

## THE PROJECTS

## SECTION

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# Working with Children & Young People

*This section examines projects aimed at children and young people. Whilst the literature points to 'the earlier the better' approach in relation to interventions to reduce the negative impacts upon children exposed to violence, adolescence is also seen as a key time to change attitudes and behaviour before they are adopted in adult behaviour.<sup>135</sup>*

*These projects provide a mix of awareness raising, changing behaviour and intervention. Through art, performance, schools-based programs, peer programs, websites and resource kits, these programs challenge the culture that supports and encourages violence.*

## Solving the Jigsaw: Changing the Culture of Violence (Loddon Campaspe Region, Victoria, ongoing)

*case study*

### KEY INFO

Solving the Jigsaw is run by the Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprise (EASE), a family violence outreach service that has operated in the Bendigo area since 1994. Jigsaw is a comprehensive schools-based violence prevention program that seeks to 'change the culture of violence' through weekly courses run over 20-60 weeks with a range of schools throughout the Loddon Campaspe region.

### BACKGROUND

EASE has its roots in providing support to women and their children around family violence, pregnancy, parenting and drug and alcohol problems. Recognising the serious impact of family violence upon children, and how few children it was able to reach through its service in any ongoing way, EASE sought to extend its work with children. The issues facing young people in the Bendigo region contributed to the need for this program: the youth suicide rate is more than double in the region compared to Victoria as a whole, and alcohol abuse rates are much higher. In 1997 EASE developed a schools-based program, aiming to reach a large number of children and work with them to create a safe environment for addressing issues and actively supporting alternatives and solutions to violence.

## AIM

Solving the Jigsaw aims to change the ‘culture of violence’ and build a ‘culture of wellbeing’ in schools and more broadly within the community. The program does this through working with young people in upper primary and lower high schools, targeting the age range ‘*where early intervention and prevention programs are likely to have significant and long term impacts*’.<sup>136</sup> The program works to provide children with skills designed to increase their safety, such as conflict resolution, assertiveness and anger management; to provide an environment where children can address difficult and painful topics safely; and to promote support networks and understanding between students, teachers, parents and external support services.<sup>137</sup>

## PROJECT DETAILS

In 1997 EASE approached eight primary and secondary schools in the Bendigo area and discussed the idea, proposing topics, objectives and possible ways to integrate the program into the school curriculum. EASE kept the project detail minimal at this stage in order to involve the schools in consultation about the project’s development. Six of these schools were interested in the program, and Solving the Jigsaw gained funding to begin work in two schools. A reference committee made up of representatives from EASE, schools, parents and services in the region was established to further develop the project’s implementation.

The program is now a comprehensive schools-based program in the Loddon Campaspe region working to ‘strengthen connectedness, belonging and resilience’ in young people. The program is based on two key premises associated with early intervention. Jigsaw connects ‘at risk’ behaviours such as bullying with later problems such as substance abuse, suicide and violence, and believes that ‘these destructive behaviours can be addressed through facilitated programs that create a safe environment for young people where self-esteem, resilience and connectedness can be fostered’.<sup>138</sup>

The program is delivered by an EASE trained facilitator in one hour sessions run each week over 20 weeks. In many schools students now participate over three years – providing them with a 60 week program. Schools pay roughly half the cost of Jigsaw, with the other half met by EASE through funds from the Victorian government and philanthropic trusts.

Jigsaw’s approach is to involve the entire class, with an aim of reaching all students, not just those directly affected by violence. The program structure is flexible to allow issues to be explored in more depth and for unexpected issues and discussion to be given an airing. Topics for a twenty week course include ‘I’m Gorgeous’, ‘Effects of Violence’, ‘Power in Groups’, ‘Exploring Anger’, ‘Loss and Grief’, and ‘Feelings and Emotions’. Jigsaw works closely with the classroom teacher, welfare coordinator, principal and other staff in the school to offer support and share resources. Positive outcomes for students include recognising and naming behaviours; increased self-knowledge; and assertiveness and anger management. Students also gain skills in conflict resolution and mediation; and in understanding and taking constructive action on issues around violence.<sup>139</sup>

In addition, Jigsaw offers professional development to teachers and runs sessions for parents which reflect and discuss the students’ program, as well as discussing adolescence, parenting styles, conflict resolution, building confidence in parenting, and self esteem. This whole-of-school approach aims to develop robust, honest and trusting relationships within school communities.

Since 1998, Jigsaw has also run targeted groups with ‘at risk’ older students, allowing the facilitator to spend more time with individual students. These groups are drawn from Year 8 -10 and are small and sex-segregated. Each school decides which students to invite to these sessions.

Between 1997 and 2003 Jigsaw worked in 56 schools with over 7,000 students between 9 and 15 years, ran two twelve month training courses for program facilitators and undertook a range of professional development sessions.<sup>140</sup> In 2003 Jigsaw ran 123 programs in 43 schools with over 2,500 students. In 2004 EASE is reviewing the program, planning accreditation and will be trialing the program in the Grampians region.

The program is widely praised and has garnered a number of awards including a National Australian Drug Foundation Award (2000), Australian Violence Prevention Awards, a National Association for

Grief and Loss Award (2001) and a National Child Protection Award (2003). Democrats Senator Lyn Allison spoke of Jigsaw during the parliamentary debate on bullying in schools:

*The Children from Quarry Hill Primary School who have gone on to the local secondary school are now being noticed. Three years on, those children who had been in the program are now entering secondary school. They are being noticed for the ease with which they make that difficult transition from primary to secondary school; they are being noticed because they are turning into the leaders of their peer groups; and they are being noticed for their skills in conflict resolution and articulating their feelings appropriately. Teachers have reported that their own behaviours and their method of teaching in the classroom have changed as a result of witnessing the program in action.<sup>141</sup>*

## SOME KEY LESSONS

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### ★ Longer programs are more effective

Jigsaw delivers courses over 20-60 weeks in one hour weekly sessions allowing for the development of trust, the development of complex ideas and discussions, program flexibility, and the ongoing and consistent support required to effect change. The weekly program is flexible to allow response to students' immediate concerns and interests.

### ★ Offer programs to the entire class

Offering the program to the entire class involves everyone, not just victims and perpetrators, in addressing and understanding the impacts of violence and building a 'culture of wellbeing'.

### ★ A whole-of-school approach means change occurs on a number of levels

Involving and linking parents, teachers, students and external services through information sessions, professional development and ongoing parental support has provided opportunities for schools and communities to develop new approaches.

### ★ Partnership with schools is essential

The program has the greatest impact where there is a strong partnership between the program and the school community.

### ★ A long-term commitment has meant excellent program development and reach

The program is received very positively by students and teachers. In a recent evaluation 73% of students reported that Jigsaw had helped them sort out problems and 63% said it had made them change their ideas and behaviours. Ninety-two percent of teachers in the evaluation reported that the program had impacted upon participating children and upon themselves as teachers. Seventy-five percent of teachers reported that the program impacted on the whole community.

### ★ Further resources are required to extend the program

Solving the Jigsaw has the potential to become a program offered state-wide. An increase in funding resources would make this possible. With further support, suitable people from a welfare or teaching background could be trained as Solving the Jigsaw facilitators, allowing the program to be applied much more widely.

## RESOURCES

For more information on **Solving the Jigsaw** contact Carla Meurs, EASE  
tel: 03 5443 4945 e: [easebend@netcon.net.au](mailto:easebend@netcon.net.au)

## Respect Protect Connect (Southern Metropolitan Melbourne, ongoing)

# case study

### KEY INFO

Respect Protect Connect is a schools-based violence prevention program run with young people in eleven local government areas in the Southern Metropolitan Region. A partnership between Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) and South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA), Respect Protect Connect works with young women and young men from Years 7-10 (and sometimes up to Year 12) in sex-segregated groups run by young facilitators on a peer education model.

### BACKGROUND

Respect Protect Connect started with an anti-violence pilot conducted by WHISE with young women in 1996. A strong recognition of the need to work with young men on violence prevention came out of this project. At the same time, SECASA was developing materials for promoting non-violent behaviours for young men, and out of these activities, the partnership grew. From the basis of two valuable sets of materials, 'Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself' for girls, and 'Respecting Ourselves, Respecting Others' for boys, WHISE and SECASA developed a joint program, Respect Protect Connect.

Nolan Alles, from SECASA, places Respect Protect Connect within the context of the convergence of violence, crime and gender in the community:

*While race, gun ownership, mental illness or the use of drugs and alcohol are often posited as the supposed 'roots' of much violence within our community, the deep-seated issue of the dominant way society shaped the behaviour of men from an early age is – continually – excluded from interrogation. In addition, while young men are demonised, the mass media sanctions other forms of covert male violence. As such high rates of domestic violence occurring in homes around the country, war mongering and terrorism, and the long term imprisonment of refugee children and families in detention centres by the state are often ignored – both by government and the media – as a form of male perpetrated aggression. All this on top of the largely unquestioned violence played out on our sports fields, cinemas, and household television screens daily.<sup>142</sup>*

### AIM

The project has the overall aim of providing young people with information about violence and ways to look after themselves. For young women the program focuses on providing information and strategies to deal with relationship violence, and protecting and respecting themselves. For young men, the project aims to promote healthy, respectful and non-violent ways to relate to themselves and others while encouraging broader, alternative understandings of masculinity.

### PROJECT DETAILS

Respect Protect Connect is conducted as a series of workshops, which are run by young facilitators from the age of 18-25 years using a peer educator model. Offered in single sex groups, the program works with young people towards harm reduction and violence prevention.

Originally developed as a one-off workshop session of 80-100 minutes, the course has now expanded to provide four, six and ten week courses in schools, dealing with themes including anger management, positive relationships, bullying, safe partying, masculinity, self esteem and dealing with problems. The cost of the program is covered jointly by the schools and by Respect Protect Connect through funding from the Victorian Department of Human Services.

Single sex workshops are offered to maximise the benefits for both young men and young women; to allow for differing maturity levels in teenage boys and girls, particularly in the lower year levels; to provide girls and boys (who may already have experienced violence) a safe space to raise issues; to reduce the need for students to impress each other, 'act out', or victimise others when bringing up painful issues; to allow for differences in learning styles; and to decrease the tension levels that often arise in mixed groups when talking about issues surrounding sex, sexuality and violence.<sup>143</sup>

The approach with young men is 'non-shaming, non-blaming'; and with *all* the young people, the approach brought to the sessions by the peer educators is one that encourages trust, tolerance, accessibility and openness, whilst not condoning or supporting violent behaviours or attitudes.

The 'peer education' model allows participants to relate to someone roughly their own age, encourages trust and positive role modelling, and is also specifically aimed at increasing the leadership and community participation of the peer educators. Forty-seven peer educators have been trained by WHISE and SECASA since 1996, and all have gone on to employment education or to work in community development.<sup>144</sup> Many of the peer educators have experienced relationship violence as well. Peer educators are not mandated to report disclosures, but work to empower young people to take action to maximise their safety.<sup>145</sup>

By the end of 1999, over 50 schools and 8,000 students had participated in Respect Protect Connect.<sup>146</sup> In 2001, 200 workshops were conducted with nearly 4,500 male and female students.<sup>147</sup> The course is further diversifying. In 2002 Respect Protect Connect ran a bullying and masculinity workshop with Year 8 students from an orthodox Jewish school, and a positive sexuality workshop with young men from a sexual offenders group. In 2003 Respect Protect Connect worked with students in a special development school.<sup>148</sup>

## SOME KEY LESSONS

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### ★ A Shared Philosophy is Essential

Both WHISE and SECASA utilise a pro-feminist framework, with a belief that this philosophy offers something to both young men and women. Nolan Alles from SECASA says, that 'in doing so, we recognise the inhibiting nature of dominant discourses surrounding gender for both young men and women and the violence and inequality that such discourses engender in practical ways.' Kiri Bear, from WHISE, discusses what this approach means for their programs:

*We acknowledge the social and systemic inequalities that give rise to differences between men's and women's experiences. These inequalities are taken into consideration when we work with women so that their needs are met and their experiences are validated in ways that are not normally supported or recognised by our society.*<sup>149</sup>

WHISE and SECASA clearly define and agree upon program processes, strategies, aims and desired outcomes.

### ★ Engaging schools requires a strategic and consistent approach

Initial frustrations in getting a diversity of schools to engage with the program led to strategies which included personal contact with key teachers such as Student Welfare Coordinators, Year Level Coordinators and follow up. Kiri Bear from WHISE says:

*A major difficulty in working with schools is making contact with teachers; you have to be a bit creative in finding ways of meeting up with teachers at conferences and forums, youth and student welfare coordinator networks, via the school focused youth service etc. Several trips are often made to a school to explain the philosophy and benefits of the program before the program begins.*<sup>150</sup>

### ★ Longer programs are more effective

Respect Protect Connect has developed from one-off sessions in 1996 to four, six and ten week programs.

★ **Long term development increases impact and program reach**

Evaluations and staff feedback have continually proved very positive. Secondary school staff report that the program has promoted cultural change within schools. Participating schools have made a number of changes including reviewing and promoting bullying and harassment policies; violence-related professional development; following up Respect Protect Connect using materials provided; and engaging with local services to support violence-related professional development. The outcomes for young people include young men recognising the links between violence and dominant forms of masculinity, and young women gaining a clear understanding of their rights and ways to uphold them.

★ **Peer education and sex-segregation works – particularly with older students**

The program's approach, using male and female peer educators to run single sex groups, has proved very effective. Sex-segregation allows for increased participant safety and open discussion, particularly at an age where young people are exploring their own sexuality. Female and male components of the program complement each other through their audience specific approach to issues affecting young people's lives. The peer education model fosters trust and positive role modelling. Peer educators also benefit greatly in terms of their own professional development.

★ **Resources are required to develop the program**

A lack of resources is a major challenge facing the further development of the project. Respect Protect Connect is keen to see the program spread to other regions in Victoria, to schools and organisations including sporting clubs and workplaces. Long-term evaluation; professional development; improved training; and further development and review of program resources are needed, and require further funding.

**RESOURCES**

Contact **Respect Protect Connect Young Women's Project**

Women's Health in the South East **tel:** 03 9783 3211 **e:** whise@vicnet.net.au

Contact **Respect Protect Connect Young Men's Project:**

South East Centre Against Sexual Assault **tel:** 03 9928 8741

**e:** secasa@southernhealth.org.au **w:** www.secasa.com.au

**Seen and Not Hurt** (Eastern Metropolitan Melbourne, 2003-2004)*case study***KEY INFO**

Seen and Not Hurt is a joint project of the Eastern Family Violence Network (FVN) and Anglicare Knox Family Services, working with young people to create artworks around family violence. The project is designed to give a voice to the experiences of young people (including survivors) and has used their artworks to develop accessible family violence prevention materials for young people, and raise community awareness about the impact of family violence on young people.

**BACKGROUND**

The project comes out of a range of community arts projects Eastern FVN has undertaken with survivors including the Victorious Quilt Connection (p. 37), the Clothesline Project (p. 39), and Freedom Flyers (p. 46). The experience of the Eastern FVN is that community arts projects have proven extremely popular, with multiple benefits for both survivors of violence and the broader community via community education. The materials created in such projects have an ongoing life as resources for community education and professional training. Commenting on the genesis of the project, project coordinator Barbara Younger says: *'I realised there wasn't much around by young people, in their own language, using their own artwork'*.<sup>151</sup>

**AIMS**

The aims of Seen and Not Hurt were threefold. The project sought to give a voice to young people's experiences and the impact of family violence on young people; to raise community awareness around the impact on young people; and to provide information to young people about support services available for themselves and adults they are concerned about.

**PROJECT DETAILS**

Seen and Not Hurt has been conducted with three secondary colleges in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. The project has three phases, with the first phase being the creation and exhibition of artworks during Week Without Violence 2003. The second phase, in 2004, used artworks selected by the young artists to create information resources for young people, including small wallet cards, postcards and posters. The third phase, also in 2004, will involve using all of the art and writing to develop a resource for young people, teachers and schools, including a booklet and CD of all the art works.

At the outset, a focus group with young people was held to determine the kind of family violence resources they would find attractive and useful. This consultation shaped the planned artworks. Using this information, the project then sought recommendations for potential participants from both school art teachers and welfare staff, and chose from amongst these on the basis of young people's artistic ability and enthusiasm. The involvement of Sue Sanders, a Youth Worker from Anglicare Knox Family Services, who was already running programs in the three participating schools, provided an invaluable link to the schools and students.

Conducted each lunchtime for one week in each school, the workshops were attended by over 40 young people, with 10-17 young people participating in each school. The artists were given lunch and provided with a wide range of arts materials, both to help ensure a diversity of works, and to allow them to work with the materials that most interested them. Phase One of the project finished with a ten day exhibition and information stall at the Knox Shopping Centre, a popular meeting place for young people that afforded great public exposure. The Centre provided free space and security, and the exhibition was launched by the Mayor of Knox. It attracted local newspaper coverage and a great deal of community attention.

Phase Two was completed in 2004, with the artists consulted about which works should become family violence materials for young people: postcards, wallet cards and posters. The materials were launched during Youth Week in March 2004 by some of the young people involved.

Further development of materials for schools is now underway.

## SOME KEY LESSONS

### ★ Creative arts have a 'unique ability' to reach people

Using the art of young people gave legitimacy to the message about the impact of family violence on young people. Project coordinator Barbara Younger says:

*The unique ability of art to convey the experience of the victim has a profound impact on viewers, more powerful than words ... This was great work with a depth of insight and I was struck by the level of internalisation of the impact – so many images of isolation, despair and loneliness. Adults were fascinated by the honest and confronting perspectives of young people. One nurse said that the poster 'sent shivers down her spine'.<sup>152</sup>*

The artworks are also a permanent resource. Powerful artwork produced by local groups serves as a voice of the community and can be utilised as a valuable resource for ongoing community education and professional training.

### ★ Consultation and involvement of young people ensured project relevance

The process has placed a high priority on young people's involvement in project decision making. Participants had input into the kinds of family violence materials young people would like to see and use; were given a wide range of options in terms of art materials; and chose the images to be used in the awareness and education materials. The artwork was displayed at a local shopping centre, which young people identified with and hung out at. These approaches have helped maximise the effectiveness of the project, both for the participants and the target audience of the education materials.

One young artist said:

*[I liked] the fact that it was open. You could express your own views and opinions on family violence. I also loved the fact that we talked about family violence and were able to discuss how to change it.<sup>153</sup>*

### ★ Powerful visual messages displayed in an accessible public space are very effective

Rather than asking people to come to a venue especially to see the exhibition, the project held the exhibition in a public space already used by thousands of people. The exhibition attracted great media and public attention, including coverage on the front page of Knox Journal, which is delivered free to every home in the area. Barbara Younger notes:

*People were really interested in the exhibition. We had a stack of leaflets, lots of people were looking at the exhibition, and one worker had to queue to see the artwork at the weekend.<sup>154</sup>*

### ★ Partnerships must involve those working with and in schools

The project was only possible because of the partnership with Anglicare, who were already working in the schools involved.

### ★ More time was required for workshops and organisation

A lunchtime workshop was not really long enough for the project. More time was required for schools to respond to the project idea and organise participation in workshops and launches.

## RESOURCES

**Wallet Cards, Postcards, and Posters** are available from Eastern Family Violence Network. Contact through the Victorian FVPN **w:** [www.vfpvn.org.au](http://www.vfpvn.org.au)

**Bursting the Bubble** (Australia, 2003)*case study***KEY INFO**

Bursting the Bubble was the first international website for young people on the subject of abuse in families. The site and associated materials were created by the Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC), and include a website – [www.burstingthebubble.com](http://www.burstingthebubble.com) – postcard, booklet and poster about family violence for young people. Bursting the Bubble was launched in 2003 for Week Without Violence.

**BACKGROUND**

Bursting the Bubble was created in response to the lack of resources specifically designed for young people on the subject of abuse, and to young people's feeling of disempowerment in services designed to help them. DVIRC notes:

*While adults had listened to them and tried to help, they had not really understood. In fact young people seemed to experience disempowerment through both their experience of violence, and by having their survival skills ignored or questioned by helping systems.<sup>155</sup>*

**AIM**

Bursting the Bubble aims to provide supportive information to young people who have been abused (physically, emotionally or sexually) or neglected by a family member, or who have witnessed domestic violence. The materials seek to empower young people to act through making the processes of police, child protection and other important agencies clear and comprehensible.

**PROJECT DETAILS**

Bursting the Bubble was based on information gathered from young people living in refuges, and builds on their knowledge and experience to assist other young people experiencing family violence. The site is specifically designed to encourage young people to make informed and thoughtful decisions on their own safety. It includes information on housing assistance; legal issues; support and advocacy services; a form to devise your own safety plan; and checklists for assessing how things are at home. Its title was overwhelmingly affirmed by young people as reflecting the internal pressure of trying to hold it together. The site contains lots of young people's stories and advice. Acknowledging that many young people turn to their friends for support, Bursting the Bubble also has advice for supporting friends who may be in abusive situations. A 16 page pocket booklet, 'Something Not Right at Home?', was also created, reflecting the tone and information available on the website.

Bursting the Bubble was launched at a public forum in October 2003 by Deborah Light (a journalist who has personal experience of family violence, see p. 32). It received significant coverage in the national media. Promotional postcards were created and distributed through Avant Card outlets in venues across Victoria, and were posted to all Victorian secondary schools. A promotional poster was also produced and distributed.

Each Family Violence Prevention Network (FVPN) distributed Bursting the Bubble materials as part of the Week Without Violence 2003, with each agency adopting their own distribution strategy. The Grampians FVPN linked up with the School Focused Project Officer and made a pack of laminated posters and information which was sent to every school in their region. As a result of this they have received many requests for information, and for speaking and training. In the Southern Metropolitan Region this information was also taken into schools, with information sessions run by the Inner South Community Health Service.

*It's easy to understand and shows that other people experience the same things too. It made me feel I wasn't alone. (16 year old girl)*

*Good links, the true stories help you feel like you aren't a freak and it's brilliant that same sex marriages are acknowledged. (17 year old boy)<sup>156</sup>*

*It helped me a lot mentally. And it made me realise that some things that have gone on, are not right. It helped me to understand things that I've always been afraid to mention or say to friends and family. Thank you! (15 year old girl)<sup>157</sup>*

## SOME KEY LESSONS

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### ★ The web is a great way to reach young people

Since the website was uploaded in October 2003, it has received over 2,000 hits every month. The website is increasing in popularity, with a significant number of international visitors.

### ★ Young people want information from other young people like them

Feedback received so far indicates that, for young people, one of the most valuable things about this project is that it provides stories and quotes from other young people about how they coped with family violence. They also particularly appreciate the quiz and question and answer format of some of the content, as this enables them to apply the information to their own personal situation. Young people can provide feedback on the site via an online form.

### ★ Schools need support if they are going to distribute materials

One of the major challenges is how to support schools to feel comfortable in distributing materials like this to young people. Ideally, resources such as these should be supported by funded training for teachers on how to respond to the issues raised by young people who read the material.

## RESOURCES

**Bursting the Bubble** w: [www.burstingthebubble.com](http://www.burstingthebubble.com)

**'Something Not Right at Home?' Booklets** and **Posters** are available from DVIRC:

tel: 03 9486 9866 e: [dvirc@dvirc.org.au](mailto:dvirc@dvirc.org.au) w: [www.dvirc.org.au](http://www.dvirc.org.au)

**When Love Hurts** (Australia, 2003)*case study***BACKGROUND**

When Love Hurts is a website created by the Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC) in 1998. When Love Hurts came out of two significant research projects: the 1996 Australian Bureau of Statistics *Women's Safety Survey* which found that 7% of women who had been abused by their current partners in the last 12 months were aged 18-24 years, compared to 2% aged 45-54 years; and a 1997 global internet user survey which found that 46% of internet users aged 10-18 years were female. Based on these studies DVIRC decided to create a website as an experiment in reaching young women.

**AIM**

The website – When Love Hurts: a guide for girls on love, respect and abuse in relationships – aimed to provide accessible and private information directly to young women in schools, homes and libraries.

**PROJECT DETAILS**

The site was created in consultation with a diversity of young women, from students to young women in detention. DVIRC found these women were very reluctant to contact authorities as they were fearful their independence would be taken away, and wanted enough information to allow them to think through solutions themselves rather than just call a helpline. The young women consulted also didn't identify with the term 'domestic violence', as much of the violence they experienced wasn't in a domestic setting, and the term was associated with adults cohabiting in marriage-like relationships. DVIRC used the young women's feedback to tailor the information and advice offered in 'When Love Hurts'. The site contains true stories from girls who have 'been there'; quizzes and information to help young women decide whether their relationship is abusive; a thinking sheet to help weigh up the pros and cons of the relationship; a safety plan; information on legal rights and services; information on young women in lesbian relationships; and a section for friends and family. The site was promoted through search engines, links, and magazines for young women and won the 2001 Australian Violence Prevention Award.

Coming out of When Love Hurts was Relationships, a wallet sized interactive 24 page booklet for young women. The booklet was based on the website and the stories submitted to it, and was developed in consultation with a diverse group of young women aged 15-22 years old. Relationships was launched in 2000, and is very popular in secondary schools.

**SOME KEY LESSONS****★ The web is a highly effective way to reach young women**

The site had 3,000 hits in the first week. When Love Hurts was the first website on this subject and the concept has since been replicated by organisations in the USA, New Zealand, Japan and in Australia.

**★ Interactive web site features give young women a voice**

The most popular part of the site allows young women to submit their own personal stories about abuse, and their advice to others. DVIRC created a feedback form for the site and has received over a thousand stories and very positive feedback. Some of these stories have been published on the website.

**RESOURCES**

**When Love Hurts:** [www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove](http://www.dvirc.org.au/whenlove) **Relationships Booklet** available from DVIRC **tel:** 03 9486 9866 **e:** [dvirc@dvirc.org.au](mailto:dvirc@dvirc.org.au) **w:** [www.dvirc.org.au](http://www.dvirc.org.au)

## The Majic Bus (Barwon South West Region, Victoria, 2000)

# case study

### AIMS

The Majic Bus Project was run by the Emma House Domestic Violence Service, part of the Barwon South Western Family Violence Prevention Network, for Week Without Violence 2000. Responding to the state-wide theme 'Family Violence Hurts Kids Too', the community bus project was designed in consultation with young people. The idea behind the Majic Bus was to involve a diversity of young people communicating the theme 'Family Violence Hurts Kids Too' through their own artwork, and then display the work on something that would be seen by the whole community – a community bus.

### DETAILS

Emma House approached the owner of Warrnambool Bus Lines and secured access to a bus, an undercover work area, and twelve months of sponsored bus display time. A local paint supplier was approached to supply paints at cost, and the project established media liaison with the *Warrnambool Standard* at the outset, who committed ongoing media coverage. The first media coverage called for interested members of the community to participate, and two artists studying at TAFE joined the project as a result.

A call for young artists went out through a range of community and school organisations including the Gundijmara Aboriginal Cooperative to recruit young Koori artists; the Warrnambool City Junior Council Committee for young people attending high school; the East Warrnambool Primary School for younger artists; and Kulcha Shift for young people who had already left school. A diversity of young people from ages 1-17 years contributed images and drawings. Finally, over one weekend the bus itself was painted. Thirteen of the young artists worked with a professional artist and the TAFE students to assist in the supervision and transferring of the drawings on paper onto the bus. The bus was launched during Reclaim the Night march and was seen in the community daily for the next two years. The Majic Bus Project received a 2002 National Crime Prevention Award.

Deborah Downes, the project coordinator, reflects on the project:

*It was a challenge to get the bus, considering the issue was domestic violence, and we did it very delicately ... We worked for about two months behind the scenes in the lead up to the bus painting day. We asked kids to draw pictures 'how a child might feel'; 'how a child should feel' ... The kids had a great time. Warrnambool's not a big town; lots of people were talking about it, and the painted bus was used every day for two years.<sup>158</sup>*

### A KEY LESSON

#### ★ Involve the local community to build support and ownership

This small project took a very inclusive approach and involved many sectors of the local community – community organisations, businesses, schools, a diversity of young people, and the local media – which increased its impact, community ownership and awareness raising potential.

*example***REAL LIFE** (Hume Region, Victoria, ongoing)

The REAL Life program is a schools-based relationship violence education program coordinated by the Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE), part of the Hume Family Violence Prevention Network. Coming out of a recognition of the lack of local programs around this issue, REAL Life was the initiative of domestic violence and community workers in the region. The program encourages local agencies to work collaboratively with secondary schools to increase students' awareness of relationship violence, and link young people to local services.

Using an action research model, WHGNE conducted a pilot in 2001. The program developed over two years to become four or more sessions delivered to Year 8 by trained facilitators. With support from the local Department of Employment, Education and Training, sixty people were trained as facilitators, including domestic violence workers; school nurses; teachers; school chaplains; youth workers; social workers; Centre Against Sexual Assault counsellors; and community nurses. Facilitators worked alongside the REAL Life project worker using a facilitator's manual created by the program. The program explores the concept of relationships, the nature of rewarding and unrewarding relationships, and the impact of inappropriate use of power in relationships. It aims to help students develop the skills to foster healthy relationships and to seek support when relationships are unhealthy.

Whilst the commitment to the project at a local level is excellent, the challenge for the project will be to develop a coordinated approach across the region and provide ongoing support and training for teachers and workers. For the family violence field, the challenge will be maintaining the relationships with local schools and allocating the time and resources to support prevention education strategies.

**RESOURCES**

**The REAL Life Manual** is available from Women's Health Goulburn North East.  
tel: 03 57223009 e: [whealth@whealth.com.au](mailto:whealth@whealth.com.au)

*example***YIPTI- Fun With Feelings** (South Australia, ongoing)

Yipti is an interactive resource kit which helps children explore and express their feelings, in three Indigenous languages – Pitjantjatjara, Ngarrindjeri, Kurna – and English. Yipti was produced by Port Youth Theatre, now called Kurruru Indigenous Youth Performing Arts Inc. Yipti was the initiative of Port Youth Theatre's Aboriginal Advisory Group who, with the advice of Elders in the group, wished to bring awareness of conflict resolution skills to young members of their communities through a creative process.<sup>159</sup> Yipti began with Warritti #1 in 1997, a program run once a week after school for five weeks, with Indigenous children aged 5-8 years and 9-12 years. Children explored their feelings in a safe and creative way, through cartoons and drawing with an Aboriginal artist, a cartoonist, and Indigenous and non-indigenous community workers. Based on the success and evaluation of Warritti #1, Warritti #2 was held in 1998. This time, children worked with a puppeteer and Indigenous workers over six weeks to make and play with puppets around issues of conflict and emotions. Yipti is

now available as four booklets on feelings – happy, sad, angry and scared – which came out of Warritti #1; a facilitator's workbook; and a video on Warritti # 2. The resource kit is designed to allow the program to be replicated and adapted to a range of settings. Yipti can also be conducted with non-indigenous children.<sup>160</sup>

### RESOURCES

**Yipti: Fun With Feelings** is available from Kurruru Indigenous Youth Performing Arts Inc; 135 Vincent St, Port Adelaide 5015 **tel:** 08 8341 1150 **e:** kurruru@chariot.net.au (cost \$47: \$40 per kit plus postage and handling).  
Yipti can also be ordered through PADV **w:** www.padv.dpmc.gov.au

*example*

### Brainstorm Productions

(Australia, ongoing)

Established in 1983, Brainstorm Productions brings plays about young people, violence and equality to schools across Australia. Winner of the 2001 Violence Prevention Award and the NSW Schools Performance Unit Frater Award for seven consecutive years, Brainstorm tackles issues including child abuse; domestic violence; suicide; substance abuse; depression; bullying; and prejudice. Every year Brainstorm performs to over 300,000 students from ages 5-18 years. One and a half million students have seen 'Sticks & Stones' – a show about conflict resolution, anger management and domestic violence. The Gippsland Family Violence Prevention Network organised Brainstorm to perform for four Gippsland schools in the lead up to Week Without Violence 2003. Networker Sarah Corbell reports:

*The kids loved it. They sat on the floor for one hour, the play reached 700 students over two days, and the company engaged with the kids on a whole range of issues including talking about the difference between acting and reality. One of the schools has a full time social worker, and after the play lots of kids came to him and disclosed relationship violence; kids he had not engaged with before.*<sup>161</sup>

Based on this success, Gippsland FVPN organised another Gippsland tour with Brainstorm in 2004, with five schools and over 1,200 students participating.

### RESOURCES

**Brainstorm plays** cost \$4 per student and have a minimum fee of \$580 per play. Contact **Brainstorm Productions freecall:** 1800 676 224 **e:** info@brainstormproductions **w:** www.brainstormproductions.com.au

## example

**BIG hART** (Tasmania, ongoing)

BIG hART is an award winning Tasmanian organisation that works to create non-welfare solutions – combining arts intervention and community cultural development – working with marginalised young people and communities. BIG hART works with young people, communities and government, using creative arts projects as a focus for community change. Their approach takes a mentoring and advocacy role with participants and communities, encouraging new insights and new approaches to issues; increasing young people's participation in communities; linking in with community services to explore more effective and innovative delivery; and piloting innovative solutions to problems. In twelve years the organisation has worked with 4,000 young people and 28 communities throughout Australia on projects addressing issues including juvenile justice, self harm prevention, domestic violence, homelessness and racism. Projects engage professional artists and community cultural development workers to 'meet people wherever their life experience is at'<sup>162</sup> and include film, theatre, radio and new media. Recent Projects include '24hr SHIFT', a film installation piece addressing issues facing young people living in mining towns in Tasmania and NSW; 'Your Shoes, My Shoes', a reverse mentoring project with police and young people in NSW; and 'kNOT@home', a national film and storytelling project exploring homelessness and dispossession.

**RESOURCES**

Contact BIG hART **e:** [bighart@bigpond.com.au](mailto:bighart@bigpond.com.au) **w:** [www.bighart.org](http://www.bighart.org)

## examples

**More Ways of Working with Children and Young People****Parenting Information Kit** (Victoria, 2003)

*Choosing Positive Paths: A Resource Kit for Parents Concerned about Children who Have Experienced Violence* was produced by Women's Health West & Berry Street in 2003. The kit is a resource for parents whose children have experienced abuse and for community workers. Community and consumer consultation was the key to the success of the kit, and it has had excellent feedback. Users have found it accessible, and found the information in it new and relevant. Mothers – most of whom are parenting alone – have found the kit very useful and encouraging.

**RESOURCES**

***Choosing Positive Paths*** can be obtained from Women's Health West or Berry Street in hard copy or by downloading from **w:** [www.whwest.org.au](http://www.whwest.org.au) or [www.berrystreet.org](http://www.berrystreet.org)

**Professional Development for Teachers**

(Western Metropolitan Melbourne, 2000-2003)

Women's Health West has undertaken professional development with primary school teachers, designed to help teachers respond early and with confidence to signs of family violence. The program, 'You Don't Have to Go it Alone,' was developed in 2000 and ran for two years with schools in the Western Metropolitan Region. The program reached 74 teachers in five primary schools. Women's Health West are currently using their experience to input into the Brimbank Family Violence Project and identify good practice models through participation on a reference group. Workshops are being conducted and facilitated by the Brimbank Family Violence Project worker to develop a professional development training manual.

**Introducing Students to their local Family Violence Services**

(Barwon South West Region, 1999)

The Ethnic Youth Health Worker from Barwon Health Corio, part of the Barwon South West Family Violence Prevention Network, took English as a Second Language (ESL) students from the North Geelong Secondary College to visit a range of family violence services for young people in the area. The excursion came out of a family violence workshop run with students by Barwon Health Corio, where discussions revealed that few students knew of any services in Geelong. Services visited ranged from the Centre Against Sexual Assault to the hospital and the police station.

**Music, Poems and Posters**

**Rage Against Violence: Battle of the Bands** (Loddon Campaspe Region Victoria, 2002) was part of the Bendigo Week Without Violence 2002. Rage Against Violence involved young people 12-16 and 17-25 years, writing and performing music with the message that violence is not OK. Rage included prizes and an opportunity to record the songs at a local recording studio.

**A Poster Design Competition** (Loddon Campaspe Region, Victoria, 2003) was held as part of the Loddon Campaspe Week Without Violence 2003. The competition involved young people in two age groups, 5-12 years and 13-18 years, around the message violence is not OK.

**A Poster Competition** (Grampians Region, Victoria, 2003) was held in Ararat for Week Without Violence 2003. Four primary schools participated, responding to three different themes for three age brackets from Grade 1 to Grade 6 – 'I am ...', 'Kids Are...', 'Families Are ...'. The project received 150 entries. Prizes for each bracket, including encouragement prizes, were donated by local businesses and were presented by the Mayor. The presentation event was very well attended by schools, parents and local identities. The project received media coverage in the local newspaper, and forged links with local schools.