum for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2016) is provided by the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments on a pro-rata, cost-sharing basis. The core grant provides research services reflecting the National Research Agenda to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, and prioritised in consultation with the jurisdictions.

Aligned with ANROWS's purpose and research priorities 2014 -2015³¹, 5 strategic research themes have been identified for the financial years 2014 -2016: they are:

1. Experience and impacts
2. Gender inequality and primary prevention
3. Service responses and interventions
4. Systems
5. Research translation and evaluation

ANROWS has recently announced funding for 20 programs across each of these themes and will announce further projects in 2015 which will focus primarily on perpetrator intervention themes.

Funding amounts range between \$50k to \$300k per organisation and timelines for completion are between 6 months to 3 years.³²

²⁹ NSW has a similar program (Staying Home Leaving Violence) operating across the State in 18 locations. The Staying Home Leaving Violence program helps women and children escaping domestic violence to remain safely in their homes. Services funded under the program work with the police and courts to remove the violent family member so that if she chooses, the victim and children can stay in the home. Clients receive support services ranging from practical assistance such as installing security measures in their homes, and help with financial, legal and personal problems.

³⁰ ANROWS Annual Report; 12 February 2013 - 30 June 2014

³¹ Released May 2014

³² Details of the projects and the individuals and institutions awarded grants can be found the publication *ANROWS Research Program 2014 -16 (Part 1)*. See <http://anrows.org.au/research-program/research-program-2014-16>.

New South Wales Initiatives³³

2010 - Domestic Violence Death Review Team

In 2010 The Domestic Violence Death Review Team (DVDRT) was established under the Coroners Act 2009 (NSW) to systematically review deaths occurring in the context of domestic violence in New South Wales.

The DVDRT is a multi-agency committee that undertakes comprehensive analyses of deaths occurring in a context of domestic violence to identify trends and patterns, highlight limitations or weaknesses in service delivery, and make recommendations to rectify such limitations.

The DVDRT aims to develop and promote domestic violence intervention and prevention strategies so as to reduce the likelihood of deaths occurring in similar circumstances in the future.

The functions of the DVDRT are to:

- Review closed cases of domestic violence deaths occurring in NSW;
- Analyse data to identify patterns and trends relating to such deaths;
- Make recommendations as to legislation, policies practices and services for implementation by government and non-government agencies and the community prevent or reduce the likelihood of such deaths;
- Establish and maintain a database about such deaths; and
- Undertake, alone or with others, research that aims to help prevent or reduce the likelihood of such deaths.

The DVDRT reports to the NSW Parliament, setting out findings from the quantitative and qualitative case analyses and presenting recommendations derived from those studies and other research.³⁴

2014 - It Stops Here

The recently launched NSW policy – *It Stops Here: Standing Together to End Domestic and Family Violence* (2014) is designed to reduce family and domestic violence by improving the response of government and non-government agencies across NSW. The Policy was developed in conjunction with the Domestic Violence Justice Strategy and aims to promote:

- A common understanding of and response to domestic and family violence
- Research and development of activities to support men, women and children and young people to understand and develop respectful relationships
- Improve consistency and effectiveness of referral pathways and service coordination
- On the ground activities such as minimum standards
- Training to support workers implementing reforms.

³³ National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (NCRVWC) 2009a. Background paper to time for action: *The National Council's plan for Australia to reduce violence against women and their children, 2009–2021*. Although now somewhat out of date the paper provides an excellent overview of policies and initiatives – including 'small scale initiatives with a prevention focus and agency costs - most of which are 'downstream' costs that result from domestic violence, rather than allocations targeted to domestic and family violence services

³⁴ At the time of writing this paper it is unclear what the status of the The Domestic Violence Death Review Team (DVDRT) was. As reported in Hansard, August 2014 no re-appointments to the Review Team had been made and the team had not met up to that time in 2014.

2014 - Snapshot

A Report by NSW Department of Family Services, *Women in NSW - Snapshot* (2014) - using data from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics, the Ministry of Health, State Coroner's Court of NSW, Transport NSW and the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that:

- The rate of domestic violence has remained consistent since 2005
- The incidence is much higher for Aboriginal women
- 70% of violence was perpetrated by males if the victim was female
- Underreporting remains a significant issue because of the fear of further violence by the offender. Older women who are married and victims of assaults that don't involve weapons and CALD women are particularly unlikely to underreport.

2014 - NSW Police - Safety Assessment of DV Victims

In October 2014 the Minister for Women announced a new approach to domestic violence service provision which will be implemented initially in Waverley and Orange, having been successfully piloted in Walgett and Mt Druitt. This Program will be in every police station in NSW by 2019.

The new procedure involves police asking 25 safety assessment questions of victims of DV to ascertain their level of risk. If the woman is deemed to be at serious risk, government agencies must respond within 24 hours. For those deemed at less serious risk, action must be undertaken within 72 hours. If a woman is at serious risk, a senior police officer will convene an interagency safety meeting.

2014 - University of Western Sydney and NSW Rape Crisis Centre – Prevention Focused Education

Researchers from the University of Western Sydney and the NSW Rape Crisis Centre have developed a prevention focused education program for young men and women based on an understanding of ethical sexuality. The program brings together research on young people's sexuality, and sexual violence and aims to prevent sexual violence by assisting young people to develop the knowledge and the skills they need to negotiate intimate relationships – thus moving beyond the limitations of standard anti-rape prevention education.

3.1 Initiatives in other States & Territories

Victoria

2010 – A Right to Respect

'A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010-2020' (2010) claims to be the world's first systematic, sustained and cross-sectoral policy which build skills, attitudes and cultural values that reject violence. This is a 10 year framework designed to promote respectful, gender-equitable relationships in communities and homes. It contains seven strategies to address domestic violence:

1. Establish partnerships across government and non-government agencies and accountable leadership structures for sustainable prevention.
2. Strengthen community leadership to drive change.
3. Build capacity and tools for organisational change and workforce development.
4. Implement multiphase communications campaigns and programs, engage champions.
5. Undertake media advocacy to promote equity and non-violence.
6. Develop and strengthen systems and programs that build respectful relationships skills and influence social norms, attitudes and behaviours.
7. Research, evaluate and monitor policy and programs for continuous improvement.
8. Improve policy, regulation and legislation to embed prevention of violence and gender equity.

2014 – No More Deaths

The *No More Deaths* Campaign was launched in August 2014 by a coalition which calls on political parties to develop a wide-ranging policy across Housing, Police, Health, Education and other portfolios – to keep women and children safe in Victoria. The *No More Deaths* coalition comprises of state-wide and local organisations working with women and children, legal services and organisations working with men.

Queensland

Queensland's domestic and family violence support system is complex, and includes a number of Queensland Government departments administering policy, legal, housing, health and other support services. In addition there is a large number of non-government organisations providing services for domestic and family violence.

Levels of domestic violence in Queensland have increased by more than 10% since 2010-2011. Last year more than 64,000 incidents of domestic and family violence were reported and almost 13,000 breaches of domestic violence orders occurred.

In an effort to address this situation the Queensland government has recently established a Special Task Force on Domestic and Family Violence. The Task Force is chaired by the former Governor-General of Australia, the Honourable Quentin Bryce AD CVO,

The Taskforce's Terms of Reference state that:

- In making its recommendations, the Taskforce is to have regard to, but is not to be limited by, the following matters:
- Educating and engaging Queenslanders to create a community that supports respectful relationships, practices positive attitudes and behaviours and promotes a culture of non-violence

- Early intervention to identify those who are at the greatest risk of violence, to ensure action is taken to protect those at risk of being subject to domestic and family violence, and to change the behaviour of those who use violence
- Holistic, coordinated and timely responses to domestic violence, including building community confidence in the reporting and investigation of domestic and family violence and ensuring that those who are subject to domestic and family violence receive immediate and effective protection and support
- Ensuring that Queensland's law and order responses, including police, prosecutors and courts, provide an effective response to domestic and family violence, to deter perpetrators from committing violence, and hold them accountable for their behaviour
- Considering ways in which strategies for ensuring protection from domestic and family violence in Queensland best complement relevant systems and processes (including within the family law jurisdiction) to provide just outcomes and maximise the safety of families
- Defining the scope of violence, assault and abuse to be addressed in a domestic and family violence strategy and whether it would be appropriate for such a strategy to focus on particular or defined sections of the community in order to have the most impact.

The Task Force will report to the Premier by 28 February 2015.

South Australia, Northern Territory, Western Australia

2008 - Keeping Safe

Department of Education and Communities in South Australia developed a comprehensive prevention-based child prevention curriculum resource *Keeping Safe*

Keeping Safe, recently updated (2012-2014 curriculum) is delivered in preschools and primary schools through to high school. Its aim is to assist students in developing skills in recognising and responding to unsafe situations, seeking assistance effectively and establishing and maintaining relationships and strengthening attitudes and values related to equality, respect and responsibility. The program is delivered in partnership with Catholic Education and Independent schools in South Australia and Western Australia and is delivered by the Northern Territory Education Department.

Keeping Safe has four focus areas;

- Right to be safe
- Relationships
- Recognising and reporting abuse
- Protective strategies

It includes two support documents for educators working with children and young people:

- From culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- With disability and additional needs

4.0 Strategies to Increase Safety and Independence

Introduction

Domestic and family violence is a complex and entrenched social problem, not only in Australia but internationally. **Violence against women has been identified by the United Nations as the leading public health issue for the international community to address.**³⁵ As *Our Watch*³⁶ points out, 'A sustained reduction in, and ultimately prevention of, violence against women and their children, requires significant social changes at all levels'.

Thus far, in Australia, despite the resources that have been employed, the research that has been undertaken and the policies that have been implemented, there has been little, if any, reduction in the rates of domestic and family violence³⁷.

Because of the complexity of the problem, a reduction in the rates of domestic and family violence and sexual assault is likely to require a range of different strategies, some of which will be specific to a particular population group, e.g. older women, Indigenous women and CALD women, some will involve girls and women only,³⁸ some both sexes; some will require 'overarching' approaches, such as better data collection, promotion of evidence-based best practice across the whole community, improved opportunities for training, more effective use of social media etc. Some approaches will have a focus on prevention, others on early intervention or a tertiary focus.

It appears that some of the best results are likely to be gained when different approaches are combined. For example **there is a growing body of research that suggests prevention-based approaches are most likely to lead to a reduction in domestic and family violence.**³⁹ However it is argued that primary prevention strategies need to be accompanied by policy, integrated cooperation between agencies, and work at the community level.⁴⁰ Primary prevention strategies do not deliver measurable results overnight – they need sustained resourcing over time, thus requiring government and philanthropic funders to work together.

Different strategies using a coordinated approach (i.e. prevention, early intervention and tertiary support) are being trialled and evaluated – yet there are still gaps and much more work to be done before to ensure reduced rates of domestic and family violence.

Taking all of these factors into account, this section of the Report presents a selection of potential initiatives in different areas and using different approaches. It also presents recommendations for consideration and possible adoption by Sydney Women's Fund - and its philanthropic, government, corporate and NGO partners - as it determines how it can best use its skills and capacities to improve safety for women and girls in Greater Sydney.

This section of the Report seeks to identify strategies, projects and programs that allow funding for immediate impact in improving safety. It also aims to identify opportunities for collaborative partnerships and greater funding aimed at bringing a full-stop to violence against women and girls in the long term.

³⁵ World Health Organisation (2002) *World Report on Violence and Health*

³⁶ Our Watch Strategic Plan, September 2014. Our Watch has been established to drive nation-wide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and children.

³⁷ See page 154 of Family and Community Services; *Women in NSW*, 2014.

³⁸ For example because there is strong qualitative evidence that women's disempowerment and dependence on men both make them vulnerable to experiencing violence, and less able to challenge or leave situations of violence, other research with a focus on prevention and on early intervention, identifies working with young girls to build self-esteem and self-confidence as critically important.

³⁹ Prevention – based approaches have historically presented challenges particularly for policy makers and governments in that to be able to demonstrate and measure success, they often require a long timeline and sustained resourcing. However this is changing as organisations such as The Full Stop Foundation - an initiative of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia, ensure that all of their programs have a focus on prevention

⁴⁰ See Our Watch (2014) Policy Brief 3 – *International Evidence Base* for why a coordinated approach is important, and for examples of the growing success of prevention based approaches.

Strategy 1: Working with Women and Girls

Initiative 1: Extending Support to Older Women

Although older women are not the subject of a great deal of the recent research, the research that has been undertaken suggests that significant numbers of older women experience domestic violence - much of which remains underreported. The incidence of homelessness in women 55 years and over is growing and there is growing evidence that these two issues – domestic violence and homelessness - are causally related.

Two recent research reports commissioned by the Older Women's Network (OWN - NSW) highlight the links between homelessness and violence. In one report *'IT COULD BE YOU: female, single, older and homeless'*, McFerran (2010) found that the most recent evidence indicates that one in four women who have experience physical violence in the last twelve months was aged 45 years and over (ABS 2006). McFerran also found that 26% of women aged 55 years and over had experienced violence from their current partner. McFerran's findings supported research undertaken by Morgan and Chadwick (2009) who found that older women are much more likely to be long term victims of domestic and family violence.

Kurrie (2004) has indicated that up to 90 percent of abusers of older people are close family-as is common in domestic and family violence'. These findings are confirmed by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).⁴¹

In an earlier Report *'Disappearing Age'*, McFerran (2008) found that older women are more likely to enter supported accommodation than men. The report recommends a close collaboration with family violence services and the care sector to address the family violence and age rights, and reduce violence and abuse of older Australians. The Report also states that the challenge is understanding the social and economic factors placing groups of older women at risk and preventing homelessness.

The *'Disappearing Age'* Report emphasises that *"many plans and strategies on abuse of older people have neglected the gendered nature of violence and, despite advocating for collaboration across support services they fall short of a comprehensive inclusion of all key agencies. The lack of collaboration between the aged care sector and the domestic violence sector has resulted in women falling through the cracks and not receiving adequate support and assistance."* (p. 8).

A NSW Family and Community Services *Safety and Justice Snapshot* (2013) reported that older women's rate of violent assault has risen more than any other age group although their total number is comparatively small.

Domestic Violence Victoria, (DVV) a peak body, reports that older women can, and do, endure violence for many years for the sake of their family. The violence may change but not necessarily cease as the woman ages. For example women's vulnerability to abuse – particularly, but not only financial abuse, by children grandchildren and/or carers (elder abuse) tends to increase as the woman gets older. DVV describe elder abuse as a form of family or domestic violence that is experienced by older people. Like family violence, elder abuse is about one person having power and control over another person. It is defined as "any action, or deliberate inaction, by a person in a position of trust which causes harm to an older person." (World Health Organization, 2002).

⁴¹ Interview with Susan Ryan – Age Commissioner AHRC

Recommendation

There is sufficient evidence that violence against older women is increasing, and likely to continue to do so as the baby boomer generation ages. There is growing evidence that domestic violence may be one of the important causes of the increasing numbers of older women who are becoming homeless.

Collaboration with the Older Women's Network (OWN) or an agency such as the Pensioners Association could be a possible approach to augment the research which is already under way to prevent violence against older women or to further explore the hidden nature and consequences of (e.g. homelessness) domestic and family violence in women 55 years and older.

Among the many recommendations of the Older Women's Network Report – *The Disappearing Age* - the following could form the basis of a partnership approach to pilot programs for older women at risk of homeless and violence. SWF would approach OWN with options to:

- Fund Community and Women's Health Centres to develop specific programs for older women
- Enhance the capacity of one specialist domestic violence service per region to act as conduit between the programs supporting older women and to ensure skilled responses to referrals of older women experiencing violence.

Initiative 2: Shelter for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence

Tertiary support services⁴² have been the mainstay of domestic violence services internationally for many years. In 1974 the first women's refuge providing crisis support for women and children escaping domestic violence – Elsie's Women's Refuge - opened in Sydney. Other refuges followed.

This early work led to many legal and program changes which provided better outcomes for families and a greater acknowledgement of the impact of violence on women and girls, including the ongoing funding of the national phone crisis and counselling services run by NSW Rape Crisis 24/7 for sexual assault, family and domestic violence telephone and online counselling. The quality and the quantity of support services vary however. As noted above, the recent AIFS research (Tayton, 2014) identified gaps in prevention and early intervention programs for at risk groups such as non-urban women and women with disabilities, especially mental ill-health. The Report also found that service coverage was very limited in relation to people who identify as LGBTIQ and women with a disability.

The AIFS report makes clear the need for community-driven and community-owned strategies in specific at risk communities, particularly CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Support services for women range from small services attached to existing neighbourhood or women's services to domestic violence resource centres which provide a range of support services including counselling, referral, financial support and assistance, legal help, housing and accommodation.

⁴² By tertiary support services we mean those that are provided after the incident has taken place or where there is an intervention to prevent (further) violence from occurring.

Currently there is a move away from the provision of crisis only support services to those services underpinned by earlier intervention to prevent homelessness for women experiencing domestic violence, and to prevent repeat occurrences. It is this approach which underpinned the recent Going Home Staying Home Reforms (GHSH) in NSW.

Tertiary services which have managed to move away from a focus on crisis only to incorporate a prevention/early intervention approach and, in doing so, have demonstrated successful outcomes, include Domestic Violence Support Western Sydney Service (DVSWS) and Greater Western Sydney and the HAP Domestic Violence Project. Both of these services use a variety of supports such as brokerage, education and financial assistance, and incorporate a strength-based approach that builds women's empowerment.

In their evaluation of the Greater Western Sydney HAP Domestic Violence Project Breckenridge et al. (2013) emphasised the importance of brokerage funding as an effective service response for women and children who are at risk of homelessness. Brokerage at the right time can assist with a bill or rent arrears which could have otherwise led to eviction. Similarly Lang (2012) who evaluated the Green Valley Liverpool Domestic Violence Service, found that there is strong evidence that an empowerment approach which focuses on enhancing women's abilities to access services is associated with positive outcomes for women, including increased physical safety, improved mental health and decreased social isolation.

Another support service is the NSW Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program (WDVCAP) which funds 28 services working at 114 local courts in NSW. The services funded under this program provide information to women on how to get protection from the court using Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs) as well as assisting with financial services and advice, housing, counselling and family law issues.

Services for people in same sex relationships who experience violence are growing, although the AIFS Report 2014 found there are many gaps in services for LGBTIQ people. Services such as the Safe Relationships Project (SRP) situated in Kings Cross Sydney, provides men and women who are experiencing domestic violence in same sex relationships with support, advocacy, referral and information.

Recommendation

Providing support for innovative and effective services is an approach already familiar to SWF through the work with neighbourhood centres in Western Sydney. As outlined above, the AIFS found there is a need for community-driven and community-owned strategies in specific at risk communities, particularly CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Therefore a collaborative partnership approach is essential to ensure community ownership. SWF could collaborate with an existing service to support its extension or to test a new approach which might include, counselling, legal support, empowerment programs etc.

In taking this approach it is important to take sustainability and scalability into account. There are many examples of 'one off' pilots which ceased after an evaluation of the pilot – no matter how successful – because ongoing funding was not assured or because the project was not scalable. Support needs to be provided for at least 3 years to be effective with an evaluation built into the program and an avenue to promote success and lessons learned to potential funding bodies.

Initiative 3: Partnerships to support culturally and linguistically diverse women

Although domestic violence service providers, are seeing increased numbers of CALD women seeking assistance, particularly from recent migrant groups. A national study undertaken by Flinders University (Taully, 2008) cites research that indicates that these women experience significant barriers to accessing domestic violence support services, including crisis accommodation services, yet are generally much less likely than other groups of women to report cases of domestic violence.

This is partly due to language difficulties and lack of knowledge and understanding of Australian law, but there may also be cultural reasons for example situations where individual women have different understandings of what does and does not constitute domestic violence. (Lay, 2006).

For Aboriginal Women the rate of domestic violence-related assault is nearly five times higher than for non-Indigenous women. They are also 38 times more likely to be hospitalised for assault and 10 times more likely to die from assault than non-Indigenous women.⁴³

Many services such as Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services have CALD Specialists on hand, but the first step in many CALD communities is not lack of specialists or services, or even access to those services, but raising awareness of the issue of domestic and family violence and educating women on their rights (Tayton et al, 2014).

The AIFS Report (Tayton et. al, *ibid.*) included an evaluation of the Domestic Violence Community Education Project, delivered by St George Migrant Resource Centre. The program is a bilingual-bicultural domestic violence awareness raising and community education project with multiple sub-programs that aim to increase women's awareness, social networks and personal empowerment, and prevent and minimise the impact of domestic and family violence. The evaluation found that community education *"strengthened connections to community; reduced social, cultural and financial dependency of one person within relationships; enhanced knowledge about domestic and family violence and relevant services; improved self-esteem and personal capacity; and strengthened community capacity"* (p.112).

⁴³ See for example Burchfield & Braybrook (2010) in Australian Institute of Criminology Research and Public Policy Series 100-120: *The relevance of family violence to Indigenous women's offending*.

Recommendation

The recent AIFS Report found that targeted interventions are required for at risk CALD groups. This finding reinforces other research which emphasises that organisations located within special need communities – such as CALD communities - need to be engaged in developing domestic violence prevention and early intervention initiatives to ensure that such initiatives meet the needs of the particular groups for whom they are intended.

While support for the development of prevention programs for special need groups will require significant funding and evaluation, there are potential opportunities for SWF to develop partnerships to support existing work with CALD women experiencing domestic violence. For example, the existing community programs could be enhanced by support to develop bilingual publications for use of community awareness-raising on domestic violence. This could also include information on the use of technology to counteract cyber violence which is outlined in more detail below.

Another partnership based strategy may be to approach those institutions in receipt of ANROWS funding, and whose research focuses on CALD or Aboriginal women, to assess the potential for working together.

If SWF decides to pursue this area it will be particularly important to take the lead from the organisation(s) embedded in the local community, and who are therefore familiar with the resources required and the approaches most likely to succeed.

Strategy 2 : Working with Young People

Initiative 1: Prevention Work with Young People

In keeping with the current focus on prevention-based approaches *Building Respectful Relations* is a Commonwealth Government program which is delivered through a range of agencies. The primary focus of the Program is to develop the skills young people need to treat their partners with respect through the provision of education to young people aged 12-24 years.⁴⁴

As noted above, this Program is based on research which suggests that 'traditional' sexuality and violence prevention education failed to prepare young people for the complexity of sexual intimacy - including issues around consent, sexual negotiation and pressured sex. Young people involved in the research felt such programmes focused primarily on risk avoidance and danger and failed to provide the positive skills for negotiation that both groups require to achieve safe and ethical intimacy.

In Victoria, Following the release of the *Respectful Relationships Education: Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools* Report, the Department of Education and Training engaged CASA House and Deakin University to develop and trial a range of the teaching and learning materials which address the key issues related to violence prevention and gender-based violence.

The resulting resource, *Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out Against Gender-Based Violence*, takes into account the key findings around effective violence-prevention strategies in schools proposed in the above report. It provides teaching and learning activities planned around key themes of gender, power, violence and respect as well as advice around a whole-school approach to violence prevention.

While not all identical, the growing number of *Respectful Relationship* programs now included in school curricula⁴⁵ and the programs provided by non-government organisations such as the YWCA/ YMCA all have a strong evidence-based focus on prevention. They aim to give young people as young as 10 years old the tools and supports to develop, promote and perpetuate equal, safe and respectful relationships, with the ultimate goal of preventing domestic and sexual violence.

⁴⁴ The Commonwealth Department of Social Services has provided grants of up to \$400,000 to 11 non-government organisations. The projects are funded from the Government's \$9.1 million Respectful Relationships initiative which aims to prevent sexual assault and domestic and family violence through education. The projects will operate in school and non-school environments across the country and will teach young people about ethical behaviours and equip them with the skills to engage in respectful relationships.

⁴⁵ The Department of Education and Childhood Development Victoria has published an extensive toolkit *Building Respectful Relationships - Stepping out against gender-based violence* for use in Victorian schools (2014)

Recommendation

Working with children is also an area where considerable research and evaluation is being undertaken. Co-educational programs involving respectful relationships are already being implemented with research showing positive results. Initial results suggest that this strategy should engage primary school aged children to maximise the desired behaviour changes. As the YWCA is one of the eleven NGOs funded by the Commonwealth to deliver the program, SWF could approach the YWCA, or other relevant organisations, with a view to a collaborative approach which would facilitate and support expansion of the Program.

Strategy 3 : Working with Men and Boys

Initiative 1: Changing Attitudes – Prevention/Early Intervention

The Sydney Women's Fund interest in improving the safety for women and girls may require work to change the attitudes of young men. Recent changes in research into effective education strategies are now beginning to recognise the importance of educating men and engaging them in challenging dominant forms of masculinity that normalise sexual violence (Flood and Pease, 2009).

In Australia much of the work with men and boys is led by the University of Western Sydney. As Carmody points out 'as sexual violence is a gendered issue based on unequal social power relations, enlisting men as active agents of social change is a core requirement if primary prevention strategies are to be effective'. (Carmody 2014)

Carmody et.al. (2014) report that '*a coherent and identifiable field of prevention practice focused specifically on men and boys has yet to emerge in Australia. Activities in the field are piecemeal, ad hoc and dispersed. There is no peak organisation that provides support to areas of emerging practice except in relation to men's behaviour change programs (i.e. perpetrator programs). Primary prevention activities are scarce as well as programs focused on boys or men specific activities*'. (pp. 6-7)

However, the authors suggest that there are areas of prevention activity focusing on men and boys that indicate promising practice. These include programs and activities such as: respectful relationships education, bystander strategies, community development approaches, whole of organisation approaches, infant and parenting programs and social marketing. (p.7)

Research suggests that best practice in engaging men and boys occurs in two key areas of primary prevention

- Community strengthening and development; and,
- Organisational and workforce development.

Carmody in the paper '*Respect and violence prevention with men and boys*' identifies specific strategies that are most likely to bring about change in men and boys' behaviour. These include:

- Addressing the role of gender in violence against women in a way that men and boys can understand
- Using male educators
- Recognising that masculinities are diverse, fluid and sometimes contradictory within individuals, groups and communities
- Understanding that experiences of masculinity are effected by class, location, ethnicity, cultural background, sexuality and other factors; there is no 'one size fits all' experience

Carmody is currently undertaking a new research project in NSW, to develop approaches for violence prevention by working with men and boys. The Research titled *Violence Prevention Program Review and Evaluation Study One: Men and Boys' Violence Prevention* is a year-long project.

The recently launched Full Stop Foundation is working with the University of Western Sydney and the University of NSW to develop a number of programs based on the concept of sex and ethics. These programs have a prevention focus and will involve working with men in different capacities.

Other prevention focussed programs involving men include the Strong Aboriginal Men Program (SAM) and the National Rugby League Respectful Relationship Sex & Ethics Program. While both of these programs are specific to particular groups of men it is possible that the learnings gained from them may be applicable in other contexts.

A further prevention-focussed initiative involving work with men is being led by the White Ribbon Foundation. White Ribbon began in Australia in 2003 as part of UNIFEM (now UN Women),

formally becoming a Foundation in 2007. Globally, White Ribbon is the world's largest male-led movement to end men's violence against women. White Ribbon is now active in more than 60 countries and is Australia's only national, male-led campaign to end men's violence against women by working to make women's safety a men's issue.

The White Ribbon Campaign and the White Ribbon Organisation's associated primary prevention initiatives aim to change "attitudes and behaviours that lead to men's violence against women" (Australian Government, 2009, White Ribbon Foundation, 2012). White Ribbon programs employ a primary prevention focus involving awareness raising and education, and programs with youth, schools, workplaces, and across the broader community.

The Federal Government (2009) also funds community organisations under the Men and Family Relationships Services to help men improve their relationships with partners and children.

Recommendation

The NSW Government is currently funding Carmody's year-long research project to identify the best approaches to working with men and boys. It would be advisable for SWF to monitor the progress of this research, which is very likely to identify a way forward for prevention work that SWF may wish to engage in with men and boys, and to make a decision about opportunities for the Foundation's involvement when the results of the evaluation are clearer.

In the interim, SWF could approach the Full Stop Foundation and the White Ribbon Foundation to investigate further what options exist for working together. This could take different forms depending on the needs and the capacities of each organisation. For example a partnership between SWF and either White Ribbon or the Full Stop Foundation, aimed at delivering mutually agreed outcomes. SWF could facilitate a partnership between philanthropic funders interested in assisting either or both of these organisations, or could facilitate a consortium of funders with an interest in assisting the further development of prevention focussed strategies aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviours of men and boys with respect to violence against women.

Initiative 2: Changing Violent Behaviours – Perpetrator Programs

Perpetrator programs are a component of the NSW policy approach to the reduction of domestic and family violence. The NSW Government has committed \$2 million over three years to fund NSW's first telephone counselling and referral service for violent or potentially violent men to help reduce domestic violence. Changing the behaviour and attitudes of men who use violence is central to reducing violence against women and girls.

The government has funded the establishment of the Men's Behaviour Change Network, an advisory body for effective ways of working with men to reduce domestic and family violence. The Advisory Body has been working for twelve months at this stage and comprises of church-based and relationship agencies.

A research paper by the Australian Institute of Criminology (Day et al., 2010), on legally mandated intervention programs for male perpetrators found *“that both the research evidence and public support for the delivery of perpetrator programs is far from consistent and yet, working with known perpetrators provides one of the most direct and potentially efficient means to improve the safety of Australian women and children”* (p. 7).

This view is supported by Australian researchers such as Flood (2003, 2006), Pease (2008) and Carmody (2010, Australian Institute of Family Studies 2009).⁴⁶

In their 'Literature Review on Domestic Violence Perpetrators', Urbis concluded that:

'Based on the status of current research, there is a need for future research to enhance the quality of program evaluations, assess the generalisability of international findings to the Australian context, and to identify strategies that improve the capacity of intervention programs to reach and engage both convicted and non-convicted perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence, across socio-demographic groups and geographic locations'.

One of the research challenges in this area is gaining the perspectives of women and not relying so heavily on men's self-report data. Understandably, many women do not wish to participate, or have other commitments, so it is not always possible to document their experiences to assist in perpetrator's change.

Some NGOs have been providing perpetrator programs which also involve women's feedback and perspectives.⁴⁷

Despite these qualifications and the need for further program evaluation there is an increasing acknowledgment of the importance of including men – especially but not only, in prevention efforts focussed intervention.

⁴⁶ See Carmody, M (2009) *Conceptualising the prevention of sexual assault and the role of education, Refereed Issues Paper No 10 for the Australian Centre for Study of Sexual Assault on Issues Paper 10*; Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

⁴⁷ A Program delivered by CatholicCare and evaluated by the Miller Group (2008) demonstrated long term reduction rates for some program participants and less for others – there was no clear evidence as to what factors contributed to success for some participants and less for others.

Recommendation

The development of perpetrator programs is in its early stages of development and evaluation. SWF could identify and support programs that are trialling and evaluating work with perpetrators - based on the current research and known evidence base – particularly programs that include women's input into whether or not the changes in male perpetrators are effective and sustainable from their perspective.

Again, the Foundation could facilitate the support of philanthropic partners in ensuring that those tertiary perpetrator programs that meet key criteria required for success – as evidenced by research – are provided with sustained support – including support for ongoing evaluation.

Strategy 4: Collaboration projects

Initiative 1: The Day to Count

The extent of underreporting is not known, particularly amongst older women and CALD women.

To understand the cost in human and financial terms of violence against women and girls accurate data must be collected. This could then establish baselines, assist in monitoring improvements and direct funding support sufficiently.

Collecting accurate data has become an international focus in prevention strategies and service provision. This need has stimulated some innovative data collection strategies such as 'The Day to Count'.

The Day to Count (24 hours) collects accounts of all forms of domestic violence episodes from a broad range of agencies – not simply from police data. The idea of a day of counting which commenced in Norwich in 2002, was taken up by Women's Aid, Bristol in 2005. Women's Aid conducts an annual survey of its national network of services each year in order to ascertain the use of domestic violence services within England.

The annual survey is carried out through three main questionnaires sent to domestic violence services in England:

- **A year in the life of your service** – a review of the previous financial year in domestic violence services in England, including the number of people using these services and how they were funded
- **'The Day to Count'** – a snap shot survey of domestic violence services on one census day
- **Women and children using domestic violence services** – the experiences of a sample of women and children using domestic violence services in England

These surveys provide Women's Aid with information about DV services provided, and the number of women and children supported by Women's Aid national network, and also gives the organisation a more detailed snap shot of those using domestic violence services at one point in time. **It has had a major impact on both government policy and public awareness of domestic violence.**

In the US since 2006 the National Network to End Domestic Violence⁴⁸ (NNEDV) has undertaken an annual non-invasive, unduplicated count of adults and children who seek services from U.S. domestic violence shelter programs during a single 24-hour survey period (*Domestic Violence Counts: National Census of Domestic Violence Services Census*). This Census takes into account the dangerous nature of domestic violence by using a survey designed to protect the confidentiality and safety of victims.

In Australia the best indicators available are from the ABS Personal Safety Survey 2005 which updates information about women's experiences of violence collected in the 1996 ABS Women's Safety Survey. Because it is linked to the census data, the data does not occur annually nor does it contain information specific to domestic and family violence.

The *National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey* (NCAS) is one of two studies designed to monitor the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*. The 2013 NCAS involved more than 17,500 twenty-minute telephone interviews with a cross-section of Australians aged 16 years and older. The Survey constitutes an important data source and is being used to inform policy as well as monitoring the progress of the National Plan.

⁴⁸ NNEDV is a membership and advocacy organisation of state domestic violence coalitions, allied organisations and supportive individuals, NNEDV works closely with its members to understand the ongoing and emerging needs of domestic violence victims and advocacy programs. The NNEDV makes sure those needs are heard and understood by policymakers at the national level. <<http://nnedv.org>>

'Our Watch' also collects and publishes data on violence against women – including domestic and family violence, however Our Watch has a much broader brief than the collection and publication of data. viz. *'Our Watch has been established to drive nation-wide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that underpin and create violence against women and children'. 'Our purpose is to provide national leadership to prevent all forms of violence against women and their children'.⁴⁹*

Recommendation

The Day to Count was proposed as a key strategy at the initial meeting of a Stakeholder Reference Group for this scoping paper. Instituting The Day to Count in Australia to augment the NCAS could be a long term, high profile project.

The role for Sydney Women's Fund could be to advocate and facilitate partnerships to progress this.

This would require a considerable amount of interagency and cross sector collaboration.

In Australia we have nothing similar in terms of a 'snapshot' taken on one day of the year current data with respect to the number of women who access assistance for DV including DV services, police etc. yet this data could have a significant impact and attract a good deal of public attention to the issue.

SWF could facilitate a consortium of government agencies and non-government organisations such as Philanthropic Trusts, other foundations, organisations such as Full Stop, White Ribbon to work together to develop and implement the Day of Counting in Greater Sydney, in NSW, and eventually nationally.

Initiative 2: Technology and Violence – the good and the bad

Online projects and apps designed to prevent family and domestic violence are a relatively new but growing area in the fight to increase safety for women and girls.

Conversely the incidence of cyber violence e.g cyber-bullying and trolling is also increasing.

Using the Internet to Increase Safety

The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) was one of the first domestic violence organisations in the world to have an online presence, winning a Crime Prevention award in 2000 for its innovative website www.lovegoodbadugly.com. The evaluation of their SmartSafe research project has found that technology-facilitated stalking is a significant issue for women experiencing domestic violence and that women's safety, health and wellbeing are negatively impacted by technology-facilitated stalking.

In Australia, Our Watch has an on-line presence with a website called The Line www.theline.org.au. The Line aims to assist young people to navigate 'grey areas', so they can enjoy healthy and respectful relationships and recognise behaviour that 'crosses the line'.

⁴⁹ See <<http://www.ourwatch.org.au>>

Crowdfunding for Anti-Domestic Violence Projects

A new avenue for raising funds is 'crowdsourcing'.⁵⁰ Crowd funding could be a way of raising the profile of women's safety and of using the funds, perhaps with others to support and or expand a particularly innovative initiative.

In a recent on-line blog, Diane Francis - Editor on the National Post Canada (2014) discussed the possibility of using a crowdsourcing site to raise funds for groups, or projects for individuals dedicated to supporting work on domestic violence. *'A Violence against Women crowd funding website would also impose discipline and eliminate fraud by screening requests for funds and rejecting frivolous or suspicious ones. It would require disclosure of financial statements, staffers, backers, projects and then require follow up to publish whether goals were met on budget and on time. A website such as this one would meet the needs of charities and donors alike by imposing discipline on the participants and information for those who wish to give money.'*

Combatting Cyber Violence

The Canadian Government, through its Office of the Status of Women, has just announced \$1.1m in funding for eight new on line programs to combat violence against women in its media release (July 2014). The project aims make Canada's online communities safer for everyone by working with skilled, local organisations across the country on strategies that will prevent cyber violence (www.swc.gfc.ca).

YWCA Canada is one of the recipients of the funding. The YWCA's aim is to make the city safer for girls and young women who use social media. They will work with partners to identify cyber violence in the community, and find ways to prevent it.

The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) is also highlighting the use of technology to address abuse and family violence.

- Abusive online behaviour can include:
- Checking a woman's texts and email or tracking her internet use
- Impersonating a woman or spreading rumours about her
- Posting embarrassing, fake or intimate videos, photos or comments about her
- Constantly messaging, emailing or texting in a way that makes her feel intimidated or scared, or
- Harassing her on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace or dating/ chat/games sites.
- Use of technology by male perpetrators is known to include changing SIM cards in women's phones to include new technology with GPS tracking to monitor where women go while away from their partner. There is some work already underway to make women aware of the use of technology however promotion of these techniques is an area needing further

⁵⁰ 'Crowdsourcing' is the process of obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people, and especially from an online community, rather than from traditional employees or suppliers (Wikipedia).

Recommendation

A collaborative partnership could be formed with organisations such as DVNSW or YWCA, working with women and girls to develop on line publication to inform women about the use of technology as a tool for surveillance and cyber violence, using the Victorian model. This would be especially relevant for organisations working with CALD women. Other opportunities include the development of an App (similar to the Aurora App developed by Women NSW) or an online campaign that could be promoted across various social media platforms.

SWF has an excellent reputation for not only working to improve the lives of women and girls, but for seeking and attracting philanthropy for innovative projects. It would be worth considering approaching a partner that is prepared to support such a project and who has the technological skills to work with SWF to promote the project online and assist with crowdsourcing the funding required.

Initiative 3: Support for Small/New Service Providers/Facilitating Strategic Partnerships

As a result of the recent Going Home Staying Home Reforms (GSHS) in NSW, domestic violence services must now demonstrate how they are supporting women and children at each stage of the continuum, working with a range of specialist services such as health services, disability services, housing, education or employment services.

Effective coordination between both government and non-government organisations, combined with an integrated prevention, through to post crisis approach, is essential for the successful delivery of human services. There is now a strong evidence base to support this.

At the regional level, coordinating committees have become an important driver of coordination and awareness-raising for domestic and family violence.

A good example of this approach is the Campbelltown Domestic Violence Committee (CDVC) which is auspiced by the Macarthur Legal Centre and convened by Campbelltown City Council. The Committee works towards the elimination of domestic violence through coordinated service provision and by raising public awareness across the Campbelltown area. The Campbelltown Domestic Violence Committee (CDVC) exists to resource, support and plan for policies that empower women and children experiencing domestic violence. The Committee uses community education, skills development and advocacy to create opportunities for change for women and their families.

A similar Regional Committee Model underpins the successful Domestic Violence Support; Western Sydney Service (DVSSWS). In this case the Service operates across 12 local government authorities and is supported and coordinated by 5 Regional Coordination Groups. A recent evaluation of the Service (Cohen, G. 2012) found that DVSSWS *'has been successful in moving away from crisis driven to long term support to prevent homelessness and repeat domestic violence; demonstrated flexibility to tailor assistance to meet individual client needs; and achieved greater collaboration between disparate services and between NGOs and Government'* (p.6).

Recommendation

Opportunities exist for the SWF and its partners to identify domestic and family violence services –including refuges that receive little government funding - that would benefit from greater coordination with related services, and to provide the support required to build and strengthen those partnerships. This may involve facilitation of partnerships to provide funding for a limited period (say 3 years) to employ personnel to enhance coordination processes through the development of interagency committees or strategic partnerships – or both.

Initiative 4: Improve Access to Training for Sector Professionals

The need for training of professionals involved in domestic and family violence and sexual assault is raised in most program evaluations and government policies as a key priority strategy and strategy for success. The recent Australian Institute of Family Studies Report (Tayton et. al. 2014), points to the fact that there is clear evidence for the need to build the capacity of domestic violence and related services such as health, policing and legal services. Access to training is particularly relevant for sensitive support and appropriate service delivery for the most at risk groups and communities. The AIFS Report also found that education and cultural awareness training of the police force, and all services involved in responding to domestic and family violence in Aboriginal communities, is needed in order to build cooperative, culturally appropriate working relationships.

The NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) is a long-standing training provider in NSW. ECAV is committed to enhancing the quality and accessibility of services to people whose lives have been affected by interpersonal violence. In order to achieve this, ECAV provides state-wide specialised training, consultancy and resource development for NSW Health and interagency workers who provide services to children and adults who have experienced sexual assault, domestic or Aboriginal family violence and/or physical and emotional abuse and neglect.

The South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE provides training in the implementation of the NSW governments Domestic violence Prevention Strategy⁵¹ in accordance with Part 13A of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal) Act 2007 – Information Sharing.

Recommendation

Training is an area which is highlighted in all national and state policies and evaluations. Training organisations such as ECAV are highly skilled at providing appropriate training. However access to training for domestic violence workers is often limited as organisations lack funding for training or engagement of relief workers. Providing funding for targeted professionals to attend training is an approach which does not have long term sustainability issues but contributes to the delivery of improved services.

SWF could undertake a scoping exercise to identify gaps in training for the prevention of domestic and family violence and sexual assault and approach philanthropic partners for resources to work with DV organisations and develop training programs to fill those gaps.

One area where it is recognised that there is a need for more workers trained in culturally specific education and prevention practices is in Aboriginal and CALD communities. Again SWF could seek additional funding for training programs and/or additional workers skilled in the prevention of violence against women across these two community groups.

Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) communities are also experiencing increasing, but often unreported incidents of domestic and family violence and have been identified as a community where there is a gap in training for the prevention of family and domestic violence.

⁵¹ See South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE: *New Tools, Roles and Training for DFV Workers It Stops Here: Standing together to end Domestic and Family Violence in NSW.*



Author's Comments

In keeping with its purpose, this Report has reviewed the current research findings and the policies and programs that have been, and are being developed and implemented in order to increase the safety of women and girls through reducing the incidence of domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

The Report identifies a number of strategies that SWF may wish to pursue as it determines how to contribute to increased safety for women and girls living in Greater Sydney.

While we have not identified *specific* projects, strategies or interventions that we feel have the greatest potential, we have identified a broad range of options across several categories, all of which we believe are worthy of further consideration by Sydney Women's Fund.

Domestic and family violence and assault against women are complex and deeply entrenched social problems. It is unrealistic to imagine that Sydney Women's Fund acting by itself, could have significant impact in increasing safety for girls and women in Greater Sydney, however, working with its cross sector partners, government, philanthropic and community, we believe the Fund could make a significant contribution to this challenging but important area.

Whatever initiative(s) or partnerships SWF chooses to pursue we suggest that before a final decision is made the following 'qualifiers' or considerations are taken into account, including:

- What, if any, is the evidence base to proceed?
- If there is not yet a solid evidence base, what is the indicative research suggesting as fruitful approaches (e.g. prevention based initiatives)?
- What resources, human and financial, might be required and over what period of time?
- Is a partnership or consortium desired or required to achieve the greatest, and/or the most enduring impact?
- How can SWF use its capacities and resources most effectively to bring partners/ funders together to deliver maximum impact in increasing safety for women and girls in Greater Sydney?
- Where can the greatest value be added and/or impact made?
- Which groups of women/girls should be the priority and why?
- Can the project be scaled?
- What type of approach or 'target group' is most likely to appeal to and 'fit' with the values and objectives of potential funders – both government and private/philanthropic?
- What expectations might funders have as a result of their support? Can these be met?

By taking these considerations into account before any decisions are made SWF will greatly diminish any potential risks, and will increase the likely success and sustainability of the chosen option(s). It will also mean that funders will have an increased level of confidence that their investment will deliver positive results in keeping with their social investment guidelines.



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Glossary of Terms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACON	Aids Council of NSW
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
AIFS	Australian Institute of Family Studies
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANROWS	Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety - to reduce violence against women and their children
AVP	Anti-Violence Program ACON
BOSCAR	NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CDVC	Campbelltown Domestic Violence Committee
DVDRT	Domestic Violence Death Review Team
DVNSW	Domestic Violence NSW
DVRCV	Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria
DVSSWS	Domestic Violence Support; Western Sydney Service
DSS	(Commonwealth) Department of Social Services
DVV	Domestic Violence Victoria
ECAV	(NSW Health) Education Centre Against Violence
FACS	Family and Community Services
GHS	Going Home Staying Home
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
GVRN	Gendered Violence Research Network
HAP	Homelessness Action Plan
NCAS	National Community Attitude Towards Violence Against Women Survey
ICLC	Inner City Legal Centre NSW
IWAWS	International Violence Against Women Survey
SHLV	Staying Home – Leaving Violence
SWF	Sydney Women's Fund
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
WDVCAP	(NSW) Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program

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APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1

NOTE: this is an *excerpt* of the data collected annually in the survey undertaken by Women's Aid – this includes the Count the Day data collection.

Women's Aid – 2013 Survey Results

Statistics about domestic violence incidence and prevalence of domestic violence: General

There are **no reliable national data** on the general incidence of domestic violence in the UK.

- In 2011/12, 7.3% women (1.2 million) and 5% men (800,000) report having experienced domestic abuse.
- 31% women and 18% men have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years. This amounts to 5 million women and 2.9 million men.
- Domestic violence has repeatedly been identified as a major factor leading to death in or related to pregnancy and childbirth: see below.
- In 2011/12, the police reported nearly 800,000 incidents of domestic violence.
- Domestic violence accounts for 10% of emergency calls.
- Domestic violence has consistently accounted for between 16% and one quarter of all recorded violent crime.
- There has been a 65% increase in number of domestic violence prosecutions between 2005/6 and 2010/11 and a corresponding 99% increase in number of defendants convicted.
- Despite this, domestic violence conviction rates in the five years to 2011 stood at just 6.5% of incidents reported to police – though a much higher proportion of around 70% of those charged.
- Women are much more likely than men to be the victim of multiple incidents of abuse, of different types of domestic abuse (partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking) and in particular of sexual violence.
- On average 2 women a week are killed by a male partner or former partner: this constitutes around one-third of all female homicide victims.
- The prevalence of domestic violence is greater among young women (under 24 years), and those who have a long-term illness or disability.

Sexual violence

- 1 in 5 women (20%) have been victim of sexual abuse since the age of 16.
- There are around 500,000 victims of sexual assault each year, 85%- 90% of whom are women.
- 1 in 20 women report being victim of a serious sexual offence (i.e. rape or assault involving penetration) since the age of 16, and 0.5% in the past year.
- 90% of the victims of the most serious offences knew their perpetrator, and 56% were partners/ex-partners.
- Only 15% of victims said they had reported offences to the police.
- The police recorded a total of 53,700 sexual offences across England and Wales, 71% of which were rape or serious sexual assault.
- In 2011, 2,873 men were prosecuted for rape and 40% (1153) were convicted.

- While the majority of adults questioned did not think victims were ever responsible for someone sexually assaulting them, 1 in 12 thought the victim was “completely” or “mostly” responsible if she was under the influence of drugs, 6% thought this if she was drunk, and 7% if she had been flirting heavily beforehand.

Gender Differences

- Research consistently shows that more women than men are or have been victims of violence and abuse from an intimate partner/former partner. However, due to different definitions and different methodologies, the degree of difference varies considerably.
- The difference between men’s and women’s experiences of domestic violence are greater when asked about their lifetime experiences than for experiences of violence and abuse during the last year.
- Female victims of intimate partner violence experienced more severe violence and control, with more serious psychological consequences, than did male victims; and women were much more likely to be fearful of their partners.
- 32% of women who had ever experienced domestic violence did so four or more times, compared with 11% of the (smaller number) of men who had ever experienced domestic violence; and women constituted 89% of all those who had experienced 4 or more incidents of domestic violence.
- Men are significantly more likely than women to be repeat perpetrators of violence.
- Intensity and severity of violence used by men was more extreme, men being more likely to use physical violence, threats, and harassment.
- Men’s violence creates a context of fear and control – this is not usually so for women’s violence.
- It is important to distinguish between the different types of intimate partner violence in order to understand, intervene effectively in individual cases, or make useful policy recommendations: “intimate terrorism”, “violent resistance”, “situational couple violence”, and “mutual violent control” have “different causes, different patterns of development, different consequences, and require different forms of intervention”.
- Population surveys (e.g. BCS/CSEW) are likely to be dominated by reports of “situational couple violence”, and include fewer examples of “intimate terrorism” and/or “coercive control”¹⁶, due to their focus on incidents and on “crime”.
- With (heterosexual) men, there is evidence that the distinction between “victim” and “perpetrator” is often blurred: of 171 men referred to one project for male victims, more than one-third had a history of perpetrating domestic violence. And follow-up interviews with men reporting abuse in the Scottish Crime Survey also indicated that a significant proportion were either primary perpetrators, or engaged in mutual violence with their partners.
- A study specifically seeking male victims found that only a minority of men abused within heterosexual relationships were apparently the primary perpetrator (8 out of 22 cases) and none of them had experienced sexual abuse from their partners.
- A study based on reports to police, (taking account of context and consequences, and reflecting the view that domestic violence is a pattern of behaviour over time) found that in only 5% of cases were female perpetrators in heterosexual relationships.

Calls to the National Domestic Violence Helpline

- The Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) received just over a quarter of million calls during its first 12 months.
- During 2011-12, the National Helpline received an average of 445 calls per day, 78% were answered.

Forced Marriage

- Statistics from the Forced Marriage Unit show that between January and December 2011, the unit dealt with 1,468 cases, a significant increase since 2007, when 400 cases were undertaken.
- 86 applications under the Forced Marriage Act were brought nationally during 2009, and this number also seems to be rising.
- In one study of south Asian women who had accessed specialist BAMER domestic violence services, 21% of women had experienced forced marriage – though only one of these had applied for a Forced Marriage Protection Order under the Act.

Impact of Domestic Violence on Children

- At least 750,000 children a year witness domestic violence.
- Children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk of behavioural problems and emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life.
- Nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs and 52% of child protection cases involving domestic violence.
- In 75% to 90% of incidents of domestic violence, children are in the same or the next room.
- The link between child physical abuse and domestic violence is high, with estimates ranging between 30% to 66% depending upon the study.
- 70% of children living in UK refuges have been abused by their father.
- A survey of 130 abused parents found that 76% of the 148 children ordered by the courts to have contact with their estranged parent were said to have been abused during visits: 10% were sexually abused; 15% were physically assaulted; 26% were abducted or involved in an abduction attempt; 36% were neglected during contact, and 62% suffered emotional harm. Most of these children were under the age of 5.
- Information received from local Family Court Welfare Services suggests that domestic violence is present in almost 50% of cases, where a welfare report is ordered.
- 30% of all Children Act cases involve domestic violence and between 50% and 60% of CAFCASS caseload is domestic violence – and these figures increase each year, as domestic violence is better identified.



Sydney Community Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit, public philanthropic fund. We help people from all parts of the community set up charitable funds, plan their giving and realise their philanthropic goals.

We build endowment funds for the future and identify priority projects for immediate impact funding. Income generated is used to make grants and build innovative partnerships to support charitable projects that deliver constructive outcomes for the people of Sydney.

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Prepared by: The Miller Group



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