

## Update to NPIP - Progress on National Priorities August 2012

### Primary Prevention

Governments have implemented primary prevention measures targeting different groups within the community using a variety of different approaches to influence attitudes and behaviours:

- *The Line* social marketing campaign;
- respectful relationship educational programs within schools and community settings targeting young people especially boys; and
- community-based primary prevention activities including through sporting organisations.

Primary prevention measures being progressed during 2012-13 include:

- inclusion of respectful relationship education in the national curriculum;
- development of primary prevention benchmarks; and
- working with media to help guide and shape the broader conversation about violence against women.

### The Line

Since its launch in June 2010, *The Line's* Facebook page has evolved from people waiting to comment on the blog and poll topics to fans creating their own content and generating their own peer discussion. As of May 2012, the Facebook page had over 71,000 fans.

To maintain momentum and help ensure it's not a static approach, new blogs and polls are regularly added or updated as well as competitions and free music downloads. The website is designed to appeal to young people and the content, in particular the webisodes, uses the language of young people. The website features a 'Parent and Teachers' tab containing fact sheets and a wealth of frequently asked questions answered by the campaign's resident psychologist.

Indigenous specific materials were developed and launched in May 2011. This includes a series of four comics, lesson plans and plays based on the theme of respect. The campaign has approached a number of people to become "community champions" to engage others within their community to promote the campaign and its messages. Materials specifically for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, such as press ads and brochures, have been developed and translated into 11 languages. This material is also available on the website.

The campaign website also provides contact details for a range of services, such as 1800 MYLINE (1800 695 463) which is a professional counselling line funded by the Government to assist young people. It provides free, confidential and professional counselling 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is important when talking about respectful relationships and violence with young people, to provide supports for those who have or may be experiencing relationship problems.

*The Line* has been around two years and the tracking research indicates good progress. While recognising that social change takes time, there are early indications young people are thinking about their attitudes and behaviours, and what it means to be in a respectful relationship.

### Respectful Relationships

Respectful Relationships is a primary prevention strategy that seeks to prevent sexual assault and domestic and family violence through education. The program works through a series of projects designed to test out different approaches in school and non-school settings, which includes major sporting codes. These projects work with young people (particularly young men) to raise their awareness of ethical behaviour, to develop protective behaviours, and to develop their skills in conducting respectful relationships. To date, 32 projects have been funded across Australia. In addition, four Indigenous specific Respectful Relationships projects have been funded under the Indigenous Family Safety Program.

An evaluation of the Respectful Relationships projects has commenced. The evaluation will be an important part of informing future directions and aims to examine program outcomes, the efficiency of the implementation of different program models, and how models are delivering on aspects of the National Association of Services Against Sexual Assault's National Standards for Prevention of Sexual Assault through Education.

The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has commenced work on to develop the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, which includes respectful relationship education. The draft curriculum is due to be developed by the end of 2012, followed by national consultation in the first half of 2013 for finalisation by the end of 2013.

### Community Action Grants

Community Action Grants (CAGs) support communities in reducing violence against women, as part of the National Plan. The grants work to make communities safe and free from violence by strengthening communities' ability to prevent, respond to and speak out against violence; changing community attitudes and behaviours so that violence against women is not tolerated; and encouraging community responsibility to support the reduction of violence against women. The grants support different communities, including a number of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Indigenous women, older women, and women with a disability. The grants have been distributed amongst 14 community and 3 national sporting organisations across the country to engage community members in a range of activities focused on primary prevention of violence against women and encouraging respectful relationships.

### Best practice for work in primary prevention

The development of best practice benchmarks for work in primary prevention, agreed under the National Plan, provides the opportunity to better integrate and leverage efforts across governments. This will be progressed during 2012-13.

The aim for developing these benchmarks is to create a set of criteria to judge the credibility and/or potential impact for a primary prevention project or approach, and to guide the development of new projects and approaches. Given the significant number of different organisations and levels of government active in the area of primary prevention, the development of benchmarks is important to help join up primary prevention activities and build understanding and capacity in primary prevention and help ensure consistent and complementary messages and approaches.

While there has been considerable research and ground work for the different elements of primary prevention, there are currently no agreed standards working across all primary prevention activities. The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development released the Respectful Relationships Education: Violence prevention and respectful relationships education in Victorian secondary schools. The report provides guidance on good practice criteria required to achieve violence prevention and respectful relationships education in schools as well as a basis for future policy and program development. A copy of the report can be found on the Department's website: [www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/respectrel.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/respectrel.htm)

The National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) has developed national standards for the primary prevention of sexual assault through education. These standards aim to assist in developing, implementing and evaluating educational programs that focus on the primary prevention of sexual assault. A copy of the report can be found on the NASASV website: [www.nasasv.org.au/Standards.htm](http://www.nasasv.org.au/Standards.htm)

#### Enhancing Service Delivery

Officials have worked together to progress a number of projects aimed at supporting improvements in service delivery. Key areas of progress are:

- National standards for telephone and/or online counselling services: extensive consultation with service providers and government agencies on existing standards has been undertaken. It is expected a report will be provided by October 2012 with recommendations on a way forward.
- Expand 1800RESPECT to support frontline workers: detailed consultation with stakeholders including state and territory officials identified gaps in availability of online resources for individual workers and organisations and awareness of existing support, particularly in rural and remote locations. Work has commenced to create an online portal and to promote support available particularly telephone support via 1800RESPECT.
- Women with Disability: building on work undertaken in ACT and SA, Women with Disability Australia is undertaking broad consultations to analyse service delivery barriers for women with disability, identify and develop resources for key areas where services could adopt new or promising practices and identify possible areas for structural reform to improve access for women with disability who experience or are at risk of violence.
- National Workforce development: there is an identified need for more holistic information and analysis about trends, gaps and possible workforce priorities across the domestic violence and sexual assault sectors. The Workforce Research Centre

has been engaged to look at the national workforce agenda within an analytical framework which takes into account broader sectoral conditions of: the core nature of service delivery; the context of deployment and development of labour; and systems of education and training. A multistage research design has been proposed including in-depth interviews with key informants, analysis of existing workforce data and mapping to identify current and emerging workforce capacity issues and organisational case studies

- Indigenous community safety planning: All 29 Remote Service Delivery (RSD) priority communities have committed to undertake community safety planning activities through their Local Implementation Plans. Community safety planning aims to ensure that local knowledge guides actions to assist police, service providers and communities tackle the causes and consequences of safety together through processes the community owns. Community safety planning is at different stages across RSD sites and is being monitored by relevant state, territory and Commonwealth governments.

#### Child Awareness Approaches

- Announced on 30 March 2012 aims to promote better understanding of the relationship between child abuse and neglect and other issues such as domestic/family violence, mental illness, sexual abuse and substance abuse. Through this initiative, the Australian Government is providing 43 organisations with \$5.7 million in new funding for projects to assist existing services to promote, adopt or enhance good practice and help strengthen the capacity of communities to develop and deliver local solutions.

#### Strengthening Justice Responses

Work has progressed in a number of areas:

- Perpetrator intervention research: Drawing on the input from jurisdictions, service providers and academics, identification of key gaps in existing evidence and knowledge base on perpetrator interventions, namely:
  - high quality evaluation studies of offender intervention programs to develop the evidence base for program outcomes or effectiveness, especially in relation to domestic violence;
  - the development of reliable and valid screening and assessment tools in order to more closely match programs to offender characteristics and to ensure that the initial screening and assessment process is effective; and
  - determining what program components are effective for which target groups in reducing recidivism.
- Support for a longitudinal study into men's behaviour change interventions, by Monash University and Violence Free Australia, which aims to follow up to 1,000 men who have participated in a behaviour change program and their partners for a period of up to three years following intervention to determine the effect of interventions on participants and their partners and consider the role of program and client characteristics on behaviour change.
- Victim focused justice responses: The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) has commenced research to explore how particular reforms such as

legislative reform have improved sexual assault victims' experience of justice within the courts. The purpose of the research is to identify victim-focussed approaches that enable the justice needs of the victim to be met and the implications of reform within the conventional justice system versus implementing an alternative justice system for victims. The research is expected to take around 12 months.

- The Australian Institute of Family Studies with the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Victoria Police jointly hosted a national two day symposium on how sexual offending is presented to and tried within the criminal courts. The purpose of the symposium was to bring police, lawyers, legal officers, judiciary, academics and researchers together to explore options to enhance the relevance and meaning of evidence in criminal justice responses to sexual assault with the overall aim of improving responses to perpetrators and improving victims' access to justice.
- National Domestic Violence Order Scheme: Under the auspices of the Select Council on Law and Justice, significant work has been undertaken to establish a National Domestic Violence Order Scheme with draft legislation being developed and considered by a working group of Commonwealth, state and territory officials. States and territories have agreed to use their best endeavours to ensure the legislation is passed in a timely manner. A technical working group consisting of police members, court representation and policy officers from all states and territories and the Commonwealth is currently consulting with CrimTrac regarding the use of its National Police Reference System to support information sharing.
- National Framework of Rights and Services for Victims of Crime: Officials supporting the Select Council on Law and Justice have commenced work to develop a framework to:
  - support a coordinated approach to providing services to victims of crime in Australia;
  - identify principles underpinning national approaches to supporting the rights of victims and delivering services through a national framework; and
  - promote an improved level of collaboration between jurisdictions in addressing the needs of victims of crime including priority areas for future work and identification of gaps.

#### Building the Evidence Base

Work is well progressed with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to conduct the PSS in 2012. The ABS has completed the process of recruiting and training interviewers to deliver the survey. Reporting from the survey is currently on track to be available in the second half of 2013.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been executed with VicHealth to re-run the NCAS in 2014. Planning and staff recruitment is proceeding.

Work has commenced towards the development of a National Data Collection and Reporting Framework. The first step is to produce a single overarching, framework for data needs analysis across the areas of domestic violence and sexual assault. This will ensure future priorities across states and territories are based on robust evidence and facts. The ABS undertake the work to develop the first phase of the framework.

### National Centre of Excellence

Work is progressing towards the development of the National Centre of Excellence (the NCE). The NCE is a key strategy to deliver on the National Plan's goal of improving the evidence base and its application towards enhancing policy, programs and practice. Research that identifies prevention and early intervention activities across a range of services has the potential to lessen the costs of domestic violence to individuals and the community.