

Respect, Responsibility & Equality Projects: *Preventing Violence Against Women*

Mr Todd Harper, CEO of VicHealth officially launched these five large scale community based projects on 12 September 2008 at *From Margins to Mainstream: 5th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and the Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders*.

These projects are part of a body of work designed to consolidate practice and support the development of sustained changes in policy and practice to prevent violence against women.

The projects will:

- consolidate practice in the area of primary prevention
- enable research activity to assess the impact of primary prevention activity
- identify models of good practice that could be replicated by others.

A Research Leader with a primary focus on prevention of violence against women will work with the funded projects to develop the evaluation process to ensure there is an increased evidence base for primary prevention activities aimed at preventing violence against women.

Project Name: “Northern Interfaith Project”

Organisation: Darebin City Council

This project will build on the established collaboration with faith leaders which led to the development of a ‘Declaration against Family Violence’. It will aim to deepen the work by focusing on training and organisational activities with faith leaders and communities to challenge values, develop policies, programs and communication strategies to foster respectful violence free relationships between men and women.

Resources produced as a part of this project include an online training kit to increase skills and capacity of faith leaders in other regions.

Project Name: “Baby Makes 3”

Organisation: Whitehorse Community Health

This project will respond to the research findings of Phase I to develop and implement strategies and activities with both men and women who are first time parents.

The activities of the project will aim to promote safety and wellbeing among new families with the potential of influencing and challenging male behaviours. Group work activities will 1) increase understanding of the dynamics of family violence and awareness of gender roles and equality within new families, and 2) increase skills and capacity for maintaining respectful relations through the period of transition to parenthood.

The project will also focus on professional development activities to increase skills and capacity of workers from the range of organisations engaged with first time parents during the prenatal and antenatal periods.

Resources, including a manual for conducting group work with first time parents in antenatal settings will be produced as part of this project.

Project Name: “*Working Together Against Violence*”

Organisation: Women’s Health Victoria

This project will consolidate achievements made with the Linfox trucking organisation during Phase 1. This project will strengthen the organisational capacity of male-dominated workplaces to develop and implement policies and programs aimed at promoting respectful and responsible relationships between men and women.

The activities of the project include development and modelling transferable tools and systems to will assist Victorian workplaces to imbed policies and programs that aim to prevent of violence against women within their organisations.

A report will be published documenting the process of engaging workplaces in primary prevention activity. This publication will include a training module and implementation plan that is transferable into a range of workplaces.

Project Name: “*Partners in Prevention*”

Organisation: Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre

This state-wide project will foster the ongoing development of cross-sector community practice in the primary prevention of violence against women that has a specific focus on working with young people.

Regular network meetings and forums will be held to increase, skills and capacity of workers engaged in primary prevention activities targeting young people. The focus of the project will ensure primary prevention activity targeting young people will progress within a shared framework across the state of Victoria.

The project will produce printed and on-line resources to further support practice of youth-focused primary prevention activity by producing and maintaining written and on-line resources.

Project Name: Maribyrnong Respect and Equity Project: Preventing Violence Against Women

Organisation: Maribyrnong City Council

This project will build on earlier achievements to prevent violence against women by reviewing and implementing recommendations within The Maribyrnong Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2007-2008. Priorities of the project include a focus on strengthening activity within Council as well as within the general community.

The project activities will: 1) integrate violence prevention into the core business of local government through the review of policies, programs and practices, 2) increase capacity of community groups and organisations to undertake primary prevention activities, and 3) provide leadership and mentoring with other local government areas across Victoria.

A report will be produced to document the process involved in developing leadership and mentoring programs with a primary prevention focus in local government. This report will be a valuable resource for other local Councils.