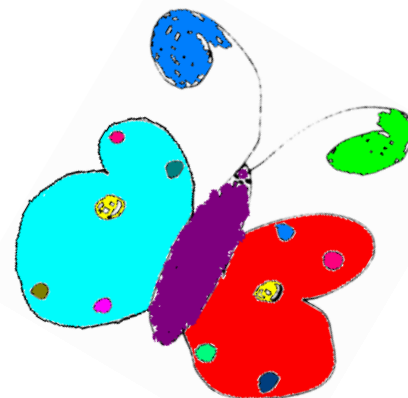


# Working With Children and Young People Living with Domestic Violence



 Working with  
Children

Presented by  
Leslie Gevers

  
GEVERSGODDARDJONES

# Child Witnesses to Domestic Violence

Access Economics in their Cost of Domestic Violence Project estimated that in 2002:

- 263,800 children lived in a household where domestic violence occurred.
- Of these, 181,200 witnessed violence
- Not included are children who lived with or witnessed violence in previous years but not in this year.

# Project Goals



- Scope and map services, resources and interventions within Australia for children living with domestic violence **with an emphasis on documenting and disseminating good practice**
- Document Australian and international good practice
- Develop good practice standards and tools to inform education and training competency and approaches
- Identify good practice characteristics and the features necessary for replicability.

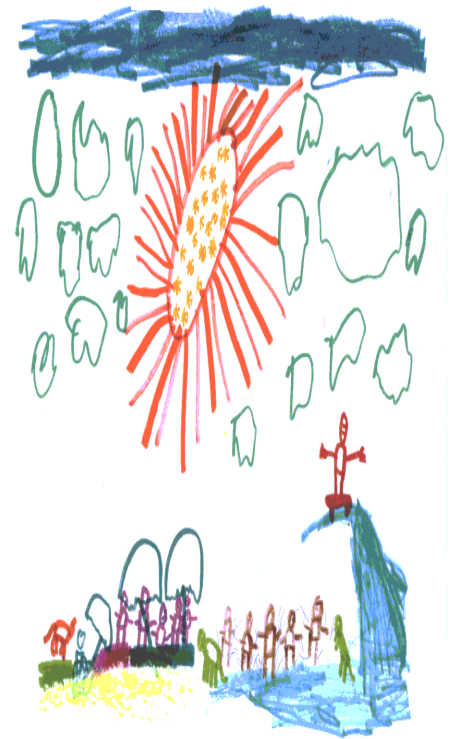
# Kids and DV Project



- The project built on the 1998 Queensland/PADV sponsored **Kids and DV** project
- The resources from this project sit alongside the Kids and DV resources

# Methodology

- Literature review – Australian and International
- Questionnaires and telephone interviews (to scope and map service providers throughout Australia)
- Forums throughout Australia on the Practice Standards and other issues
- Circulation of the Practice Standards for comment



# Resources

Two main resources for services working with children living with domestic violence came out of the project:

- A resource manual
- A range of web-based resources



# The Resource Manual

- Practice Standards for Working with Children and Young People Living With Domestic Violence
- Working with children from different groups (age groups, youth, Aboriginal and CALD)
- Models of intervention
- Good practice examples
- Tools and example forms to support continuous improvement in service delivery



# Obtaining the Manuals

The resource manual 'Working with Children' and the Kids and DV publications are available from:

**National Mailing and Marketing**

Email: [Debbie@nationalmailing.com.au](mailto:Debbie@nationalmailing.com.au)

Phone: (02) 6269-1000

# Web Based Resources

- A database of specialised services (148) throughout Australia who work with children and young people living with domestic violence
- A bibliography of relevant books, articles and papers
- A database of training programs/providers, educational programs, and other resources
- A bibliography of children's books
- Links to relevant websites
- *This presentation will be on the website next week*

[WWW.GGJ.BIZ](http://WWW.GGJ.BIZ)

# Practice Standards



- Six Standards underpinned by **elements and guidelines for practice**
- Developed through consultation with the sector (158 people/organisations contributed) and reflect service provider's priorities
- Are non-prescriptive - provide guidelines for practice and include examples of practices that support the elements within each standard
- The rationale for the guidelines practice is included

# The Standards are:



1. Services Strive to Continuously Improve
2. Services Have Defined Their Philosophy and Values
3. Services Promote the Safety and Rights of Clients
4. Services Are Accessible and Appropriate
5. Services are Culturally Relevant
6. Services Have Effective Staff

Preview

# What Do The Standards Mean for Practice?

The Standards are a framework for effective practice.

The service providers that contributed to the Standards believe that the best **outcomes** for clients can be achieved by working within the framework of the Standards.

# Outcomes

- Outcomes for clients are not specified in the Standards
- Outcomes vary depending on: service philosophy and values; the preferences of clients and their caregivers; available resources; methods of intervention; and must be determined by each service and based on the expressed needs of the client group

Working within the Standards means:

# 1: Continuously Try to Improve

- Make sure a consistent quality of service is provided that is responsive to individual's needs— be responsive to the needs of different gender, age groups and cultures
- Evaluate what you do – ask: does it work and try new things – be creative
- Be accountable – get feedback from clients and other players – respond to it
- Work with other services – learn from them and share with them

## 2: Define Your Philosophy and Values

- Work within a framework of domestic violence that acknowledges power and gender issues
- Recognise that domestic violence is a form of child abuse
- Maintain a child centred focus
- Work in a way that empowers all clients
- Work within a broad definition of family

## 3: Promote the Safety and Rights of Clients

- Make the safety needs of the child or young person the priority
- Recognise your legal and ethical obligations and responsibilities and ensure they are met
- Respect the rights and responsibilities of clients
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of clients
- Implement or work for early intervention and prevention strategies
- Advocate for the needs of children and young people

## 4: Make Sure Your Service is Accessible and Appropriate

- Ensure it is accessible to all people
- Make sure the physical environment, atmosphere and staff are welcoming
- Provide services in a timely manner
- Allow young people to have autonomous access to services
- Adopt a planned approach to service delivery
- Work with the caregiver of the child/young person

## 5: Make Your Service Culturally Relevant

- Make sure people from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds are able to access services
- Promote your service to all cultural groups in the community
- Encourage community input in the management and operation of your service
- Underpin services to Indigenous people with an understanding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concepts of family violence

## 6: Make Sure Your Service Has Effective Staff

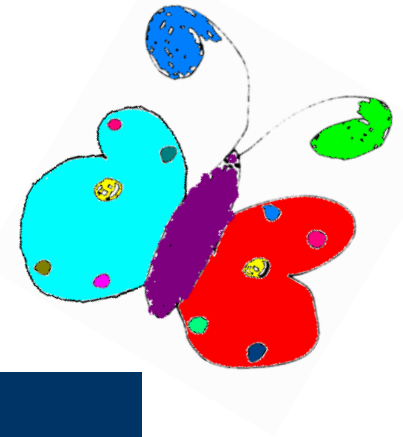
- Develop systems to ensure that appropriately skilled staff are recruited
- Provide good working conditions
- Provide appropriate training
- Support and supervise staff
- Encourage staff to evaluate their work practices
- Ensure staff provide a positive role model to clients

# Good Practice Examples

- The focus is on providing the reader with enough information to consider the appropriateness of an approach or model for their service and to seek additional information
- 11 services from throughout Australia have been documented
- The key characteristics from each service are described



# Criteria for Inclusion of Services



- Practice was in accord with the Standards
- The service/program had not been written up in the Kids & DV (1998) project
- Geographically diverse
- Diverse target groups and age specific
- The programs/services offered are varied in their approach and design
- The programs/services or components of the program may be replicable to other services

# Documented Services

- Anglicare Broadmeadows Family Services – Victoria
- BIGhART – Tasmania
- Central Eastern Domestic Violence Service – South Australia
- Eastern Children’s Resource Program – Victoria
- Geraldton Sexual Assault Resource Centre – Western Australia
- Holyoake Alice Springs Inc. – Northern Territory
- Jannawi Family Centre – NSW
- North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service – Queensland
- Relationships Australia (Canberra and Region) – Family Violence Program – ACT
- Royal Children’s Hospital Mental Health Service – parkas Program
- Whitsunday Domestic Violence Service - Queensland

# Anglicare Broadmeadows Family Services - Victoria

Anglicare Broadmeadows Family Services provides a group program for children aged 8 to 12 years and a parallel group for parents. Good practice features include:

- parallel group programs with combined sessions;
- twenty week duration of the program;
- pre and post-testing for assessing the outcome;
- community promotion of the program that includes past participants.

# BIGhART - Tasmania

BIGhART assists in re-engaging marginalised young people aged 12 to 25 years into their community and provides opportunities for the communities in which young people live. The good practice features of BIGhART include:

- a community cultural development approach;
- the development of reference groups with representation across government and community sectors;
- providing an ongoing legacy from each project.

# Central Eastern Domestic Violence Service – South Australia

This service provides supported accommodation and outreach services for women and children. Playgroup and childcare services are provided for children aged 0-5 years and children aged 5-15 can access gender specific group work programs. The good practice features include:

- specialised support for younger children;
- gender specific group work programs with gender appropriate content and activities;
- the use of male and female facilitators.

# Eastern Children's Resource Program - Victoria

This service provides services for workers in SAAP funded services and Family Day Care services and for children accessing SAAP services. The good practice features include:

- provision of secondary consultation, information, support, resources and training for workers;
- group programs for children in SAAP in three age-defined groupings;
- collaboration with other services to provide group programs; and advocacy for children experiencing homelessness and family violence.

# Geraldton Sexual Assault Resource Centre – Western Australia

Geraldton SARC provides an ongoing group work program for children aged 6-10 years and individual counselling for children and young people up to the age of 18 years and their families. The good practice features include:

- culturally relevant programs;
- outreach services;
- assessment charts;
- a school based program;
- the provision of training for teachers;
- links with Indigenous agencies.

# Holyoake Alice Springs Inc. – Northern Territory

This service provides individual and group counselling to families directly or indirectly affected by alcohol or other drugs. Group programs and individual therapy is provided to children and young people aged 5 to 24.

The good practice features include:

- age appropriate sessions for group work and one-to-one counselling including an adolescent counselling program;
- support for the parent and the option of family or sibling sessions; follow up with participants;
- evaluation of the program.

# Jannawi Family Centre - NSW

Jannawi Family Program works with 'at risk' and abused 0 to 9 year old children and their families and provides individual and group therapy programs. Good practice initiatives include:

- a family program with parallel parent and children's groups;
- a wide range of user-friendly resource materials;
- the provision of training for other service providers;
- participation in community education seminars, forums and conferences.

# North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service - Queensland

The North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service provides a program for children and young people. The good practice features include:

- an approach to actively engage and empower women;
- a range of therapeutic models and activities; social action forums;
- community education and training.

## Relationships Australia (Canberra and Region) – Family Violence Program - ACT

The Relationships Australia (Canberra and Region) – Family Violence Program provides a range of services for families living with domestic violence including a children’s group for children aged 5 to 12 years.

The good practice features of the Family Violence Program include:

- the provision of an integrated program with other service providers and
- concurrent mother and children group programs.

# Royal Children's Hospital Mental Health Services – parkas Program - Victoria

This service provides group programs for children aged 8 to 12 years and their mothers/carers using the parkas (Parents Accepting Responsibility Kids Are Safe) program. The good practice features include:

- parallel parent and child group programs;
- a child-centred (and directed) approach;
- comprehensive assessment procedures;
- supervision;
- involvement of community leaders and peer leadership;
- program evaluation;
- follow up sessions and reunion

# Whitsunday Domestic Violence Service - Queensland

This service provides a crisis accommodation service and individual and group counselling programs for women and children living with domestic violence.

The good practice features include:

- a specialist child support worker;
- an Indigenous support worker;
- participation in a coordinated intervention team; and
- the development of community networks.

# So What is Good Practice?

- The Standards provide principles of good practice
- The Examples show good practice in some services
- The key is flexibility and a commitment to continuous improvement through a willingness to try new things and a preparedness to fail and try again
- Good practice is always evolving and improving
- Good practice is driven by reflection and evaluation

# Concerns of Service Providers

## (Project Recommendations)

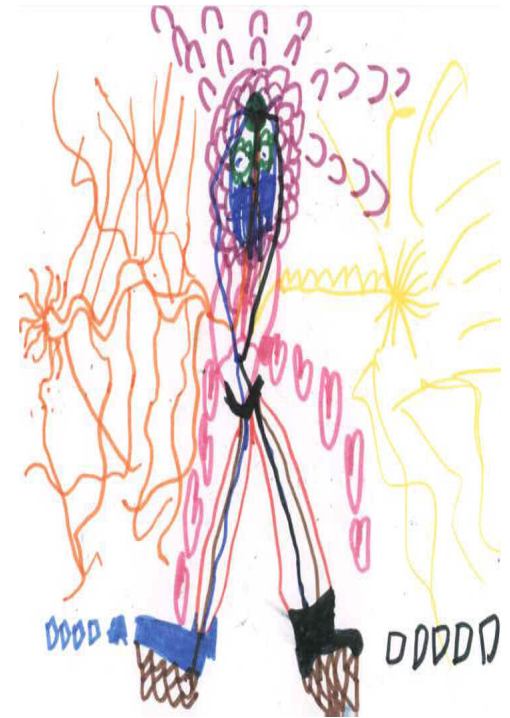


- Provide resources to assist service providers in the implementation of the Practice Standards
- Provide access to ‘interpreted’ current best practice research for service providers ‘in the field’ eg workers in SAAP services
- Updating of project materials

# Concerns of Service Providers

## (Project Recommendations)

- Promote increased coordination between service providers
- Promote PADV materials and resources more widely in the sector and associated sectors eg childcare services, schools, GP's, libraries etc.



# Key Points



To meet the needs of children and young people living with domestic violence:

- There needs to be more specialist services
- There needs to be a continuing recognition that domestic violence is a form of child abuse
- Services must have a child centred focus
- The safety needs of children must be paramount.

**The End**



**Thanks!**