



# Advocate

Victoria's industry magazine providing news, interviews, articles and expert review for family violence specialists, prevention practitioners and allied professionals working to prevent and respond to women and children experiencing family violence.



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DVRCV acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, the people of the Kulin Nation and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. DVRCV acknowledges that sovereignty of this land was never ceded and is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our work.

### DVRCV's Advocate

**Editorial Group:** Emily Maguire, Krista Seddon, Nicola Harte, Cate Edwards, Jelena Djurdjevic.

**Contributors:** Minister Gabrielle Williams, Adele Murdolo, Tracey Gaudry, Patty Kinnersly, Marian Cronin, Susan George. **Print:** BluePrint **Distribution:** Mail Pro Australia.

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### About DVRCV

The Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) is one of the state's most expert sources of information and training on family violence and the prevention of violence against women. We are a not-for-profit incorporated association and registered training organisation that operates across Victoria and is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services with additional income from other government departments, grants and donations. **ABN** 31 202 397 579 **ISSN** 2206-0065 (Print)

DVRCV's focus:

# Striving towards once-in-a-lifetime reform

Victorian Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams and DVRCV CEO Emily Maguire reflect on the progress towards implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

## We're about halfway through the Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017-2020, how do you think the sector reform is tracking towards achieving the stated outcomes?

**Minister Williams:** The sector should feel very proud of the work already done. Creating sustained, long-term and systemic reform is extremely challenging.

Our commitment to prevent family violence is enshrined in legislation through the establishment of Respect Victoria. We have rolled out five of the Orange Doors – providing a single entry point for victim survivors of family violence – and intend to have the remaining 12 operational by 2021.

We are driving an understanding of the link between gender inequality and family violence through our mass behaviour change campaigns. The second of these, Respect Women – Call it Out, has reached 5.2 million Victorians.

**Emily Maguire:** Given the scale of the task and the depth of change, I think the reforms are tracking quite well across the state. The level of commitment we have around ending family violence across politics, the public and a wide range of sectors involved in these reforms is truly staggering; if we can maintain this commitment, I believe we will over time see the vision of the Royal Commission realised.

I think we've made progress in a lot of areas – we have strong new cross-sectoral partnerships, new prevention work is taking place across the state and more agencies than ever are seeing family violence as their core business – but as with any large-scale reform there is still lots more to do.

In the coming years it will be important to take stock of what we have achieved and learnt, and to think about what we should continue, what is still missing and what we need to improve or shift to ensure the best outcomes for women and children living with family violence.



## What do you think some of the major challenges are in the reform journey over the coming years?

**Minister Williams:** One of the hardest parts of reform like this is the time it takes – to not only build a system that creates behavioural change, but to see this flow through to results, in declining incidents of family violence.

It will take at least 10 years, if not more – but we know it can be done. Changes in attitudes toward drink driving took more than 20 years of sustained effort to achieve, but now they are entrenched in our lives.

**Emily Maguire:** With any change comes challenges; the more we understand about what these are, the more we can plan and work together to address them.

Some of the challenges are about the people and the organisations doing the work; maintaining the pace and level of work required in a reform environment, increasing the pool of skilled prevention and response practitioners to do this work, and finding a balance between engaging with long-term reforms and maintaining the day-to-day work of organisations are joint challenges we all face.

Other challenges are more structural or theoretical; trying to coordinate a reform this complex and nuanced; bringing together differing theoretical frameworks and ensuring that the needs of women, young people, children and men are addressed in the intersections of these frameworks, and ensuring that every piece of work remains

true to the intent and vision of the Royal Commission.

Whilst the challenges are significant, the depth of commitment from everyone involved will mean we can continue to work through these challenges as the reforms progress.

## What is most inspiring or exciting about your work and/or the reform journey at the moment?

**Minister Williams:** The most inspiring part of the work for me is how those with lived experience of family violence are guiding these reforms and how incredibly resilient they are.

Working with the Victim Survivor's Advisory Council – set up by government in 2014 and chaired by Rosie Batty – is an absolute privilege, and the Council's direct advice to government has been crucial to our progress so far.

It's also exciting to help shape a global movement of change. We in Victoria are leading the world with this work.

Still so far to go – but never forget the big steps forward that are already taking us on that journey.

**Emily Maguire:** There are three things in particular that help keep me inspired in my work.

The first is the opportunity to be a part of once-in-a-lifetime change for an issue I care so passionately about.

The second is the people I work with – the team at DVRCV, my colleagues across the not-for-profit sector and government alike – all of us have different roles, but the passion, intelligence and commitment of the people I work alongside is inspiring.

And the third is the victim survivors who, I hope, will be the ultimate beneficiaries of these reforms. Being a part of creating a world where women and their children are safe, and where all people are able to engage in healthy and respectful relationships, is what drives so many of us in this sector. ■

**Perspective:**

# Migrant women's health in migrant women's hands

In 2018 the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health celebrated 40 years since its founding in 1978. The organisation's Executive Director, Adele Murdolo, has worked at the centre for almost two decades. She shared with us some of the changes and challenges the organisation has faced since its inception.

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) started out as a small factory-visiting program that delivered in-language contraception information to migrant women factory workers in the late 1970s. A team of bilingual peer educators were trained in women's contraceptive options, including the newly available contraceptive pill. They then made regular visits to factories around Melbourne to speak with migrant women in their preferred languages about reproductive control.

Called Action for Family Planning until the early 1980s, the program was born of feminist, trade union and migrant activism. The program's aim – to restore to migrant women the knowledge and awareness they needed to take control of their reproduction – was a hallmark of the women's movement in the 1970s. The method, delivering multilingual, peer education in factories, brought together migrant, feminist and union concerns, networks and techniques.

MCWH's essence has stayed constant since the peer educators' first factory visits took place 40 odd years ago. But much has changed in response to the dynamic external environment. Industry has changed – local manufacturing has diminished and new industries have grown. Migrant communities continue to make up the majority of the factory workforce in Victoria, but many migrant women also clean, care and serve. MCWH still delivers outreach and bilingual peer education, but in addition to factories, the settings now extend into aged care and hospitality, and visits include English language centres, community groups and prisons.

Victorian demographics have also rapidly changed. Women born overseas in a primarily non-English speaking country now number over 880,000, a number that has doubled over the last 10 years. Countries of birth, cultural identities and languages have diversified. The growth in temporary visas over the years has added complexity to the settlement experience and has increased migrant women's precarity and dependence – on their spouses, their families and their



employers. Citizenship is harder to attain, which adversely impacts on migrant women's capacity for social, political and civic participation.

MCWH programs have responded to these changes by covering a broader range of health and wellbeing issues. Programs now address the spectrum of reproductive and sexual health issues, mental health, occupational health and safety, as well as the all-important issue of gender equity. Migrant women experience gendered discrimination – which intersects with race, religious, and other forms of discrimination – in many settings, including education, health, welfare and employment. Fighting for gender equality for migrant women is a must.

Gender-based violence has a huge impact on migrant women's lives, limiting their movements, diminishing their financial capability and reducing their control over their own lives. At the same time, research has shown that migrant women do not have equal access to the family violence service system. They tend to access the system at a later point, and are less likely to receive a service that addresses their needs once they have entered it. MCWH works with migrant communities, service providers and policy makers to build capacity for

earlier access to the service system, and for primary prevention. The application of feminist intersectional approaches to policy and programming is an important aspect of MCWH's capacity-building work.

MCWH has responded over the years to the changes in the social and political landscape by tailoring its programs accordingly, adapting the focus and forms of its advocacy, conducting and sharing new research, and continuing to speak with migrant women about their lives and the strategies they use to address the challenges they face. Migrant women, of course, are the experts about their own lives and their voices remain at the centre of the organisation as MCWH is run by migrant women for migrant women.

Governments, policy makers and service providers have so much to learn from migrant women. That learning can only take place if those who design and implement policy and service systems are empowered to listen and act accordingly. MCWH started four decades ago on the basis of activism and advocacy and it continues to act as an important mechanism for listening, learning about migrant women's lives, and acting on their advice. ■

**Prevention:**

# A new statutory authority for preventing family violence in Victoria

As a result of the Prevention of Family Violence Act 2018, a new independent statutory authority, Respect Victoria, was founded to focus on the prevention of family violence in Victoria. We interviewed Respect Victoria CEO Tracey Gaudry and Our Watch CEO Patty Kinnersly about the possibilities of this new body.

**Respect Victoria is the first agency solely devoted to preventing family violence and violence against women in Victoria. What are the priorities for this exciting new statutory authority?**

**Tracey Gaudry:** Primary prevention is our number one priority – that is, to prevent all forms of family violence and violence against women before it starts. With the recent launch of our four-year strategic plan on 29 March, we're aware that a change of this magnitude can take generations to achieve, but we're in it for the long haul and more than that, we're hopeful that our vision will be realised – that all people are safe, equal and respected, and free from all forms of family violence and violence against women. By coordinating and galvanising the prevention efforts that have come before Respect Victoria, a key part of our work is educating the community about the drivers of family violence. Most notably, helping people understand the role gender inequality plays in perpetuating the attitudes and social norms that have contributed to a culture where family violence remains hidden, and in many cases, often until it's too late.

Family violence is an incredibly complicated issue, and many people see it as the consequence of an unhealthy relationship. As we know, there's victim blaming and a whole host of blinkered attitudes that can prevent people from absorbing the bigger picture, and that can include discrimination based upon sex, gender and race. We're committed to bringing the community at large along the prevention journey. We'll do this by using evidence-informed research, lived experiences and the proven societal benefits of respect and equality to demonstrate how men, women, young people, everyone can contribute to making Victoria a safer, more equitable place to live.

**How does Respect Victoria differ from Our Watch?**

**Patty Kinnersly:** A really important key difference between these two agencies is that Respect Victoria is devoted to preventing



family violence and violence against women. Our Watch was established in 2013 to drive nationwide change in the structures, norms and practices that underpin violence against women. Whilst there is significant overlap, Respect Victoria has a broader remit.

The other key difference is that Our Watch has national responsibility and works with state and territory governments (including Victoria) and receives funding from almost all state and territory governments.

**What possibilities does Respect Victoria bring for Victoria's prevention sector?**

**Tracey Gaudry:** The possibilities for Respect Victoria are endless. As a new statutory authority, we're on a steep establishment and development curve. Our focus is to cultivate relationships with leaders in primary prevention, to consult widely and build our research arm. In the six months since Respect Victoria's inception, we have been thrilled with the results of our flagship 'Call It Out' campaign, and more recently, the response to Respect Victoria's first strategic plan.

While there is some research into the attitudes, practices and power relations that drive family violence, there is still a lot to be done, and Respect Victoria aims to fill this gap with the support of government, our

colleagues and partners. We'll be engaging with workplaces, industry, sport, the arts, media, community organisations and others. Respect Victoria will also undertake and disseminate research into the drivers of all forms of family violence and violence against women. Using this research, we'll be developing and promoting best practice primary prevention for government, industry, organisations and communities, and we'll be providing advice about what programs work and where investment should be placed.

Informed by research and evidence, we'll be leading social marketing campaigns and engaging with stakeholders across multiple sectors to build a culture of respect for all Victorians.

**Patty Kinnersly:** Addressing the underlying drivers of violence against women and family violence is an enormous task, the more hands and minds dedicated to that task, the closer we will be to a future where women and children can live without fear of violence.

Respect Victoria will also provide a central leadership organisation for Victoria that will provide clarity about what's needed for prevention work, give good advice to government, and advance important work to advance knowledge about the drivers of family violence (broader than gendered violence against women).

Victoria's decision to invest both in its work with Our Watch and in establishing Respect Victoria shows that this state is genuinely committed to ending violence against women and their children, and demonstrates an appreciation of the fact that addressing gender inequality is the only true long-term solution to this terrible problem. ■

**Feature:**

# Online learning to build foundational knowledge

DVRCV has been developing a comprehensive elearning package to build the foundational knowledge required to prevent and respond to family violence and violence against women.

## Why is DVRCV developing this online foundational package?

There are huge challenges in the scale of education and training that is required across a wide range of sectors and professions if Victoria is truly going to achieve the vision of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Given the limited specialist training expertise in the family violence sector and the scope and scale of the workforce reforms in this space, it is important to ensure that face-to-face training is primarily focused on building skills, developing practice expertise, expanding specialist knowledge and putting information and theory into practice. DVRCV have developed this elearning package because we believe that face-to-face training will be more effective if training participants come to a session with the same foundational knowledge that they can then develop into practice.

DVRCV have specifically designed this training to ensure that it can be widely accessible and as relevant to as many professional groups as possible. The hope is that, regardless of which sector you work in or which role you hold, you will find this elearning useful in building the foundational knowledge that's required to either prevent or respond to family violence.

We've also tried to make the elearning as comprehensive and as interactive as possible, and have ensured it is informed by the most recent research, evidence and practice wisdom.

It's important to note that this elearning isn't designed to replace face-to-face training, as skills and practice-based education is imperative when learning how to prevent or respond to family violence.

## Who was involved?

The project was funded by Family Safety Victoria and DVRCV has worked with eLearn Australia to develop the training package. In recognition of the need to ensure these modules are as relevant and useful for a wide range of sectors and professionals as



possible, DVRCV has consulted heavily with a range of agencies who have reviewed unit design, provided feedback on the modules and offered advice and guidance along the way. These agencies include Victorian Healthcare Association, Monash University, Mind Australia, Seniors Rights Victoria, Youth Affairs Council Victoria, Western Region Centre Against Sexual Assault, Court Network, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, City of Melbourne, Odyssey House Victoria, Women with Disabilities Victoria, and the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board.

In recognition of the need for self determination and the importance of enabling women from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse communities to speak about their own experiences in their own voices, we have worked to ensure that the development of modules on family violence in Aboriginal communities, cultural safety and intersectionality were led by individuals and agencies with specific expertise in that space

and with lived experiences of the issues the modules focus on.

## What is the online elearning package?

The new elearning package is based on the recently released capability frameworks which articulate the knowledge, skills and expertise required by professionals working to prevent or respond to family violence across a range of sectors and settings. The elearning addresses the key foundational knowledge indicators within both the prevention and response capability frameworks, to make sure that practitioners have the knowledge to prevent and respond to violence against women and family violence. The aim is to ensure that everyone has the same foundational knowledge, regardless of whether they're engaged in prevention or response, and regardless of what sector or field they work within.

The package is designed to address the baseline knowledge that is required when working in prevention or response, so that

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**The overarching aim of this online training is to ensure that any professional across Victoria has access to elearning that supports them to build their foundational knowledge around family violence and violence against women.**

face-to-face training can focus more on building professionals' skills and supporting them to put their knowledge into practice in a face to face training context.

#### **What kind of content will be included in the package and how will it be structured?**

The elearning package is designed to be detailed and comprehensive. It is specifically designed to address the majority of the foundational knowledge indicators in the prevention and response capability frameworks so it is thorough and in-depth; violence against women and family violence are complex issues and it is imperative that any education – face-to-face or online – is designed to help professionals understand and work within that complexity.

It contains individual modules, and brief assessment tasks at the end of each module to help users understand what knowledge they have gained and where they may need further training. The training is designed so that users can work through each module consecutively, or complete modules one by one. Users can come in and out of the training and their progress will be tracked, and there is no time limit on how long you take to complete all 16 modules.

The main modules are divided into four 'streams': violence against women, family violence, intersectionality, and children and young people.

Stream one includes foundational knowledge around violence against women, including defining violence against women and its gendered nature, looking at prevalence, myths, the relationship between violence against women and gender inequality.

Stream two focuses on family violence more broadly, building on the previous stream relating specifically to violence against women. The modules in this stream address the definitions and forms of family violence, the dynamics of power and control, the impacts of family violence, and help users identify the warning signs of family violence. The final module in the stream focuses on Victorian referral pathways, because it's

imperative that professionals know which services to refer to and how to talk about accessing them in a way that doesn't re-traumatise victim survivors.

Stream three, on intersectionality, introduces key concepts including diversity, intersectionality and systemic discrimination. It also includes a module about violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and cultural safety, informed by the Changing the Picture resource. This module was developed by an Aboriginal woman and Djirra also contributed to the development of this module. Cultural responsiveness is also part of this stream, and the lead authors for this module were InTouch Multicultural Centre against Family Violence.

Stream four focuses on children and young people's experiences of family violence. This includes the nature, impacts and warning signs of family violence, the impacts on the child-parent/mother bond and attachment theory. Another key focus is supporting safety, which examines strategies like strengthening the bond between the non-offending parent or family member and the child. The important legislative and statutory requirements when it comes to children, young people and family violence is also a significant feature of the stream.

The overarching aim of this online training is to ensure that any professional across Victoria has access to elearning that supports them to build their foundational knowledge around family violence and violence against women. Over time, it is hoped this will build a shared and consistent understanding of family violence and violence against women across Victoria and equip professionals with the information and knowledge they need if they're working to prevent or respond to family violence or violence against women. ■

#### **WHEN WILL THE TRAINING BE AVAILABLE?**

The package is in the final stages of testing, with the training scheduled to be available in the second half of 2019.

To keep up to date about the progress of the elearning, **sign up to DVRCV's e-news at [www.dvrcv.org.au/about/our-ewsletter](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/about/our-ewsletter).**

**Voices of the sector:**

# MARAM leading alignment training for organisational leaders

To assist organisational leaders and managers with the MARAM alignment process, DVRCV has been contracted by Family Safety Victoria to develop a suite of training modules. DVRCV recently piloted the MARAM Leading Alignment training module, developed in partnership with Family Safety Victoria.

The Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF) has recently been redeveloped into the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) to address the issues identified by the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Unlike the CRAF, which was voluntary, prescribed organisations are required by law (Part 11 of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008) to align their practices, policies and procedures to the MARAM Framework. This is a staged process, with phase one having commenced in September 2018. The MARAM framework has been developed to ensure that all relevant services are contributing effectively to the identification, assessment and management of family violence risk.

The organisations prescribed under the law represent a wide variety of services and organisations beyond traditional family violence services. It is not expected that all organisations will be able to implement the requirements of the MARAM framework immediately. Instead, aligning practices, procedures and policies will be a gradual process, with organisations beginning from different starting points along the alignment spectrum.

To assist organisations in their alignment journey, Family Safety Victoria have contracted DVRCV to develop the MARAM Leading Alignment training module. This training module has been designed to assist organisational leaders in assessing

their organisations' current alignment with the MARAM framework. The training is designed to utilise the existing knowledge and expertise of participants, complementing other work being done through Family Safety Victoria to support organisational alignment. The structure of the training module recognises that organisations will be at different stages in the alignment process and seeks to be relevant to leaders from a broad range of services.

**Training outcomes**

The MARAM Leading Alignment training has been designed to support leaders in promoting and leading MARAM alignment in their own organisations. It offers a strengths-based, capability-building approach to alignment, guiding participants towards a shared understanding of the framework model in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary environment.

The training seeks to assist managers and organisational leaders to:

- Increase familiarity with the MARAM framework including core principles, key responsibilities and the application of practice guidance and tools;
- Understand the concept of alignment with the MARAM framework;
- Lead organisational implementation of the MARAM framework, through alignment of policy and procedures, partnership development and staff support and management;

- Recognise the implications, challenges and complexities of applying the MARAM framework, through the application of the four MARAM pillars;
- Understand the application of an intersectional lens in the alignment process; and
- Undertake a leadership role in communicating and supporting the wider vision of the family violence reforms.

**Training structure**

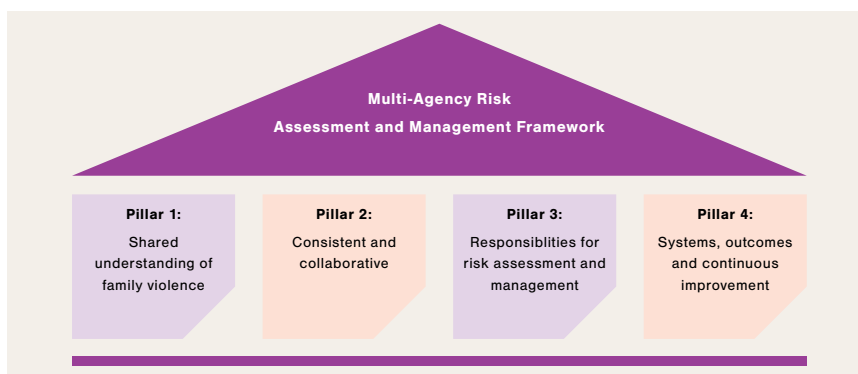
The MARAM Leading Alignment training module is a one-day training session. Participants will be required to undertake a pre-session self-assessment task to assist trainers in understanding participants' familiarity with the MARAM framework. Some foundational knowledge of family violence and the MARAM is assumed so that participants can spend time focussing on the application of the framework in an organisational context.

The training session covers a summary of the key elements of the MARAM framework, and the central leadership role required to support alignment against the four pillars of the MARAM.

Over the course of the training, participants will touch on the ten MARAM principles outlined in the MARAM legislative instrument. These principles reflect the values underpinning the MARAM framework and are the key to providing consistent, effective and safe responses to family violence. They are structured into four conceptual 'pillars', against which all prescribed organisations are required to align. The pillars form the structure of the training module, as participants explore the application of each pillar through a series of group discussions and activities.

The four pillars are:

- a shared understanding of family violence
- consistent and collaborative practice
- responsibilities for risk assessment and management







- systems, outcomes and continuous improvement

The training focuses on what each pillar looks like in practice within an organisation, including the administrative and practical support required. Particular attention is paid to areas that mark a significant departure from the CRAF.

Leaders participating in the training module will spend time exploring what alignment with the MARAM might look like for their organisations. Alignment with the MARAM framework involves the incorporation of the four Pillars into existing policies, procedures, practice guidelines and tools, as appropriate to the roles and functions of the prescribed organisation.

#### **Supporting MARAM alignment through a maturity model**

The language of 'alignment' supports the flexibility required for organisations to

start from any point along the alignment scale, moving from positions of little to no alignment to positions of higher alignment over time. This approach to implementation is known as a 'maturity model'. Under this model, organisations do not need to commence using the risk assessment tools and practice guidelines straight away. Instead, organisations are encouraged to identify which parts of their practice can be brought into alignment with the MARAM, and which segments of their organisation will require ongoing alignment work.

#### **Pilot program**

The MARAM Leading Alignment training module was piloted by DVRCV in late 2018 with a group of organisational leaders from a range of prescribed organisations. Feedback on the training pilot was very positive and following testing, further work was undertaken to strengthen the module based

on feedback from participants. The module is in the final stages of development and Family Safety Victoria is continuing to work with DVRCV to establish a delivery approach to ensure availability of this training module to organisational leaders from prescribed framework organisations across the state. ■

#### **SUBSCRIBE FOR UPDATES**

To be notified when the MARAM Leading Alignment training is available for enrollment, subscribe to the DVRCV e-news at [www.dvrcv.org.au/about/our-ewsletter](http://www.dvrcv.org.au/about/our-ewsletter).

**Organisational spotlight:**

# Universities as a setting for violence prevention

Since 2015, Victoria University has been actively working to educate its students and the broader community about gender equality and prevention of violence against women. We talked to Marian Cronin, Senior Manager, Respect and Responsibility, about VU's commitment to preventing violence against women.

**Tell us about the work VU has done to date to prevent violence against women.**

Victoria University is a very young, vibrant university located in the west of Melbourne. The majority of our students are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and many are the first in their family to go to university.

In 2016, we established the Preventing Violence Against Women Ten Point Plan, which outlines the university's commitment to reducing violence against women. There's a whole range of things that we do as part of this plan, but all of our work is generally based on addressing the four key drivers of violence against women. Challenging attitudes is really important, particularly with the young cohort of students.

The plan is part of a three-pronged approach that incorporates students, staff and the community. We understand that our students are a microcosm of what we see in society, and so we work with community partners, particularly in the west of Melbourne, to challenge existing attitudes and work towards societal change.

We've participated in the UN's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence since 2017, which has involved staff and students in activities ranging from art exhibitions to participation in rallies. International Women's Day events have included painting a mural inspired by Malala Yousafzai's words 'I am stronger than fear' and a singing event.

All of these events, in their different ways, make our voices really loud and really clear, that we can't keep quiet about sexual harm or violence against women any more, that we've had enough. We do these kinds of events to build engagement and collaboration between our staff and our students and the community.



VU students and staff on the Walk Against Family Violence, as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.



Staff and students sing out loud for gender equality at Victoria University on International Women's Day 2019.

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**We make our voices really loud and really clear, that we can't keep quiet about sexual harm or violence against women any more, that we've had enough.**

**What is unique about VU's prevention work? What's the university's long-term approach to preventing violence against women?**

Our approach is one that is collaborative, trauma-informed and aims to be gender-transformative. We deliver face-to-face training to student leaders and key staff in gender equality, responding to disclosures of sexual harm and being an active bystander. We have also developed an innovative suite of e-learning modules in this space, using a co-design process with students. We were very aware that there was nothing that had been done before in an online setting that would work for us. We wanted to do something that was more collaborative; that wasn't just 'here's the training, tick the box', rather than changing behaviour and then eventually changing attitudes. A diverse group of students were the authors of the scenarios we've developed, in which the user is asked to be an active bystander against sexism.



Marian Cronin (right) with Achol Arow (left) a VU graduate of the AMES Preventing Violence Against Women leadership course.

What we're looking at now is really embedding the work in the University's own transformational agenda. We've started to have conversations about including prevention of violence against women in the curriculum, right across the board. The long-term vision is that, regardless of your starting point, by the time a student leaves university they will have the skills to operate in the dynamic world of work. In the twenty-first century, that requires you to understand gender equality, to know how to help prevent violence against women and how to be an active bystander.

**What about in the university as a workplace? How is this work influencing that space?**

I sit on the Gender Equity Committee, which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and includes university senior leaders. It meets quarterly and has a rigorous gender equity plan that's led by People and Culture. Through this committee, the Vice-Chancellor receives pay equity data, so that's happening at the top of the structure. The university has also just implemented a revised sexual harassment prevention and response policy and procedure, and a new sexual assault policy and procedure.

**This is the last year of the Ten Point Plan. What's next?**

We have started conversations around developing the next iteration of the plan, which will be from 2020 to 2023. It will build on what we've already achieved and will be linked to the latest research in this space. It will focus on transformation, because now we've done a lot of the grassroots work – though of course we have a new cohort of students come in every year, so building

prevention into all student-facing curriculum and activities is really important.

By the end of the year we will have a complete Respectful Relationships online training program, complemented by face-to-face training for student leaders, embedded in the student leadership area. From there, it's all about mobilising and activating both men and women to be involved, to be agents for change, to keep the momentum going. ■

**Profile:**

# Building cross-sector collaboration to prevent family violence

Susan George is an AOD (alcohol and other drugs) Specialist Family Violence Adviser (SFVA), auspiced by Odyssey House Victoria (OHV), building capacity for family violence assessment and response to all AOD service providers in the western metropolitan catchments. We spoke to Susan about the challenges and opportunities of her role.

## **Tell us about your role in AOD services in the western metropolitan catchments.**

The Specialist Family Violence Advisor program was established in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence to build capacity through improving early identification and intervention to family violence by the AOD and Mental Health (MH) sectors. The program aims to strengthen inter-sector and cross-service coordination and collaboration, moving towards integrated and consistent responses to family violence.

## **What needs to be considered in the AOD context for Specialist Family Violence Advisors?**

The AOD sector responds both to those experiencing and using family violence.

There is scope to consider the potential barriers for women attending AOD services, as currently the majority of clients accessing AOD services are men. Western Health - Drug Health Services have a women-specific AOD day rehabilitation program which includes addressing family violence. However, many AOD clients who

have partners using violence may not be accessing specialist family violence services out of fear that their help-seeking might be used against them, both by the perpetrator and by the service system.

The large number of men accessing AOD services also provides an opportunity to further develop understandings and leadership within the AOD sector, particularly regarding developing non-collusive practice in how to raise respectful accountability questions with those who perpetrate violence. Cross-sector collaboration can also provide an important opportunity to bring AOD and MH knowledge back into the family violence sector, improving access and support to those who also have AOD and MH needs. Coordinated and systemic partnerships are integral to building comprehensive risk assessment and interventions.

## **What are the challenges and opportunities working as a FV specialist in the AOD sector?**

Building collaboration across the sectors will require deconstructing past siloed approaches that may have existed across specialist sectors. This cross-sector work also brings opportunities to improve responses, skills and understanding of family violence for all sectors, including family violence, AOD and MH. At a systemic macro level, this includes opportunities to improve referral pathways, develop secondary consultation systems, and offer co-case management. Developing skills and practices to avoid collusion and improving respectful responses with those who use violence creates interventions that generate individual and community accountability. Improving these responses would also assist in prioritising the safety of families who are experiencing family violence.

Another important opportunity is engagement with criminalised women, who are often identified as being 'high risk of lethality' through the RAMP specialist family violence program, and AOD services may be the only supports they are actively engaged with.

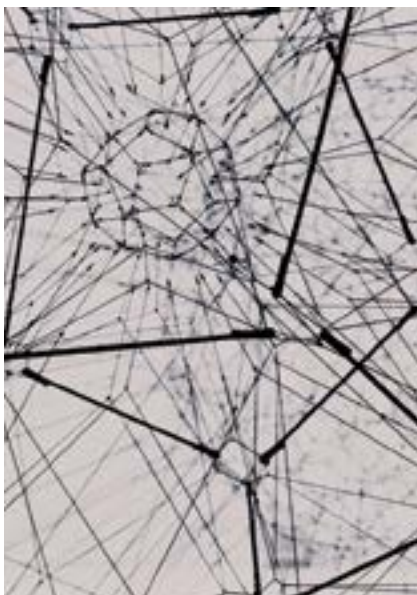
## **What are the benefits of having specialist practitioners in organisations outside the FV sector?**

Being located in an AOD organisation external to the FV sector facilitates incidental family violence consultations and the establishment of secondary consultation systems. My attendance at AOD clinical reviews and team meetings prompts a focus on family violence, providing opportunities for practitioners to develop a family violence lens and increasing their capacity to identify family violence risk, navigate referral pathways and undertake safety planning.

Another significant benefit is the opportunity to identify AOD practitioners who have an interest in and commitment to addressing family violence. Mentoring opportunities can be developed for those practitioners, and their involvement and expertise utilised to establish capacity-building activities within their teams/services. This can help to effect systemic change and build capacity to support improved responses to family violence.

## **If you could improve the way that SFVAs work in other services, what would you do?**

It seems essential to me that Phase 2 of the AOD and MH Specialist Family Violence Advisor program has a coordination infrastructure across Victoria. Encouraging the sharing of information and strategies amongst advisors would facilitate the systemic changes that advisors have been tasked to implement, including breaking down barriers and bridging identified gaps in service and sector responses across the FV, AOD and MH sectors. ■



# DVRCV Family Violence Training 2019

## Response Training

Wellbeing, self-care and worker sustainability

Trauma informed practice

CHCDFV001 Recognise and respond appropriately to domestic and family violence

CHCDFV002 Provide support to children affected by domestic and family violence

Identifying family violence and risk assessment

Family violence training for supervisors

Digital safety, family violence and risk assessment

Family violence is a workplace issue

Case notes and the law

Adopting child-led practice

Working with fathers

## Prevention Training

Unpacking resistance

Leading Change – engaging a workforce in the prevention of violence against women

Respectful relationships: the whole school approach

Bystander action in the workplace

**NEW:** Building your Foundation course designed for new prevention and response practitioners

Learn with Victoria's only Registered Training Organisation (RTO) whose trainers come with direct service family violence experience and prevention practice expertise..



RTO 20853

Domestic Violence  
Resource Centre Victoria



Visit [www.dvrcv.org.au](http://www.dvrcv.org.au) today

# ABCDEquality

Students act to prevent violence against women



**Advocate** for gender equality



**Be** an active bystander. Call out disrespect and offer support



**Consent.** If you don't have it, the road is closed!



**Don't** use someone's gender as an insult



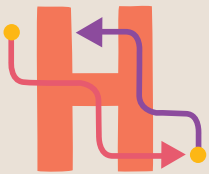
**Encourage** girls to pursue science, sports and maths



**Feminism** is about equality for everyone



**Generate** conversations about inspirational women throughout history



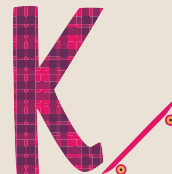
**Help** people understand the connection between 'everyday sexism' and violence against women



**Investigate** how the media influences gender roles



**Jump** on social media to draw attention to gender inequality



**Keep** challenging gender stereotypes



**Listen** when someone tells you they're not feeling valued, respected or acknowledged



**Make** room for girls and non-binary students to lead



**Normalise** positive discussions about women's sexuality



**Organise** an event that promotes gender equality



**People** can wear what they want – remember that!



**Question** people who think boys can't cry



**Read** books written by women



**Speak up** when someone makes a sexist joke



**Talk** to a trusted adult if you have experienced violence



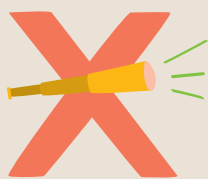
**Understand** and celebrate gender diversity in our school community



**Value** and respect the voices of girls and non-binary students



**Write** stories with female protagonists. Share them with the class



**E(x)plore** the many ways our school can act to prevent violence against women



**Yay!** We're changing the world!



**Zero** tolerance for violence against women



