Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse

ISSUES PAPER 11

Good Practice in Indigenous Family Violence Prevention - Designing and Evaluating Successful Programs

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1. Introduction

Family violence mars the lives of a very large number of Indigenous Australians, helping to effectively disable many communities and deny future generations a basic chance for health, happiness and prosperity. It is important to understand why some programs aimed at changing this situation succeed, and in fact what success means in this field, both in order to advise government spending and to assist Indigenous organisations and groups putting that money into action at the coalface. The core aim of this paper is to consider the current state of good practice with regard to projects or programs aimed at reducing family violence. With the Federal government expending greater amounts on family violence programs in recent years, as well as most State and Territory governments developing relevant strategies and initiatives, this is a useful opportunity to reflect on which programs have been shown to work and in what ways. Also of interest are the approaches that would form part of a sustainable model for dealing with this issue.

The awareness among various groups of Australians, including government departments, of disproportionately high and widespread levels of Indigenous family violence was raised by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Fifteen years later these rates of Indigenous violence and incarceration continue across the country, yet it remains difficult to find good practice guidelines for those wishing to combat Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence. Underlying this problem is the lack of published evaluation studies of anti-violence projects and programs conducted among Indigenous Australians.

A key source of data used in the preparation of this Issues Paper is the information provided by the Office for Women (OfW) on projects funded under the National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme. This national grants program, referred to as the NIFVGP, was a component of the second phase of the Commonwealth's Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV 2) initiative which funded 74 Indigenous violence projects between 2001 and 2004. FaCSIA (Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) has kindly provided permission to draw on the findings of this unpublished report. The current authors were involved in mentoring the projects funded under this scheme during the four years of the NIFVGP.

Good practice may pertain to both the running of complete Indigenous violence programs by various arms of government, as well as the running of individual projects by Indigenous and other groups. This piece is written for a readership including both government personnel and non-government organisations executing Indigenous violence programs and projects. It aims to provide a set of ideas and strategies for good practice based on learning from both Australian and international Indigenous projects and programs.

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We have approached this task from a number of directions. Firstly, by providing a portrait of the policy context out of which a number of significant funding programs have emerged over the previous decade (Section 2). This leads into a broad discussion of what types of techniques or strategies have been tried and how to analyse or categorise them, as well as the key principles that would be essential to any holistic approach. We then set up a theoretical framework through which to consider the issue of violence related to families in an Indigenous context (Section 3). Good practice Indigenous initiatives in violence projects that have been undertaken recently in North America, New Zealand and Canada are summarised to provide additional good practice benchmarks (Section 4). We also examine some significant Australian family violence projects that have been evaluated which displayed good practice, as well as reflect on the value of conducting effective evaluations (Section 5). The key elements contributing to the success of Indigenous violence programs, and how to evaluate such success, are discussed (Section 6). Finally, we outline a number of models and strategies that would support the sustainability of programs within Indigenous communities (Section 7).

In this Issues Paper, we discuss some of the important insights gained into how family violence programs can work in communities and how funding arrangements can be designed to complement successful efforts. We believe it provides a valuable opportunity to talk openly about the real problems and avenues for success that have been discovered by the Indigenous people actually running programs in communities.

2. Program Overview

This section of the paper contains a broad overview of program approaches to Indigenous family violence in Australia.

Background to Indigenous Family Violence Programs

In the previous five to ten years, a number of significant inquiries and initiatives have been undertaken at Federal, State and Territory levels of government, indicating that family violence is recognised as a key issue affecting the quality of life of Indigenous Australians. The Commonwealth Government's recent moves to dissolve ATSIC (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission) and ATSIS (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services), previously the key bodies through which programs and services were provided to Indigenous Australians, signals a fundamental change to the way in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs will be administered in this country. Mainstream government departments now have responsibility for all Indigenous specific programs, and will be required to coordinate their service delivery through whole-of-government approaches. This new strategy will revolve around the negotiation of agreements with Indigenous communities at the local level and the setting of priorities at a regional level (HREOC 2004, p.67). Under the new system, family violence initiatives will be overseen by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) portfolio, with responsibility for prevention being shared with the Attorney-General's Department (Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs 2004).

A previous initiative, the chief precursor to the current FaCSIA programs described below, was the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) initiative. This initiative included two key Indigenous program allocations: the first nominated as PADV 1 and the second, a major component of which was launched at the commencement of its second funding phase, was called the National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme (NIFVGP). PADV and the NIFVGP represented a significant focus of federal funds aimed specifically at reducing the incidence and effects of family violence in Australia's Indigenous communities (Strategic Partners 2003, p.23).

The key programs being administered by FaCSIA at the time of writing, as a part of its response to family violence include:

- the Family Violence Partnership Programme (FVPP)

- the Family Violence Regional Activities Programme (FVRAP).

The first in the list, the Family Violence Partnership Programme, is the vehicle through which the Federal Government can pursue agreements with its State and Territory counterparts to fund family violence and child protection initiatives in Indigenous communities. The program was allocated $37.3M over four years in the 2004/05 budget (FaCSIA 2005b; Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs 2004). The second program, the Family Violence Regional Activities Programme, provides practical and flexible support for grassroots projects identified at a community level through the recently established Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICCs) and has been funded with around $4M annually (FaCSIA 2005c). The last program, the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program (FVPLS), was originally initiated by ATSIC in 1998 with pilot funding of $1.31M originating from the first phase of Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV 1). Currently, the FVPLS continues with funding of $22.7M provided by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, which is being distributed among 26 ICCs (Attorney-General's Department 2005a, p.19). FVLPS units operate two key initiatives by providing legal assistance, along with support and counselling services to victims of family violence (Attorney-General's Department 2005b)[1].

FaCSIA runs a number of other programs that focus on strengthening Indigenous families and communities, and which have an important role to play in addressing family violence. These include: the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, the Family and Community Networks Initiative, Reconnect, the Indigenous Parenting and Family Wellbeing Program and the Responding Early Assisting Children (REACh) Program (FaCSIA 2005a).

Of significance to any overview of current and recent governmental responses to the issue of Indigenous family violence is a summary discussion of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) whole-of-government community trial sites which began operation in various localities during 2002 and 2003. Eight Indigenous community sites were selected around Australia. The Commonwealth's revised arrangements for Indigenous service provision discussed above have been linked to the philosophical underpinnings and outcomes of

[1]*Also see Braybrook 2004 for the program perspective from within the Victorian FVPLS.*

these community trials, despite no formal evaluation being conducted (HREOC 2004, pp.73-74). The trials emphasise the "mutual obligation and the responsibility of all players (government, communities, families and individuals) to address issues of social and economic participation" (HREOC 2004, pp.71-72). The partnership between government and community is formalised through the negotiation and signing of a Shared Responsibility Agreement. The issue of family violence services and programs is one of these trials' key priorities.

The results of these more recent programs, in terms of documented project profiles and independent evaluation studies of good practice, had not yet been generated at the time of writing this Issues Paper. Such material had only been produced by the earlier PADV and NIFVGP initiatives, and these will be considered in due course.

Categorising violence programs: National research overview of Indigenous violence by National Crime Prevention

In the late 1990s, National Crime Prevention within the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department commissioned a national research overview of Indigenous violence. The resultant 2001 report, Violence in Indigenous Communities (Memmott et al, 2001), provided a rare example of an attempt being made to categorise violence program types. Its discussion highlights three different ways that this can be achieved, or lenses through which programs can be viewed. The first breaks the umbrella term 'family violence' down into twelve types of violent acts: spouse assault; homicide; rape and sexual abuse; child violence; suicide; self-injury; same-sex, one-on-one adult fighting; inter-group violence; psychological abuse; economic abuse; cyclic violence and dysfunctional community syndrome (Memmott et al, 2001, p.36). The report states that programs can then be defined according to the specific type of violent act upon which they are focusing their efforts. As the causes of Indigenous family violence are "varied, complex and interrelated with social, economic and political issues" (Memmott et al, 2001, p.55), so do the approaches taken to curbing it vary greatly in their character.

The second approach outlined in Violence in Indigenous Communities categorises program examples according to the nature of the approach being adopted, which produced a list of different program types that included: support, strengthening identity, behavioural reform, community policing and monitoring, shelter/protection, justice, mediation, education and composite programs (Memmott et al, 2001, pp.59-60).

The third set of categories devised by Memmott et al, in their 2001 report, relies on the criterion of whether the program

is enacted well before, just before, during or after the violent act has occurred. These stages of response to violence were termed early proactive, late proactive, early reactive and late reactive (Memmott et al, 2001, p.74). As the late proactive and early reactive programs are focused on acts of violence that are about to occur, are occurring or have just occurred, the current authors, in an extension to the previous work, state that they can be grouped together as interventionist responses. Such responses would include mediations, counselling, night patrols, wardens, youth suicide intervention strategies and women's refuges. The early proactive and late reactive programs, because they are either aimed at preventing violence from occurring in the former case, or at preventing violence from recurring (recidivism) in the latter case, would be called preventative programs by the current authors. Preventative programs would include education methods, diversionary activities, counsellor training, alcohol management strategies and the promotion of definitions of acceptable and non-acceptable forms of behaviours. It is to be noted that the majority of projects funded under the NIFVGP fell into the preventative category, indicating the difficult and demanding nature of interventionist programs.

The Working with Adolescents to Prevent Domestic Violence Program in Western Australia

The development of intervention strategies for Indigenous young people who experience violence, either as witnesses or recipients, was recognised as an urgent priority by the joint agencies National Campaign Against Violence and Crime (NCAVAC) and the National Anti-Crime Strategy (NACS) in early 1997. They commissioned a two-stage project in Western Australia, identified in its earlier and later phase as Working with Adolescents to Prevent Domestic Violence – Indigenous Rural Model (Indermaur et al, 1998, pp.iv-11; Blagg 1999, pp.2-4).

The project commenced with a Stage 1 model executed in Northam and incorporated these key components: a national literature review, an audit of 98 Australian adolescent violence prevention programs, an environmental assessment and the design of a pilot program. Extending the methodological foundation of the first stage, Stage 2 centred on Derby in the West Kimberley region with the aim of developing an intervention pilot model suitable for application in Aboriginal communities, allowing for some modifications in response to differing sociocultural circumstances (Indermaur et al, 1998, pp.iv-11; Blagg 1999, pp.2-4).

Reports on both projects were built on the theoretical premise that attitudes and expressions of violence and its dynamic variables are embedded in learned, transgenerational, cultural values rather than evidence of individual pathology (Indermaur et al, 1998, pp.iv-11; Blagg 1999, pp.2-4; Atkinson 2002). Additionally, Indermaur et al. (1998, p.2) identified links between "… cultures of masculinity and corresponding social structures in generating and sustaining acceptance of violence", whereby "… beliefs are transmitted through culture, have a cyclical dynamism, and are exercised under similar conditions, such as where (usually male) authority and status are under threat". This provided a key component of the researchers' explanatory basis for adolescence violence.

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[2] *'Dysfunctional community syndrome' can be defined as a situation wherein multiple violence types are occurring and appear to be increasing over generations, both quantitatively (numbers of incidents) and in terms of the intensity of experiences. For example, victims of sexual abuse include very small children; pack rape is being committed by boys as young as 10 years old. Such communities need to be viewed as in states of dire emergency. As the violence increases, the problems of psychological harm, and of arresting and treating the violence across generations, become more complex and will require increasing levels of resources (Memmott et al, 2001, p.36). The term has since achieved some currency in the literature on Australian Indigenous violence.*

Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) and Indigenous Family Violence

In November 1997, the Prime Minister of Australia convened a national Domestic Violence Summit to bring together the Heads of Government to discuss ways to address the major problems caused by domestic and family violence in Australia. Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV) was launched at the Summit and brought together all governments to work together to find new ways to prevent domestic violence. Projects were implemented at the national, State and local levels, including those addressing family violence in Indigenous communities. PADV 1 was established with $25.3 million. The initiative was to build a strategic collaboration between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments through which they would work together to test new ways of operating, to enhance and share good practice, and to share knowledge and good practice in preventing and better responding to domestic and family violence.

In 1997, a number of program approaches were defined by the agency in charge of PADV, the Office of the Status of Women (OSW), now the Office for Women (OfW), on which the first phase of funding was to focus. These included: working with children and young people to break the cycle of violence between generations; working with adults to break patterns of violence (both victims and violent men); working with the community to educate against violence; protecting people at risk; reforming legislation and improving responses by police and courts; providing information and good practice; finding out what works and researching areas where new information is needed to support violence prevention; and helping people in regional Australia to overcome barriers to receiving assistance (Strategic Partners 2003, p.23). All these approaches were to embrace a number of issues such as race and ethnicity.

The remaining two objectives of PADV 1 involved measures to inform future program design by information and best practice, including protection by the law. Throughout the three years of operation of PADV 1, additional elements extended the list of core themes. These were: understanding and responding to young children who live with domestic violence; and increasing awareness of the levels of domestic and family violence in Indigenous communities (Memmott et al, 2001, p.55; Strategic Partners 2003, p.5).

By the inception of PADV 2, these priority areas had evolved into three program streams: community education, children and perpetrators, and the National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme or NIFVGP (Strategic Partners 2003, p.24).

The National Forum Rekindling Family Relationships and Walking into Doors Campaign

During April 2001, OfW staff staged the Rekindling Family Relationships National Forum in Adelaide to consider Indigenous family violence. This occurred during the early part of the NIFVGP, costing approximately $300,000, and was attended by 350 Indigenous participants, along with non-Indigenous policy makers and service providers (Strategic Partners 2003, p.91).

The aims of the Forum, as stated in its program, were to share knowledge and good practice across communities, organisations and institutions, promote new linkages and collaboration between a broad range of stakeholders and identify steps to move forward. The program also outlined a number of Forum principles, which were:

- observe Indigenous customs, protocols and traditions

- respect and acknowledge diversity

- demonstrate commitment to partnerships with Indigenous communities

- commitment to access and inclusion

- no more shame and blame

- promote and enhance cultural family kinship ties

- promote community identified outcomes to build on community strengths

- reinforce and encourage local solutions that are community owned and driven to strengthen community

- ensure that solutions are developed in response to the underlying issues

- provide a safe and non-judgemental environment (OSW 2001a).

The National Forum on Indigenous Family Violence (Rekindling Family Relationships Forum) created a positive introduction to the funding provided by the NIFVGP. This vehicle of communication was a successful component of PADV 1, enabling a constructive face-to-face rapport to be established between most Round 1 NIFVGP grant recipients and their mentors. The Walking into Doors Campaign was also launched at this Forum, assisted by Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter who, as Aboriginal models, generated an immediate enthusiasm for the NIFVGP among the Indigenous participants. The Walking into Doors Campaign will be examined in Section 5 of this Issues Paper.

National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme (NIFVGP)

In 1999, the Working Party on Family Violence of the Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs developed a set of principles by which funding would be most effectively distributed to community-based Indigenous family violence programs. These were incorporated into the design of the National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme (OSW 2001b, p.57). They reflected the complexity of the problem facing Indigenous communities and the fact that a range of approaches operating over varying periods of time are required to bring about change. They state clearly the necessity of understanding the historical influences on family violence levels, as well as the numerous factors of disadvantage that contribute to its prevalence. What this set of principles essentially recommends is that a holistic approach be taken, and what has been lacking in terms of the recent history of funding and service delivery are groups or organisations with this goal central to their operations. However, it also raises the question of what exactly is a

'holistic' approach. We shall return to address this question at a number of places in this Paper.

Also in 1999, the Commonwealth Government provided a further $25M for a second three-year phase (PADV 2) to build on the emerging findings of PADV 1 and to consolidate its outcomes. This included the identification of Indigenous family violence as a priority theme and saw $6 million allocated to the NIFVGP, which funded a total of 74 Indigenous community-based projects operating between 1999 and 2004.

Embedded in the design of the NIFVGP was a constellation of related and culturally specific principles that comprised: cultural appropriateness; support for community-based organisations and initiatives implemented at a local level; embracing all segments of the Indigenous community; increasing community capacity and leadership to respond to violence; embracing Indigenous culture and identity; and enhancing family relationships. We can refer to this constellation as a culturally grounded approach or program ideology. By seeking to embrace all segments of the community and enacting a range of program types and processes (both preventative and interventionist) related to family violence, the principle of a holistic approach was emphasised.

A third key principle of the NIFVGP was its emphasis on fostering collaborations between local community-based Indigenous organisations and other agencies, both in government (all levels) and non-government sectors (e.g. universities, industry). This links to an earlier set of NIFVGP principles, in that a corollary is to improve non-Indigenous organisations' understanding of, and commitment to, working with Indigenous cultural groups and approaches. These key NIFVGP principles were thoroughly embedded in the vision, aims, and granting criteria of the program.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence in Queensland

The extent of violence against women has been documented in another key review conducted in Queensland by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000). In some areas, Aboriginal women were estimated to be 45 times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women and ten times more likely to die as a result. It was also found that many people in various locations, especially rural and remote communities, have become almost totally reliant on welfare as a result of the breakdown of traditional support and the lack of infrastructure and employment, with human services such as family and welfare agencies and health services unable to meet the increasing demands. Dispossession and colonisation were identified throughout the consultations as central to the alcohol and drug abuse, violence and dysfunction in Indigenous communities, with many of the victims being women and children. Victims cannot escape the violence as public transport and private vehicles do not exist due to the isolation, poverty and small size of many Indigenous communities in Queensland (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.xii). The Task Force was told that

at least one member of each family in some communities is likely to become a victim of violence.

The extent of violence is reflected in the increased incarceration rates and in the statistical data on interpersonal violence, homicides, rapes and suicides. For violent offences, sexual offences and breaches of domestic orders, the total for all reported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders in Queensland has risen from 664 in 1994 to 1,075 in 1998 (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.xiv). The Task Force believed that the number of violent offences is actually higher than the officially recorded data, as they heard many stories about crimes that women did not report for fear of reprisals from the perpetrator, the perpetrator's kinfolk or the justice system (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.xiv).

The Task Force reported the reasons for poor collaboration which had slowed progress for Indigenous people. These included:

- quick-fix solutions instead of long term initiatives by all levels of Government

- lack of coordination of policies and programs across Governments

- ineffective public funding in duplicated programs

- under representation of Indigenous peoples in senior positions

- lack of Indigenous people in decision-making processes (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.xv).

The Task Force believed that economic independence and sustainability cannot be achieved without significant cultural and social development, which should form the basis of future Government and Community initiatives, along with improved education, employment, training and cultural revitalisation (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.xv).

Cape York Justice Study in Queensland

The Cape York Justice Study (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.9) identified several principles, strategies, priorities and frameworks for the way forward. The Study was conducted in the following context: the median age at death for Cape York Indigenous males and females was at least 20 years below that of non-Indigenous people; the mortality rates for the Indigenous population was between 2 to 3 times higher than that of Queensland's population; and suicide rates among Aboriginal males in remote Aboriginal communities were over 6 times higher and, among women, 4.5 times higher than statewide rates (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.9).

Cape York communities have high levels of socio-economic disadvantage. Levels of education, health, life expectancy, employment and home ownership for Indigenous residents are lower than those for other Queensland communities. The Indigenous population in Cape York consists of 33% being less than 15 years of age, which points to policy requirements

with a greater focus on education, school to work transition, new family formation and employment creation (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.9).

The Study identified three strategies as key ways forward:

- interventions which immediately address emergency situations, reduce harm and improve safety (such as a freeze on issuing new liquor licences and zero tolerance of family violence) until communities are stabilised

- community development (welfare and governance reform)

- public sector reform (coordinating departments, programs and services through negotiation) (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.10).

Violence within Cape York's Aboriginal communities takes place at levels that are far greater than those in non-Indigenous Queensland communities. Unofficial police statistics indicate that Indigenous people consisted of 32% of spousal domestic homicide victims in Queensland in the seven years to December 2000, but represented only 2.9% of the total Queensland population (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19).

Submissions to the Study support findings that the extent of violence against women has been underestimated (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19). Indigenous women do not use support services for fear of what will happen to the perpetrator in custody and are more likely to use refuges as respite and then return to the violent partner (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19). The Study found that some women also use violence but it appears that men's violence against women is mostly spousal whereas women's violence is either in retaliation to spousal violence or towards other women in the public space (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19).

Priority areas for action identified in the Study include:

- individuals, families and community leaders to condemn violence and abuse

- communities to determine how they will ensure safety, with the support and resources of Government

- responses and services to be community determined and implemented, agreed and signed off in negotiation with Government and non-Government service providers

- responses to family violence to be coordinated with responses to alcohol (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.21).

The Study also suggested three areas of reform (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.21):

- community-controlled prevention and early intervention focused on maintaining healthy relationships

- community-controlled and civil responses to violence that focus on: safety for victims as the

first consideration; a civil legislative response to family violence that must be used in conjunction with a range of community-controlled responses and, where appropriate, criminal response; and flexible responses to a range of community issues

- criminal justice system responses marked by:

  an acknowledgment that serious violence and abuse needs the full force of the law and a clear message that violence will not be tolerated

  a commitment to address barriers to reporting, appropriate policing, court assistance to victims, speedy and appropriate court processes, appropriate rehabilitation and post-release support for offenders.

The Study reported that the Queensland Government is attempting to engage communities in more effective ways to build partnerships at regional and local levels. These approaches are based on (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.31):

- a clear linking of funding to desirable outputs and outcomes

- a commitment to evaluate Government programs to ensure they are having the agreed impacts

- a commitment to ensure greater community participation in decision making

- the need for integrated funding and service responses at the community level

- recognition of partnerships as a preferred basis of engagement, with a shift away from expert consultation models

- the pursuit of a shared responsibility for outcomes, a real sense of involvement of both community and Government parties and decision making close to the point of service.

The Study recognised that there has been limited evaluation of programs and services delivered to the Cape York communities, which has made it hard to link funds to activities and to assess the impact of funding against original aims. A range of issues include (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.33):

- determining base line indicators to reflect the health, education, social and economic status of the Cape York communities

- ensuring that new initiatives and programs provide for effective evaluation as part of the planning and budgeting process

- establishing evaluation frameworks most relevant to Indigenous communities, including indicators with regard to the following:

  changes in incidence and prevalence rates relating to injury, suicide and violence related hospital separations and other basic law and order indicators

  improved community expectations about

preventive outcomes

evidence of uptake of educational activities

an increased rate of well coordinated interagency activities

increased compliance with evidence-based preventive interventions and services

leadership and program innovation

the sharing of the results of evaluations with communities and all Government contributors to maximise learning

commitment to effective accountability (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.34).

It suggested that government agencies work together with each community to agree on a set of indicators, a process of monitoring against indicators and an avenue to ensure effective monitoring by the Auditor-General so as to develop and implement the above monitoring and evaluation regime (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.34).

Effective approaches to reform include the following reform principles (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.34):

• communities have the right to self-determination, to determine their needs, to prioritise, coordinate and plan and the right to communicate these to Government

• communities have assets, including the talents, skills and knowledge of community members

• community members require development support and community capacity building processes to engage with Government

• partnership through negotiation between Government and community is an effective process to facilitate outcomes and social change

• partnership is based on mutual respect, integrity and accountability of all parties

• cultural sensitivity is integral to effective service delivery

• provision of services, including early intervention and basic services, be maintained throughout any major change process, and the quality of service provision should not be compromised by the reform process.

The Cape York Justice Study suggested a framework for reform to include the following themes (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, pp.34-35):

• strengthening of individual family and community capacity – supporting individuals to develop skills and capacities to enable them to develop governance structures, with both the internal social and cultural context in the communities and the external frameworks of accountability

• creating safe environments – strategies for ensuring safety to emphasise the enforcement of laws and control of the supply of alcohol

• building sustainable environments – involves development of both economic and social sustainability

• re-orienting service delivery – requires a fundamental change to the way that Government does business to ensure that services are competent, coordinated, integrated, flexible and accessible.

3. Theoretical Frameworks

"All policy and action to address the issue of domestic violence takes place within a context of beliefs and assumptions about the nature of that violence, and hence the most appropriate means of addressing it" (OSW 2001b, p.8). This section of the Issues Paper contains comment and review on available theory underlying discourses on the development of Indigenous violence policy.

While theories about the nature and causes of domestic violence within Western populations have been evolving since the rise of feminism brought such issues into the public sphere in the 1960s, it is only recently that debate and theory-making has occurred regarding how family violence arises and continues at such disproportionately high levels in Indigenous communities. In Australia, as in other developed nations, new ways of understanding and therefore approaching this issue are only just beginning to emerge. Nevertheless, a decided lack of empirical evidence has limited explanatory models as well as definitions of the complex underlying situational factors relating to Indigenous violence in Australian communities (Memmott et al, 2001, pp.2 & 7).

Before discussing the theoretical frameworks that exist to help understand family violence, the term itself must be considered. It has been suggested that Indigenous Australians generally prefer the term family violence to domestic violence (Atkinson 1998, quoted in Strategic Partners 2003, p.28; Australian Law Reform Commission 1994, quoted in Strategic Partners 2003, p.42; HREOC 2003), and that the researchers investigating its effects and solutions share this preference (Memmott et al, 2001, p.1), as do the Government agencies who initiated programs aimed at reducing it (e.g. OfW, ATSIC, FaCSIA). However, it is important to emphasise that this preference does not represent a simple exchange of words but rather is based on a culturally distinct definition of 'family' and an assumption that there is a need to address simultaneously a range of forms of violence, in addition to spousal violence.

The Cape York Justice Study (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.18) stated that: "The term 'family violence' in Indigenous communities is understood to be violence perpetrated by and against a range of family members, including grandparents, parents and adult children, aunts and uncles and siblings. However, use of this broad term must not obscure the fact that it is predominantly Indigenous women and children who bear the brunt of family violence."

The concept of family in the Indigenous context refers to a pattern of kinship relationships extending beyond the nuclear family model and dominating the way most Indigenous groups and societies identify and operate. Family can also include perceived relatives who are linked by virtue of belonging to a social class or division system (a 'skin' system) and who are not necessarily related directly by blood or marriage. Indigenous family violence can involve a range of related people. In addition to spouses and children it can engage individuals and groups representative of a number of different generations and interrelated families and can include physical, psychological, social, economic and sexual forms of abuse occurring over an extended period of time (Memmott et al, 2001, p.1). The term highlights "the trauma of the inter-connecting and trans-generational experiences of individuals within families, to show the continuity between how we have been acted upon, and how, in turn, we may then act upon ourselves and others" (Atkinson 1995, quoted in Strategic Partners 2003, p.44). That is, family violence embraces the dynamic social nature of violence whereby one form of violence can transform into or catalyse another category of violence. This definition is not meant to diminish the reality of suffering of Indigenous women and children and indeed the application of the term family violence (Keel 2004, pp.6-8) would be misrepresented and misapplied if used to gloss over the prevalence of violence committed against women.

The theoretical frameworks that have been put forward to explain domestic violence in the general population have been summarised in a number of the reports produced through the PADV initiative (e.g. OSW 2001b; Strategic Partners 2003). They are Biological Determinism, Individual Pathology, Social Stressors and Individual Risks, Early Feminists and Interactive Systems and Individuals (Strategic Partners 2003, pp.34-36). In recognising that the predominant models have developed primarily out of violence research involving Western populations, it must be noted that they do not readily translate cross-culturally or adequately address the complex range of factors which underlie the high level of violence found in Indigenous communities. However, some elements may contribute to evolving new definitions between individual and collective experience, as well as help to clarify understandings between psychological, historical and political explanations that underpin some existing approaches in the literature of preceding decades. New theoretical explanations need to be developed that take into account situational and contextual factors.

Feminist theories provide a general understanding of family violence and violence against women. Since the mid 1980s, State and Federal Government Task Force reports and recommendations had been derived from feminist approaches (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.57). Such an analysis broadens the scope of experiences, including a sociopolitical context to a deeper understanding of trauma through 'stories' or narrative accounts of life experiences (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.58). Fundamental to many feminist theories is the notion of patriarchy or male domination and oppression of women through gendered power and control. However, this has been criticised for its lack of acknowledgement of race oppression and the social construction of who Indigenous people are, as men and women (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.58). The issue is more complex as Aboriginal women also share the experiences of Aboriginal men in terms of experiencing the effects of colonisation and its consequences (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.58).

The impact of alcohol and drug abuse and family violence must also be given appropriate attention. However, the interaction between alcohol and violence should not be oversimplified since not all intoxicated people are violent and some violent people are not drunk or alcoholic (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19). Yet, as pointed out in the Cape York Justice Study, there can be no doubt that alcohol consumption, "as well as the pervasive culture of excessive alcohol consumption in Cape York communities, is deeply implicated in high levels of violence" (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19). There have been few services in communities for alcohol and substance abuse, family violence, trauma and grief counselling. This lack of assistance then exacerbates the likelihood of violence (Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet 2001, p.19).

Recently explored models involve increased emphasis on socio-historical and cultural factors unique to these Indigenous communities, which include colonisation, poverty, social marginalisation, racism and 'structural stressors' caused by unemployment (Memmott et al, 2001 pp.6-31; Strategic Partners 2003, pp.37-38). Sociological theories focus on social factors involved in the incidence and escalation of violence in families and in communities. Violence in Indigenous communities must then be understood in its historical and sociostructural context, for "to construct [violence] as an 'Aboriginal problem', or to simply incriminate alcohol, denies a history of overt violence to Aborigines and the contemporary covert violence of cultural exclusion and institutional control" (Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 2000, p.60).

One of the most significant findings of the previous decade of research and action is that if Indigenous family violence is to be effectively addressed, it must be community owned and controlled (Memmott 2002; Strategic Partners 2003, p.2). Strategies and programs that are composed of a range of approaches and ideas to address family violence need to be developed. They would combine both "proactive and reactive methods which target different age and gender groups" (Memmott et al, 2001, p.4), and incorporate Indigenous approaches to therapy and healing, restorative justice and traditional law and an Indigenous definition of 'family'. These methods would contrast with those adopted by mainstream service providers that have treated the problem as an individualistic and isolated one (Memmott et al, 2001, p.37; Strategic Partners 2003, p.28).

The current authors concur that the thinking behind the term family violence reinforces the need to find solutions in the context of the particular communities or social networks in which the violence is occurring, and suggest that any useful theoretical framework must embrace the multifaceted aspects of the issue.

4. Indigenous Initiatives in North America, New Zealand and Canada

This section contains a summary of recent good practice initiatives in Indigenous family violence prevention that have occurred in North America, New Zealand and Canada, with comment on their significance or relevance to the Australian Indigenous context. The project and program profiles are arranged in order of country starting with New Zealand, the USA and Canada:

- Two Domestic Violence projects for Maori people (NZ)

- The Ngati Porou Community Injury Prevention Project (NZ)

- The Kanuhkwene Project for Oneida Women (USA)

- The Women's Circle Project, San Francisco (USA)

- Domestic Violence Intervention in an Urban Indian Health Center (USA)

- Aboriginal Women's Program Family Violence Learning Circle (Canada)

- Components of successful Aboriginal-Based Family Violence Intervention Programs (Canada)

- The 'Beginning a Long Journey' Review of Canadian Family Violence Projects (Canada).

The authors have adapted a table from the last review document for use by groups intending to develop a culturally appropriate family violence program in their community.

Two Domestic Violence Programs for Maori people at New Plymouth and South Auckland, New Zealand

Cram et al. (2002) provide an evaluation of two North Island domestic violence programs for Maori adults proscribed as Protected Persons under *The New Zealand Domestic Violence Act 1995*, and it serves as the chief document informing the following discussion. The researchers came from diverse fields of expertise and were knowledgeable about various issues regarding health and domestic violence within Maori culture (Cram et al, 2002, p.3).

The first program was called *Tu Tama Wahine o Taranaki* and operated in New Plymouth. It had both a rural and urban focus, working with groups and individual female Maori Adult Protected Persons where facilitators travelled to visit clients in outlying areas. A children's program was linked to the Adult Protected Persons program (Cram et al, 2002, p.3). Oral, written and visual methods were used to encourage women to express their feelings. Group participation allowed the women to listen to one another and share their experiences (Cram et al, 2002, p.4).

The second program was called *Te Whare Ruruhau o Meri* and located in Otahuhu, South Auckland. It was run by a large, well-established agency that provided a range of services to extended families, including programs for both Adult Protected Persons and respondents or perpetrators. The agency was perceived as a safe place for women, received referrals from all Auckland Courts and worked primarily with individual female Adult Protected Persons, although they did

have approval to conduct group sessions (Cram et al, 2002, pp.3-4).

Both programs were well established and had large client groups yet operated differently in terms of where they were located and the population they served. The underlying focus of each was to empower Maori women to build their self-esteem and confidence, and to make them aware of the safety network available after they had left the program (Cram et al, 2002, p.20). The philosophies of both programs were grounded in Maori worldviews. Clients who participated in the Tu Tama Wahine program found the culturally-specific content and focus to be effective in reaching them, providing them with a vehicle through which they could explore issues of identity and re-evaluate their own situation (Cram et al, 2002, p.5).

A Maori facilitator was considered a valuable aspect of the *Te Whare Ruruhau o Meri* program, which aimed to protect clients by educating their abusive partners and ex-partners. *Tu Tama Wahine o Taranaki* had approval for the development of a group perpetrator program (Cram et al, 2002, p.5). Both programs provided the means for protection of clients through education, information, support and empowerment. This would allow women to take control of their circumstances, as well as understand the wider socio-historical-cultural context of domestic violence (Cram et al, 2002, p.4).

A key factor in the process and content of both programs was that they embraced Maori cultural values and solutions primarily through a holistic approach. This allowed for interaction between group members and also focused on supporting the whole family in the healing process, which contrasts with Western family violence programs that have tended to address only the needs of the individual in isolation (Cram et al, 2002, p.6). Similarly, individual and collective healing was considered an essential component of the programs, focusing not only on the client's healing process but also on healing within extended families, communities and tribes (Cram et al, 2002, p.6).

The approach taken by both programs was grounded in *Kaupapa Maori* or a Maori framework. It utilises a combination of methods that relate to "cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural reliability, [and] useful outcomes for Maori …" through the incorporation of Maori self-definitions and self-valuations (Cram et al, 2002, p.14). Cram et al. (2002, p.15) argued that it was essential that the Maori people develop initiatives for change that were culturally appropriate and "located within distinctly Maori frameworks".

The Ngati Porou Community Injury Prevention Project, New Zealand

Brewin and Coggan (2004) evaluated the *Ngati Porou Community Injury Prevention Project* or CIPP (conducted between 1996 and 1998), which was based in a rural district on the North Island of New Zealand and dealt with an extensive Indigenous (Maori) population. The district had a large dispersed population, of whom 62% were Maori. It supported some 63 *marae* or tribal meeting places that were the focus for most community activities in the area (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.6).

From the beginning, the project was to conform to a holistic Maori framework, utilising strong community ties and basing its interventions within the marae context (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.6). The people of *Ngati Porou* were able to use their own *tino rangatiratanga* (or cultural ideology) as the base upon which project content and process was formed (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.6). If the program were to be successful, it had to be community-based and specifically address Maori aspirations (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.13).

The project operated within a Maori cultural *kaupapa* (framework) and included collaborative and holistic approaches to appeal to its constituency. A combination of methods and techniques was used to educate families and the community on a range of issues including road safety, substance abuse, family violence and playground safety. The project successfully applied the principles of role modelling, life span focus, accessibility, acceptability and active participation to increase awareness of these issues. Maori cultural elements such as *aroha* (love), *tautoko* (assistance), *manaaki* (support) and *karakia* (prayer) were incorporated in the project (Brewin & Coggan 2004, pp.5-6).

To address family violence, *Ngati Porou* identified *hapu* (sub-tribe) resource people who were interested and/or already involved in the prevention and reduction of domestic violence and child abuse (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.9). Through this initiative, the hapu resource people identified proper traditional care and protection practices for families, conducted many education sessions, distributed information packs and provided ongoing training for the identification of other resource persons. In addition, they organised promotional events targeting domestic violence and child abuse and displayed these within national campaigns. This was achieved by way of a *hui* (gathering) focusing on the themes of emotional and physical violence, along with an anti-family violence concert (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.10).

By using effective Maori development techniques, the *Ngati Porou* team successfully brought together at various *marae* a range of Maori organisations, sporting groups and key stakeholders who collaborated in designing injury prevention programs and information packages specific to *iwi* or local tribes (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.13).

Involvement in the program "gave the people of *Ngati Porou* an opportunity to take responsibility for their own destiny and, in doing so, they have been able to implement community participation and ownership at all levels" (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.14).

Participant observation by the researchers identified a high level of participation at the venues used to promote the program, demonstrating whole-of-community support from the *Ngati Porou* people.

The Kanuhkwene Project for Oneida Women, Northern Wisconsin, USA

The Kanuhkwene Project, established in 1990, was operated and supported by Canadian Oneida women who had experienced domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, poverty and other health care issues (Hagen & House 1995, p.1-2). It was recognised that Oneida women had suffered at the hands of a service delivery system in opposition to their traditional customs and values, subsequently impacting on their engagement with domestic violence and substance abuse services, particularly amongst pregnant women who did not utilise prenatal and postpartum care (Hagen & House 1995, p.2). The proposed project encountered problems with securing funds from mainstream government agencies. The organisation devised fund raising events and ran donation drives (Hagen & House 1995, pp.3-4).

The most important lesson that was derived from the *Kanuhkwene* project was the centrality of the traditional concept of community as embodying a holistic way of life that empowers people by connecting them and the environment. To the Oneida women, this sense of community was a key component of the program as it encouraged "cooperation, empowerment, communication and connectedness", values deemed necessary in responding to certain environmental conditions (Hagen & House 1995, p.1).

Designing a program that was culturally appropriate to Canadian Indian women allowed the Oneida group a greater opportunity to take control of their own lives. Through *Kanuhkwene*, they were also able to support the empowerment of others in the community by defining and addressing their own needs. They addressed the failure of mainstream service delivery by providing support and education to those women who experienced domestic violence, substance abuse and other forms of victimisation. By operationalising their connectedness to community, the women also experienced their own self-empowerment (Hagen & House 1995, p.5).

The Women's Circle: a component of the Native American Health Centres in San Francisco, USA

Another international family violence intervention program, quantitatively reviewed by Saylors (2003), was the Substance Abuse Treatment Women's Circle Project, based in a Family and Child Guidance Clinic focused on assisting Native Americans. The Women's Circle offered a wide range of services including a residential substance abuse treatment facility for both men and women, including group and one-on-one counselling services. Saylors compared the project elements identified by clients as important to their healing with that of staff's perceptions. The need to more effectively address a wide range of women's health issues, including physical, emotional, mental and spiritual ones, provided the initial impetus for program development in 1996. Family instability and domestic violence were chief concerns among the issues bringing women into the clinic (Saylors 2003, p.59). According to Saylors (2003, p.60), the high levels of violence, substance abuse and depression experienced by American Indian women are interrelated and pose a serious health problem.

The project's philosophy recognised the challenges faced by Indian women living in two worlds, Western and Indigenous. Anecdotal comments from one Indian social worker reported that many felt ashamed of being Native American, which was perceived as a response to acculturation pressures and historical experiences that interrupted traditional cultural transmission. Program counsellors discussed the problems clients experienced in trying to fit into a Western value system while assisting clients to develop a different perception

about themselves, to gain "respect and awareness of one's own history and culture" (Saylors 2003, p.59).

The Women's Circle program highlighted the importance of linking an individual's health, physical and spiritual wellness with that of the community and natural world by having a strong cultural component, as cultural affiliation and identity were understood to be protective factors against high-risk behaviour. Cultural involvement was viewed as an asset contributing to individual and community life (Saylors 2003, p.61). Clients who attended the Women's Circle program had 95 different tribal affiliations, so it was necessary for staff to be mindful of providing culturally appropriate options to clients. Native American healers from different cultural backgrounds and traditions were brought in for several days at a time to work with clients (Saylors 2003, p.61). Traditional American Indian healing techniques included "prayer, singing, drumming, sweat lodges, smudging, herbs and use of tobacco in ceremonies" and were used in combination with Western psychotherapeutic practice (Saylors 2003, p.61).

The program reported highly positive improvements in the participant's behaviour, life circumstances, employment and health status, as well as a marked reduction in substance abuse. Findings were based on self-reported data from 742 interviews conducted at the commencement and subsequently at six and twelve month intervals, totalling to three interview sessions during the program's three year term. The study charted a decline in usage of legal and illicit drugs, however, other contributing factors that may have influenced these findings were not examined. Saylors (2003, p.61) recognised the limitations of using self-reporting substance abuse data as a primary source and highlighted the potential for contamination of therapeutic clinical findings when a client eager to please a counsellor may falsely report positive changes (Saylors 2003, p.62).

Domestic Violence Intervention in an Urban Indian Health Centre, USA

The authors, Norton and Manson (1997), described a domestic violence program conducted in an urban Indian health centre and discussed its failure in meeting the needs of American Indian women clients when it was run from an office. They provided insight into the possible problems that can develop if a program does not sufficiently meet the needs of its Indigenous clients (Norton & Manson 1997, pp.332-333). As a consultant to the program in question, Norton found that Indigenous women were less likely to utilise mainstream services and because of this, would not receive the necessary support and healing they needed. Alternative ways of encouraging Indigenous clients to participate in programs and counselling were required. American Indians were found to prefer group therapy, either in the form of a social activity or therapy within the home environment, if it did not pose a threat. A key factor in the success of these counselling sessions was the inclusion of Indigenous traditions and values such as sharing (Norton & Manson 1997, p.335).

An important finding of the above review by Norton and Manson (1997), which supports points made elsewhere in this Issues Paper, was that programs had to be culturally tailored if they were to appropriately address the needs and values of clients.

An Aboriginal Women's Program Family Violence Initiative Learning Circle, Ottawa, Canada

In March 2002, the Department of Canadian Heritage hosted a 'learning circle' for recipients of funding from the family violence component of its Aboriginal Women's Program. It provided an opportunity for 14 selected Aboriginal Women's organisations to share information and experiences about their projects (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.4), and to determine future directions for efforts relating to reducing family violence among Canadian Indians. A key Learning Circle goal was to explore issues such as working with extended families to address family violence issues in a culturally specific way that met the needs of the community, as well as to find ways to promote and ensure healing and wellness (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.5). The 14 projects represented were based in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, the Western and Prairie Provinces, and Ontario. All involved several languages and cultures and encompassed a diversity of program types including "healing and wellness, training, education and awareness, information-sharing, and capacity-building activities" (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.4). Projects addressed the needs of Aboriginal people living in both urban and rural communities.

Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting (2002, p.6) found that an important feature of all projects was the reclamation of traditional ways, either through language, ceremonies, cultural expression or storytelling. The incorporation of such techniques into programs had enabled women, their families and communities to recognise, talk and teach lessons about, and heal from family violence. Prevention was highlighted in the Learning Circle as an essential element to any program (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.6). Other project techniques used by various groups included: setting up a traditional sewing group, conversations and discussions through support and education, community activities, cultural camps focusing on artistic expression, talking circles, workshops and the involvement of Elders (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, pp.6-8).

The achievements made by women comprised of support for individuals to heal, newly acquired skills, self-sufficiency, wellness and happiness. Supporting women in these areas was considered "a sound path to healthier families and communities" (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.8). Expectations were measured against how projects had positively affected a person's life (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.8).

The challenges faced by many projects, which emerged during the Learning Circle discussions, included lack of adequate funding, unrealistic expectations and time-lines on the part of the funding body, insufficient material resources, cultural differences and barriers, discrimination, stereotyping and racism directed at Aboriginal women, families and communities, language barriers and lack of communication (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.9). Participants in the Learning Circle believed it was necessary for people to recognise and understand that Aboriginal ways of perceiving the world differed from mainstream culture's perceptions (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.10).

A common set of key principles were found to apply to all programs. The best approach to addressing family violence

was considered to be a holistic one that incorporated a number of important cultural elements, including the use of traditional practices and the need to strengthen connections between women, their families and communities. It was also important to use community approaches to address family violence and to build upon a positive vision and approach to violence. Above all, it was recognised that healing had to "come from within and move beyond to the community" (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.10).

Components of Successful Aboriginal-Based Family Violence Intervention Programs in Canada

Of great relevance to this discussion of good practice in schemes aimed at reducing Indigenous family violence is the research evaluation project conducted by Brown and Languedoc (2004) to determine what components made a successful Canadian Aboriginal family violence program. This research was undertaken using a sample from across Canada of Aboriginal Family violence program administrators and service providers and to fill a gap in the family violence literature, which was found to be no targeting of "children, their parents, and the whole family at the same time in a community setting". Only one program was found "that worked concurrently with individuals and families" (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.478). There was also a need to provide services for male victims of family domestic violence (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.481).

The following main components of a successful program were elicited:

- good administrative structure
- good program staff
- secure funding
- connections to the community
- traditional teachings
- personal and family awareness (family dynamics)
- education and awareness about family violence
- multidimensional issues related to family violence.

A key finding of the evaluation was that the "[e]ssential components needed for a successful program must balance traditional history and process with Westernized content and accountability" (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.482). Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.482) further stated that "… a family violence program must include a multidimensional approach that is grounded in the traditional teachings of each community". It is believed that if proper healing and change were to occur, programs would have to reflect the voices of the Elders and the community (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.482).

The 'Beginning a Long Journey' A Review of Canadian Aboriginal Family Violence Projects by Health Canada

Also significant for this Issues Paper was the Health Canada (1997) report that reviewed the files on 15 projects all conceived, developed and implemented by Aboriginal people and funded by the agency's Family Violence Prevention Division under the Federal Government's Family Violence Initiative (1991-96) (Health Canada 1997, p.5). All projects "were meant to address one or more forms of violence in Aboriginal families and to do so in a nationally innovative fashion" (Health Canada 1997, p.5). The result was a variety of material encompassing many different project types and formats including television public service announcements, professional training, public education material, conference proceedings, curriculum outlines, academic and popular articles and theatrical scripts (Health Canada 1997, p.10).

One key finding of the *Beginning a Long Journey* Review of Canadian Indigenous Violence Projects was the vital importance of building culturally appropriate services for the client population. The report focuses considerable attention on the value in ensuring projects are culturally appropriate to the people they are serving. It states that services had to be designed by Aboriginal people to ensure they would work. However, the report reveals that identifying what is culturally appropriate is a demanding task given the differential processes of cultural change within and between different Indigenous groups.

The following table (Table 1) is an edited version of a longer one extracted from the Health Canada report (1997, pp.14-18). It aims to identify the broad characteristics of projects that reflected cultural appropriateness. We intend it to be used as an illustrative template that might assist groups in designing their projects by adapting or adding particular practices and attributes.

Table 1: Thirteen project characteristics that reflect cultural appropriateness (with associated good practices) analysed from 15 family violence prevention projects across Aboriginal Canada. (Source: Health Canada 1997, pp.14-18).

Program Characteristics That Reflect Cultural Appropriateness	Resulting Practices (in projects funded)
Valuing of Aboriginal tradition and culture	resources, approaches and the organisation of the services themselves are presented in a way that is deemed by the community to be compatible with Aboriginal culture
Recognition of the importance of ritual and ceremony	appropriate use of rituals and ceremonies within programs
Valuing the wisdom of those Elders who understand the dynamics of family violence, and a recognition of their role as important carriers of knowledge	involvement of such Elders in program planning and implementation
Strong sense of community and shared responsibility	an attitude toward privacy and confidentiality in the context of service delivery that is different from mainstream services involvement of community in the initial awareness raising process community wide commitment to healing as a community community effort toward healing both the abuser and victim at the same time effort to keep abuser in the community while protecting the victim(s)/survivor(s)

	support for and connection with abusers who have been convicted, given prison sentences and then been taken out of the community, as well as children who are removed from it
An emphasis on connectedness (that is, to the land, the family, extended family, clan, family of spouse) resulting in a view of the individual in context	a progression through individually centred programs to those that are conjoint or group or community centred
	connection of concurrent programs (for example, a program for batterers, one for survivors and one for children)
	recognition of the need to deal with related issues (for example, drug and alcohol abuse and co-dependency)
	teaching of practical life skills together with more psycho-social therapeutic interventions
	recognition of the need to deal simultaneously with long term community education issues, especially the education of children
An objective of restoring balance	the development of related programming that is positive and life enhancing (for example, family recreation in support of therapy)
Placing value on nurturing and mutually respectful relationships	a focus on rebuilding relationships
	a recognition of the loss of the traditional male role and the unfortunate emergence of a role based on pervasive male dominance
	a recognition of shame on the part of both the abuser and the victim
	an importance on networking among staff of different programs, even over long distances
	a collaboration between Aboriginal political leadership and service providers
An honouring of the central place of women	a recognition that the role and position of women in Aboriginal communities is changing
	a concern for the equality of women
	recognition of the need for women to be central to the decision-making process for program design and delivery
Acceptance of and respect for the client as a whole person	flexible rules and individualised programming where required
	acceptance of staff-client personal relationships that are supportive to therapeutic intervention (within an understanding of social work ethics)
A sense of equality between service provider and service recipient	client direction in pacing of program
	importance placed on storytelling as part of therapeutic programming
	staff attendance at related program events
	predominance of staff of Aboriginal ancestry
	use of simple, everyday, jargon free language
	use of resource material (posters, pamphlets, etc) that depict Aboriginal people or symbols
	use of Aboriginal language
	staff client relationships characterised by openness and informality

A central attitude of caring	a recognition of the importance of worker wellness and self care
	a requirement for healthy, trained staff (that is, people committed to becoming healthy)
	a focus on support programs and healing strategies for the helper
	programming that breaks down individual isolation and promotes sharing
	limited and appropriate self disclosure of personal experience by staff
A preference for forgiveness rather than judgment and punishment	a tendency to provide time and resources to all members of the family to consider the possibility of forgiveness of the abuser
	an acceptance of personal responsibility by the abuser as a starting point
	a recognition of Aboriginal mechanisms for achieving justice (e.g. sentencing circles)
	a recognition of the potential of such justice system mechanisms as the first part of a therapeutic intervention for the abuser
A holistic connection of body mind spirit	program management that values client process as much as staff defined results
	a focus on healing at all levels: individual, family, community, global
	a view of program development as unfolding
	a range of programming, including art therapy
	creation of opportunities for grief, anger and acceptance of the need for clientele to go through stages of 'denouncing, announcing and going beyond'
	understanding of long term grieving issues
	use of the medicine wheel and similar symbols of holistic approaches both within programs and among different programs

5. Findings on Key Indigenous Violence Projects in Australia

This section contains an overview of selected Australian Indigenous family violence projects and programs that have been evaluated in some way. Five selected projects that have been reviewed in the literature are examined:

- Aboriginal Remote Area Night Patrols, Central Australia

- The National Walking into Doors Campaign

- The Apunipima Project, Cape York

- Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre, Western Australia

- Circle sentencing as a form of community justice, NSW.

A note on evaluation methodology

Notably there is a dearth of published evaluations of Indigenous violence programs in Australia. This is partly related to the lack of anti-violence grants programs

specifically targeting the Indigenous sector (Memmott et al, 2001, pp.2-3). During their research for the National Crime Prevention in the late 1990s, Memmott et al. (2001, pp.57-77) identified 131 Indigenous violence programs and were able to profile 54 of them. Their review of the literature also revealed a systemic paucity of formal program evaluations being administered across various funding sectors, with only six of their programs having received a reasonable, documented assessment.

A recent exceptional case of a formally evaluated program is the Commonwealth initiative, Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV), which was administered by the Office for Women. Not only were various program streams evaluated, but also numerous individually funded projects, either by internal or independent methods. The auspicing agency, the Office for Women, embarked on a series of seminars across Australia titled PADV Showcasing Events that highlighted select key programs, research, publications and good practice examples.

There is a general lack of published evaluation studies conducted in the Indigenous family violence sector. One factor contributing to this state of affairs is the loose application of the term 'evaluation' in a range of research contexts. Much of the literature tends to be dominated by theorising and discussion, yet lacks reporting on empirical evidence and specifically the failings of violence programs (Memmott et al, 2001, pp.2, 94-95). Program funding bodies, service providers or research evaluators are often reluctant to be frank about program problems. Another important reason previously identified for the lack of evaluations was that funded projects operate on tight budgets and the expense of conducting an evaluation could result in competition for essential project execution funds (Mugford & Nelson 1996, p.2). We cautiously note that if and when evaluations are undertaken, reliable empirical data is required, as well as sufficient opportunity to reflect on a program's performance. These measures will ensure a clear understanding of whether any changes in the incidence of violence are a result of the program under evaluation, other possible factors or programs occurring concurrently in the community (Memmott et al, 2001, p.95).

Evaluative shortcomings can occur when studies are hindered by limited research material being gathered and a research methodology not suited to the task, as was the case with the PADV Phase 1 meta-evaluation of Indigenous Family Violence that included consideration of the Rekindling Family Relationships Forum. The overall study was confined to descriptive project profiling done according to violence types, without engaging in any sort of in-depth examination. The methodological difficulties of obtaining reliable and accessible data prior to and after a project (as an accurate reflection of a program's performance) may explain the study's reliance on anecdotal evidence. However, some value can be derived from the report's 'key learnings' and its program description components (Memmott et al, 2001, p.2; Strategic Partners 2003, pp.46-86).

The information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme (NIFVGP) provides insight into this program's strengths and achievements, along with its weaknesses and deficiencies. This study of the performance of 70 individual

projects was limited to using source literature that included: Indigenous Service Provider (ISP) grants contracts, the project reports submitted by ISPs, mentor contact, site visit reports and a questionnaire assessing individual project performance according to nine criteria and completed by the mentors.

Four of the following five project profiles draw upon the information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP.

Aboriginal Remote Area Night Patrols, Central Australia

One of the projects funded through the NIFVGP was the Tangentyere Council's Remote Area Night Patrol (RANP) Support project. This is a useful example to discuss, not only because of the good practice it displayed, but also because night patrol programs, some with a comparatively long history of being trialled in various Indigenous communities around Australia, have been shown to be an important component of any holistic, community-driven anti-violence scheme (Blagg 2003; Memmott et al, 2001). Night patrols fall into the categories of early reactive or late proactive program types - or those designed to intervene just before or after violence has taken place.

In general terms, patrols are forms of non-coercive intervention whereby a group of people move around a community, either on foot or in vehicles, and intervene in certain situations to prevent individuals or groups from further anti-social behaviour that would bring them into contact with the police. The patrollers may then direct them to an alternate service. These targeted people may be intoxicated and require a sobering up shelter, and/or be involved in physical and verbal fighting. The communities in which these patrols help maintain social order may not be defined by particular geographical limits but be made up of a certain constituency, such as young Aboriginal people out after dark in an urban regional centre (Blagg 2003, p.5). The patrollers draw their authority, which is essentially moral, from the consensus of the community (Blagg 2003, p.5). These kinds of patrols have different names in various States, some are called 'street beats' and others are called 'barefoot' or 'street patrols' (Blagg 2003, p.6). An overview by Blagg (2003, p.7) describes how his literature survey, consultations and site visits revealed that night patrols were moving beyond their traditional core functions and "developing sophisticated case-work arms and … engaging in multi-agency liaison in their localities". As family violence is one of the key issues the patrol programs are tackling, they are pertinent to this paper's discussion.

Tangentyere Council's Remote Area Night Patrol Support project received two rounds of funding under the NIFVGP. In PADV 1, it received just over $120,000 to "assist [remote community] patrols to develop accountability procedures by providing administrative support and training". And through the fourth funding round, the RANP received a further $47,000 to install a pictorial reporting database in a small number of remote communities .

Tangentyere Council was formed in late 1977 to serve the nineteen Aboriginal town camps located in Alice Springs in the Northern Territory (Memmott 1994). The success of the

night patrols it had initiated in these urban settlements has led to the organisation providing support in the form of training for patrols being run in some 20 remote communities in the Central Desert region of the Northern Territory. These patrols strive to respond in a timely or appropriate fashion to violent incidents, often family-related, where the police are unable to do so because of their distance from the scene. They must operate between the Indigenous cultural imperatives operating in communities, which require individuals to look after family members, or fulfil obligations defined by kinship along with the legal imperatives that require them to report offences to the proper authorities (Tangentyere Council 2003, p.1). Blagg's (2003, pp.18-19) recent overview of night patrol services in Australia noted that it was the women in remote communities, such as Lajamanu and Ali-Curung, who had been responsible for establishing the most effective patrols in response to the levels of family violence being experienced there.

The team running the NIFVGP-funded project had to complete a number of interrelated tasks. The team was to assist with the introduction of a paper-based reporting system for night patrol teams which would take account of varying levels of literacy but would also make the resultant records acceptable to funding bodies and useful to the police. As an extension to this system, the team was also to develop a flexible database system. The records kept were to be used to inform community council decisions as well as policy making at certain levels of government. The project was to strategise the identification of personnel able to provide administrative support in the selected communities and provide training in the reporting system and other night patrol skills (including legal issues, occupational health and safety, first aid and mental health). The activities of the various night patrols were also to be publicised through a video newsletter. In engaging in these tasks, the team aimed to enhance partnerships between the relevant local and regional organisations and services and the night patrol staff.

The information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP (which included a desktop assessment of the materials submitted in fulfilment of the grant reporting requirements, as well as the contribution of the mentors closely involved throughout the project) determined that the RANP displayed good practice on a number of fronts. It was highly technically efficient, well planned and executed, and its products were shown to be very useful in different communities. The RANP team carried out its reporting tasks well, providing a lot of useful material to the PADV initiative. We will expand upon this evaluation here as we believe night patrols have shown themselves to be vital in addressing levels of Indigenous family violence. Among others, a report by Strategic Partners (2003) stated that night patrols had succeeded in reducing levels of substance abuse and family violence in communities, were instrumental in deflecting certain people from unnecessary involvement with the police and played a key role in policy development at local and territory levels.

The Tangentyere night patrol project is particularly illustrative of one principle central to the design and intentions of the NIFVGP - cultural grounding of projects - and how its elements can be successfully realised 'on the ground' in certain communities. The reporting system devised by the

RANP involved a single record sheet featuring a range of drawings which described a number of incidents that may have occurred and what action may have been taken. The drawings were in a style recognisable or acceptable to local Aboriginal people (for example, with figures blacked in rather than defined in outline). Patrollers circled the drawing relevant to a particular incident, as well as recorded other relevant information such as their names and the names of the people involved. A map was often used to allow people to indicate with a mark where an incident had taken place. These kinds of pictorial systems gave people for whom English was frequently a third or fourth language, the opportunity to fulfil the reporting requirements laid down by funding bodies and the police (Tangentyere Council 2003, p.1). Such a technique allows the community people, so sought after by programs like the NIFVGP, to fulfil notions of the 'community in action' while not being hampered by their lack of capacity with regard to literacy. The RANP's 'Patrol Story' website (http://www.patrolstory.org.au) provides a demonstration of how this incident reporting system has developed since the original NIFVGP funding. This data-capture system in itself is innovative, by allowing remote patrollers the opportunity to input patrol details online (Tangentyere Council 2005).

The final report produced by the Tangentyere RANP project and submitted to the Office for Women in 2003 makes an important and honest point about the pressure placed on night patrollers who find their cultural or kinship obligations conflicting with the nature of the task they have been set. The patrol participants being 'cultural insiders', with a deep understanding of language and long-standing relationships, is what imbues the night patrols with their strength. However, it can also be a hindrance when people are prevented by kinship-defined avoidance rules from having contact with a class of relative, or are required to treat a family member with deference (Tangentyere Council 2003, p.2). The 'Trial of the Century' workshop run by the project for night patrol groups, and the responses of attending men and women presented in the final report, further illustrates some of the complex cultural issues surrounding how night patrols operate. It presented participants with a scenario involving an individual who had broken the law and asked them to decide on a suitable punishment. All participants had difficulty giving a 'verdict' as they wanted more information about the individual's family and could not give a fair judgment without this information. It was also significant to see that men and women gave different responses. As the report reveals, "[n]ight patrols rely for their effectiveness on traditional cultural principles and protocols. These … are negotiable to some extent according to kinship, status, country [and] language group" (Tangentyere Council 2003, p.2).

The 2004 evaluation of the NIFVGP determined that the most successful projects generally occurred within well established regional Indigenous organisations. The stability and access to resources provided by them ensured that projects could fulfil their aims and respond to difficulties without threatening their relationship with the funding body. The example of the Remote Area Night Patrol project run by Tangentyere Council illustrates this point well. The authors of the evaluation recommended that long-term support be made available to such organisations and that a process of accreditation accompany the family violence services. This

ties in with other feedback that came out of information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP. Namely, about improving the standard of evaluation for projects through ensuring mentors provided 'tick sheet' evaluation forms and conducted closer analysis from the base of a regional organisation.

The National Walking into Doors Campaign

The Walking into Doors Campaign, implemented in 2001 by the Office of the Status of Women (now the Office for Women) as part of PADV 1, was formally evaluated by the consulting firm Cultural Perspectives as a successful model of a violence awareness campaign (Cultural Perspectives n.d.). The campaign cost approximately $300,000 and comprised the following components:

- print and radio advertising through Aboriginal owned and operated media

- a series of ten community forums

- educational brochures

- information cards featuring contacts for national, state and local services. (OSW 2001c).

The community forums were a major component of this campaign's delivery and occurred in ten locations throughout four States and the Northern Territory. Walking into Doors aimed to: promote community discussion and understanding of the impact of family violence on the wellbeing of communities and families, in particular, on children; identify and promote discussion on measures to prevent domestic violence; and increase knowledge about sources of assistance for individuals and families experiencing domestic violence (Cultural Perspectives n.d., p.5).

The following key findings of the evaluation have relevance to how this campaign was received by the NIFVGP grant recipients

Firstly, "… the campaign was well received by community members and service providers. In particular, the forum format was considered appropriate and successful for Indigenous communities, with many participants acknowledging the powerful impact the forum has had on all those who attended" (Cultural Perspectives n.d., p.3).

High profile Aboriginal singer/songwriters, Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter, were the public faces of the Walking into Doors Campaign. It was positively received due to the presence and music of these two prominent Aboriginal identities, who were able to speak personally and openly in a non-shaming way about family violence. They were viewed as ideal spokespersons because they were "grass-roots" people who had "actively worked through their own problems" (Cultural Perspectives n.d., p.3). This finding indicates the potential contribution that highly regarded mentors from the Aboriginal community could make to an anti-violence campaign.

Although the contribution of highly regarded mentors was perceived as successful, the responses from service providers to the overall outcomes of the forums were less enthusiastic. "Opinion was divided over the aim of the forums and what they had achieved. The majority of those

service providers interviewed felt that the forum functioned well as an awareness raising activity rather than something that might effect immediate or direct change, or provide tangible solutions for tackling domestic violence. In this vein, the campaign was viewed as an important part of a wider strategy to combat domestic violence" (Cultural Perspectives n.d., p.4)

A recommendation of the campaign's Evaluation Report was that "follow-up activities would have been beneficial to maintain the momentum and dialogue established by the forums." A second key strategic recommendation was that "highly visual material and face-to-face workshops are effective methods of targeting Indigenous communities. In particular, Aboriginal people talking to other Aboriginal people about family violence is a powerful and appropriate strategy for promoting change …" (Cultural Perspectives n.d., p.4).

We believe a further series of points can be made about the Walking into Doors Campaign. The limited reach of the forum location launches helps show how critical the choice of venue is. The small campaign budget suggests that many centres with high Indigenous populations may not have even heard the message. The correlation between the forum locations and locations of other PADV 1-funded Indigenous programs was not strong and this may have affected the momentum gained by the campaign. Victim support and information services must exist in communities in order to receive and distribute such campaigns, however, many Indigenous communities lack or are devoid of any such services. Education programs offer a long-term proactive strategy to violence and can have a positive effect on behavioural change, but there is insufficient data to show whether or not changes occur for a considerable length of time after such short-lived campaigns have ended (Memmott et al, 2001, pp.72-73, 78).

The Apunipima Project, Cape York

A further example of a project displaying good practice in the family violence field was called 'Stepping Up', run by Apunipima Cape York Health Council in Cairns, which was provided with $163,600 by NIFVGP. Its aim was to develop a community-controlled counselling service in five Cape York Indigenous communities, based around the concept of social and emotional health care (Strategic Partners 2003). These services were to utilise a 'triage' model wherein a number of 'natural helpers' would be selected from within the communities because of their existing potential, and trained to provide support, healing and further training in response to family violence. Such an approach was seen to have the potential to build community capacity by tapping into its existing strengths, in the form of individuals already displaying an interest, willingness or talent for such work. 'Natural helpers' were also to be trained to provide referral to relevant agencies. Family violence awareness programs were delivered extensively at health clinics, in schools and churches, and with men's, women's and community justice groups. Over the course of the project, 252 meetings were held, 81 training sessions were delivered to a total of 854 people and 32 agencies requested more training (Success Works 2003).

Apunipima Cape York Health Council began in 1994 and is

incorporated under the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976* (Commonwealth). Its role in the Indigenous communities of the Cape York Peninsula is "to identify deficiencies in services and activities influencing health, and to push for solutions" (Apunipima 2005; CYP 2005). It is "dedicated to preventative health care development through the adoption of the 'River of Life' Philosophy, which utilises consultation and advocacy for the health needs of Cape York communities, in partnership with key stakeholders" (Apunipima 2005). All adult Aboriginal persons with traditional or historical interests in Cape York who are also residents in the area are entitled to become members of Apunipima and attend, speak and vote at general meetings, as well as be eligible to stand as office bearers or members of the Governing Committee (CYP 2005). The membership of the Governing Committee includes approved representatives from both ATSIC and the Cape York Land Council (each nominate a regional council member), as well as one man and woman elected by each community (CYP 2005).

This project demonstrated good practice in a number of areas that surfaced in the information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP. However, as noted, the heavy workload under which its staff operated did prevent them from engaging in the task of self-evaluation, even though they were otherwise well equipped to do so. These people were professionally trained and experienced in the delivery of similar schemes in the Indigenous communities of the Cape and elsewhere, and this expertise showed in the way they responded to certain difficulties encountered during the course of the project. As many as ten or eleven communities were canvassed before the final five were selected. The team was able to assess which communities were willing to participate. Apart from the use of skilled staff, the project displayed good practice with regard to the culturally appropriate techniques it deployed, and displayed a high level of understanding about how communities functioned and/or failed to function, what pressures their citizens were under, and with which tasks they experienced difficulty. The project engaged a range of community structures such as justice groups, used methods aimed at people with poor literacy skills, such as the role-playing elements of the 'walk away, cool down' initiative and encouraged community participation through unthreatening events such as barbecues and video nights, recognising that family violence is not an easy topic to begin addressing openly. The delivery of certain programs to children was age-appropriate, using puppetry and role-playing. The Apunipima project is a further example of a successful project occurring within a larger, well-established regional Indigenous organisation, as was the Tangentyere Council night patrol project.

A number of the insights gained by the Apunipima 'Stepping Up' project team would be useful to other agencies considering the implementation of behaviour modification programs, such as the one trialled. They found that in the Indigenous communities with which they were involved, there existed little awareness that family violence was not normal. When it was actually a culturally sanctioned norm, the 'natural helpers' frequently had no sense that they could make a difference. The helpers selected often had poor literacy and numeracy skills and were experiencing personal problems themselves.

The agencies serving these communities experienced the common difficulties associated with a high staff turnover, as well as there being a lack of relevant protocols in place. There were a limited number of safe places for victims, inconsistent leadership from men in positions of power and high levels of substance abuse. As the project team reported, because the capacity of these communities is so impoverished, the process of building community-grounded programs will be commensurately slow. They "anticipated that a minimum three-year timeframe was required to execute a project of this scale and that five years was more appropriate in order to have sustained delivery".

Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre, Western Australia

Yirra Yaakin's Kutta Kutta (Noongar for 'make believe') Theatre Project was developed as a performance piece in response to the family violence awareness issues highlighted in the 'Cultural Perspectives' evaluation on the Walking into Doors Campaign. In 2002, it was funded through the NIFVGP as a major project and received $148,790 (Yirra Yaakin 2003). The aim was to initiate and encourage open discussion of family violence issues and the wider context in which they occur by developing a theatre performance piece and follow-up workshops based on the theme of 'Family Violence - No Excuse'. The project was designed to provide positive models of family relationships.

Yirra Yaakin Noongar Theatre was established in 1993 with only a core staff of three. By 2005, it had developed into a large theatre company performing 46 new works, was in receipt of seven major awards, employed 246 Aboriginal people and 51 trainees and had presented its work to over 170,000 people over the previous twelve years (Da Cruz 2005, p.3).

The Kutta Kutta project, through consultation with the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Community Development, seconded experienced Indigenous family violence workers who contributed significantly to the project's development. The project team accessed resource materials and discussed personal experiences in order to develop a script focused on the issue of Indigenous family violence. In addition to consulting with other existing agencies and utilising existing resource materials, Yirra Yaakin enhanced its linkages with other existing Indigenous theatre networks or organisations, both within Australia and overseas. Some included Taki Rua Productions from New Zealand, Native Earth Performing Arts Incorporated (North America), BLAKstage National Indigenous Theatre Alliance and Kooembajdarra Indigenous Performing Arts based in Brisbane.

The production of 'No Excuse' was initially trialled and refined through 20 free performances for family violence victims, perpetrators, other Aboriginal community members, health providers and in educational institutions and prisons (Yirra Yaakin 2003). The production was designed to be non-regionally specific to ensure its potential application in any part of Western Australia or indeed throughout Indigenous Australia.

'No Excuse' incorporated both a theatre piece production (30 minutes), followed by a workshop (30 minutes) conducted by experienced and trained Indigenous support workers from

the two Family Violence agencies cited above.

In all, 29 formal performances were conducted and the 'No Excuse' message was delivered to audiences through a range of promotional material including a poster, booklet, T-shirt and costume design. Performances occurred two or three times at each location on the nominated day and were held at fourteen schools, two community centres and four correctional centres. An audience of almost 3,000 attended the 'No Excuse' performances, of which about half were in the 13 to 17 year old age bracket (Da Cruz 2005).

The workshop following the performance involved participants filling out a questionnaire on their experience and perception of family violence. The broad definition of family violence was based on a Power-and-Control Model of violence that included forms of non-physical and social violence. By incorporating a broad definition of violence types (psychological and physical), theatre participants were encouraged to consider whether they had been involved in such forms of violence and in what capacity. In an analysis of 889 survey returns, 77% of respondents could identify one or more forms of abusive activities as having occurred in their extended families or communities, whilst 48% had personally experienced violent abuse (Farmer 2005).

The Kutta Kutta Theatre project displayed an innovative use of theatre to generate awareness in the community about family violence issues, and to promote the role of Aboriginal theatre in addressing a range of problematic issues prevalent in the community.

Circle Sentencing as a form of Community Justice, NSW

A concern regularly voiced by Indigenous community members regarding family violence is the way offenders are treated by the criminal justice system once a violent act has been brought to its attention. Complaints are frequently made about offenders being drawn into a system that separates them from the local consequences of their actions, and from any efforts to attain justice for those concerned within their kinship-focused communities. Concern is frequently voiced by victims that their trauma is not heard and considered during the sentencing process. Furthermore, and most particularly, Indigenous communities decry that traditional law is not a part of the process. It is argued that this 'blindness' to the context in which violent acts are carried out is a key part of what drives recidivism, or continued family violence, and that it is coupled with offenders not being made to understand the consequences of their actions in terms they can relate to, by people whose authority they are bound by culture to respect. One important program type, the proponents of which believe can help redress this situation, is 'circle sentencing', or a court process involving community figures like Elders, the victim and offender, and a number of judicial officers including a magistrate. The use of such a scheme where spousal abuse or assault (refer to the twelve family violence forms discussed in Section 2 of this paper) is involved has been questioned and will be considered in the following paragraphs.

Circle Sentencing Courts operate in some form in most Australian States, including Queensland, Western Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia; the last having

hosted the first Indigenous Magistrates Court session in 1999 under Magistrate Chris Vass (Marchetti & Daly 2004, pp.1-2; Potas et al, 2003, p.3). Such specialist courts have emerged for three basic reasons: in response to the over-representation of Indigenous Australians in the criminal justice system; as an outcome of recommendations made by the 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody; and because of the growing recognition that the traditional legal system is unsuited to dealing with the complex issues in the lives of Indigenous offenders (Marchetti and Daly 2004; Briggs and Auty 2003, quoted in Freiberg 2004, p.8). These Circle Sentencing Courts take two basic forms: urban centre courts that set aside a certain number of days per month to hear the cases of Indigenous offenders; and practices in remote locations where judicial officers complete a circuit. Each respond to different justice contexts and modes of participation (Marchetti & Daly 2004, p.1). They occupy part of a field of innovation in the criminal justice system called restorative, transformative, participatory or reintegrative justice which tries to balance "the needs of victims, offenders and citizens in general, all of whom must be involved in the sentencing process" in a way not achieved by traditional court processes (Freiberg 2004, p.4).

One model was trialled in the New South Wales Local Court of Nowra in 2002. The Australian Institute of Criminology's 2005 Crime and Violence Prevention Awards recognised the achievements of the Nowra Circle Court, as well as the Shepparton Koori Court in Victoria with Certificates of Merit (Australian Institute of Criminology 2005). An initiative of the NSW Aboriginal Justice Advisory Council, the model was partly based on one tried in Canada in 1992, where efforts were made to situate the sentencing of Indigenous offenders in a community setting where their crimes and the consequences of those crimes could be considered in a more holistic way (Potas et al, 2003, p.3). Thirteen cases were looked at, which appears to be almost the total number of cases heard over the course of the year-long trial (Potas et al, 2003, pp.9&51). We are aware of some substantial criticisms that are made of the application of these restorative or reintegrative justice principles in the context of domestic and family violence. For those who are interested in a detailed debate and critique of restorative justice and its application (which fall beyond the aims of this paper), we refer readers to the Stubbs' (2004) paper, Restorative Justice, Domestic Violence and Family Violence.

While different jurisdictions vary in the way their Circle Sentencing Courts work, they are similar in a number of key ways: the offender must be Indigenous and have already entered a plea of guilty; normally a magistrate would hear the charge; the offence must have occurred within the court's geographical sphere of influence; and the magistrate retains the ultimate power with regard to sentencing, although advice is sought from a number of court participants (Marchetti & Daly 2004, p.2; Potas et al, 2003, p.4). The specific crimes excluded from consideration by the court were strictly indictable offences (which could include serious assault or violent offences), sexual offences and strictly indictable drug offences. NSW relied on its general sentencing legislation to oversee the operation of the Nowra Circle Court, and as of 2004, only Victoria had enacted specific legislation regarding its Indigenous Court (Marchetti & Daly 2004, pp.2-3). Nowra's

Circle Court sat in a more culturally appropriate place than the Local Magistrate's Court. After the magistrate had assessed the suitability of an applicant, the local Aboriginal Community Justice Group also did so. Those participating sat in a circle that included "four community elders, the magistrate, the offender, the offender's support people, the Aboriginal Project Officer, the victim and their supporters, the defence counsel and the police prosecutor" (Marchetti & Daly 2004, p.3). Permission had to be sought for observers to be present and they were required to sit outside the circle. After sentencing, the court would reconvene after a few months to assess the offender's progress (Marchetti & Daly 2004, p.3).

As it was not oriented specifically toward family violence, only a few of the cases heard by the Nowra Circle Court dealt with it. One in particular provides insight into the life of an Aboriginal man with a history of assaulting his defacto wife (Potas et al, 2003, pp.16-20). The 28-year old male was appearing before the Court for a number of crimes including assaulting police, use of offensive behaviour and language, and common assault. He had been raised in a violent home and had suffered brain damage during a brutal beating, which required him to take ongoing medication for a mental illness. At the time of the incident, he was under the influence of alcohol, and he had a history of committing violent offences. Unfortunately, this case could not be formally evaluated through the follow up or progress report, since the feedback and outcomes for the victim were not recorded in the case study's progress report. This could be due to the ending of the relationship. Longitudinal evaluation was not conducted to track this case to determine if the victim of the family violence was no longer in fear of or being intimidated by the partner, and that the offender had continued to abstain from alcohol and stopped his abusive and violent behaviour. A long term follow up on the offender accepting responsibility for the violence was also absent.

Another spousal abuse case that was profiled in the Nowra Court's descriptive study involved an offender assaulting his defacto partner on two occasions (that had been reported and came to the official notice of the authority), with at least one incident occurring while her young children were present (Potas et al, 2003, pp.35-38). On the second occasion, after his partner had fled the house with the children, the police arrived and were also assaulted. On both occasions the offender was intoxicated. However, the proceedings did not indicate whether the offender had accepted responsibility for the violence instead of excusing it away on intoxication. The Court proceedings extracted in the descriptive review show that the magistrate indicated that the sentence had to reflect the obvious emotional harm done to the victims—the police and the defacto partner—and that a merciful attitude on the part of his partner should not influence the sentence more than an unforgiving one. This highlights the important need for magistrates to understand the power, control and intimidation associated with spousal abuse. The offender's mother acted as his support person and told the Court how he had been raised in a home where she suffered serious ongoing spousal abuse. The Elders present reinforced the lack of acceptance of domestic violence in the community and the realisation that it was the cause of much anguish to Aboriginal women. They also discussed the need to closely supervise the offender's post-sentence work efforts. Again,

unfortunately, there were no progress reports provided for this case, and no evaluation or follow up with the victim and her safety needs.

Stubbs (2004) highlighted concerns raised in the context of other restorative justice programs used to address domestic and family violence. Noted was the low rate of victim participation and high drop out rate of participants; the lack of long term empirical evaluation on recidivism and other outcomes; the potential conflict between the goals for the offender and that for the victim; the vague and inconsistent outcome measures to evaluate victim satisfaction; the lack of outcome measures and long term evaluation for community restoration and retribution; and the power imbalances of the mainstream or wider society being replicated in circle sentencing.

Bearing in mind that most of the cases did not involve family violence, the descriptive pilot report prepared by Potas et al. (2003) declared that the Nowra Circle Court, in the one year period, had fulfilled its aims. These were to: make the court setting a more culturally appropriate one, thereby encouraging Aboriginal people to feel that their traditions were recognised in a meaningful way by the criminal justice system; provide more effective sentencing options for Aboriginal defendants; provide support while people served their sentences; improve the support of victims and encourage healing and reconciliation; and break the cycle of debilitating recidivism (Potas et al, 2003, p.1). The pilot process tried to gauge the satisfaction levels of various participants and found that victims, in particular, attended the Court with serious concerns about it being too soft on the offenders. All but one of the victims came away from the experience with those concerns allayed. Other participants were highly satisfied with the outcomes achieved (Potas et al, 2003, p.39). However, it should be noted that the majority of the participant and victim feedback would not have involved circle sentencing for family violence matters. Since there has not been a longitudinal study on the Circle Sentencing Court's effect on the rates of recidivism on family violence by tracking or monitoring cases over a substantial period (beyond one year), it would seem early to make claims about the Circle Sentencing Court's effect on the rates of recidivism, especially if most matters did not involve family violence related matters (such as the legislative exclusion from dealing with sexual offences, indictable offences including serious assaults or violence).

The positive aspects of the Circle Sentencing Court, as stated by the report: "[c]ircle sentencing is a clear example of how the court can share its authority with the local Aboriginal community, and how the traditional justice system and Aboriginal cultural practice and values can be successfully merged" (Potas et al, 2003, p.52). What it also makes clear is that to be most effective, such a sentencing system must be supported by adequate treatment services in the community for substance abuse problems, as well as for addressing family violence. A number of participants suggested that more Aboriginal women be included in the circle, especially when a charge of domestic violence or spousal assault was made (Potas et al, 2003, p.41).

However, the limitations of Circle Sentencing Courts must also be recognised. The descriptive review by Potas et

al. (2003) made some very specific statements about the caution that must be enacted when expanding such a sentencing scheme into other areas (Potas et al, 2003, pp.53-54). Its authors emphasised the importance of all regular participants - magistrate, legal representatives and the Aboriginal community - sharing the same aims. Furthermore, it reinforced how vital it was that the offenders appearing before such a court have strong community ties and display a commitment to the process themselves.

> *Indeed the full potential of circle sentencing cannot be attained unless all participants work as a team. Each must make a constructive contribution to finding an outcome that satisfies the need to impose a sentence of appropriate severity to punish the offender as well as the need for retribution and community protection* (Potas et al, 2003, p.54).

Stubbs' (2004) paper on restorative justice and domestic and family violence concludes by doubting the ability of generic models of restorative justice to provide safe and effective justice for victims of domestic violence. A formal and longitudinal evaluation process is vital to assess the outcomes of circle courts, particularly with respect to retribution and community protection, including that of the victims of family violence.

In this discussion of community justice and in the context of good practice initiatives, it should also be mentioned that there have been various community legal centres developed to support and advocate for victims of family violence (they do not represent perpetrators due to the legal conflict of interest). Some of these include: the Many Rivers Aboriginal Women's Legal Service in Kempsey, NSW; the Top End Women's Legal Service in Darwin, NT; the Western Australian Family Violence Advocacy Project; and the Warndu Watlhilli-Carri Ngura Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service in Port Augusta, South Australia. The community legal centres support and represent victims, predominantly Aboriginal women, in the context of family violence matters, with liaisons between the police, refuges and accommodation services and referrals to other relevant services.

6. Elements Contributing to the Success and Deficiencies of Indigenous Violence Projects

Introduction

This section of the paper attempts to identify elements, strategies and principles that will contribute to the success of Indigenous family violence projects. It draws heavily on the evaluation study of PADV 1 and the information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP, as well as on the international projects reviewed in Section 4 of this paper. The following good practice elements will be discussed in this section:

- cultural grounding of projects
- community grounding of projects
- the engagement of men into programs
- ensuring the involvement of Elders
- self-empowerment and self-esteem as capacity-building by-products
- examining inter-generational family history and colonial experience as a healing element
- cultural preference for group approaches
- capacity building through networking and partnerships
- information collection and dissemination
- training and skills acquisition
- flexibility and adaptability of projects.

Further good practice strategies will also be discussed in Section 7 of this Issues Paper under the heading of 'Designing holistic and sustainable programs within Indigenous communities'. In discussing success, equal attention must be focused on the inevitable failures or difficulties experienced by Indigenous Service Providers (ISPs). If evaluation studies are reticent about describing program shortcomings, then ineffective program design and execution will be repeated, with little progress being made in tackling these deficiencies. Based on their work conducted in the 1990s, Memmott et al. (2001, p.77) clearly stated that Indigenous programs face very significant and real barriers to effective program execution, which include the following:

- lack of suitable sectoral partnerships for program delivery
- lack of coordination at the local level
- lack of training and skills amongst program staff
- lack of funding or insufficient funding
- unethical community politics interfering with program execution
- programs not directly targeted at the worst forms of violence in a community, which may appear too awesome to tackle
- programs being predominantly reactive and not balanced with proactive components to reduce incidents of violence
- lack of coordination or fragmentation between State and Commonwealth goals and programs
- violence intervention staff themselves can be threatened and/or assaulted by violent perpetrators
- 'burn out' amongst program staff caused by regularly dealing (both during and out of work hours) with the constant, stress-inducing occurrences of violence in the community.

The factors listed above further indicate that initiating and delivering Indigenous violence programs requires that an awareness of hurdles be coupled with effective strategies to overcome these impediments to project implementation. The evaluation of the NIFVGP found that these and other problems were experienced by a considerable number of the funded projects, whether or not they completed their defined tasks.

The NIFVGP provided many worthwhile lessons and is a very useful model to adapt for future use. The projects funded through it demonstrated a wide range of strategies,

some of which positively engaged with communities and were delivered with great effectiveness by the ISPs. The information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP established that about 60% of projects achieved all of their stated aims. In addition, a total of 54 out of 74 projects completed all their reports and thus, in terms of their contracts with the Office for Women, completed their work. The mentors assessed that 15% of ISPs performed very well or fairly well, and that 60%, although performing at a lower level (a mix of positive and negative achievements), developed projects with the potential for ongoing application and growth. However, providing timely reports to the Office for Women was problematic for many project groups. Unfortunately, only 21 out of a reviewed sample of 60 NIFVGP projects were identified as performing well with their reporting requirements. Generally, there was a correlation between good project execution and reporting performance, however, several project groups executed their projects well but did not report as required to the funding agency.

We shall now examine a series of project elements that have been identified as contributing to the success of Indigenous family violence programs.

Cultural grounding of projects

The NIFVGP was successful in promoting and fostering a culturally grounded approach to ISP project design with 54 out of 66 projects devising a culturally specific approach of some sort. Customary kin groups and networks were widely considered by ISPs in their project execution; specifically nuclear and extended families, gendered groups (men's and women's groups) and Elders' groups. Some of these techniques emphasised male and female roles or the roles of particular kin, such as 'aunties' and 'uncles', in addressing family violence problems.

Of repeated significance in projects was the use and empowerment of individual Elders, Councils of Elders and Elders' groups. Elders played high-profile roles in projects by guiding and informing, exerting their authority, doing their own research and acting as project officers, as well as by being key speakers, cultural educators and mentors for younger leaders. This was achieved through such strategies as ensuring community involvement and ownership of projects, using community volunteers and selecting projects that were community-focused. Most projects also combined various cultural methods and techniques, some of which were innovative in their application to contemporary bi-cultural circumstances.

The international literature demonstrated that in order to be effective, programs needed to be culturally-based and incorporate traditional elements into their content and process, especially into their teaching, learning and healing processes. This allowed the programs to appropriately meet the needs and values of the client group they were serving. Examples of traditional elements cited in the relevant literature included the use of ceremony, storytelling, traditional sewing techniques, cultural camps, 'medicine wheel', herbs and sage, sweat lodges, talking circles, sharing, language, involvement/participation of community members and traditional meeting places (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, pp.6 7; Brewin

& Coggan 2004; Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.482).

The Native American community living in the San Francisco Bay area and its examination by Saylors (2003, p.62) revealed the effectiveness of combining Western and traditional methods to address family violence (healing was also highlighted). Combining components from both cultures was considered by the researcher to be "part of actualising and implementing a holistic model" that made use of "elements of Western psychotherapeutic practice and Native healing". The Canadian study by Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.482) noted that incorporating traditional components into a program's content and processes, as well as tailoring them to suit individual and family needs, when combined with the inclusion of Western content, was of significant value.

Many Indigenous women suffering domestic or family violence, according to the international literature reviewed, would not utilise mainstream service delivery because of the culturally inappropriate style and structure of these programs, as well as the inability of staff to understand their values and needs. Many mainstream services did not meet the needs of the Indigenous population, therefore, Indigenous women did not get the counselling and healing they required, thus demonstrating the importance of using traditional elements (Norton & Manson 1997, pp.332-334; Hagen & House 1995, p.2; Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.483).

Indigenous women who accessed mainstream services were sometimes subjected to situations where they were made to feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or humiliated by staff working within the top-down bureaucratic system by which mainstream services were run. This has been the driving force behind the development of many community-based organisations and programs which have been designed to be culturally appropriate so as to allow Indigenous women a greater opportunity to take control of their lives (Hagen and House 1995).

Development of culturally adapted good practice methods

A broad definition provided the basis for identifying and analysing emerging 'good practice' techniques in the NIFVGP which may apply to an approach, a technique, a method, a process, a document, a media product, a role, a concept or a message being used for the prevention or reduction of family violence. A 'good practice' example showed evidence of several of the following traits:

- the approach or technique was creative, effective and culturally appropriate

- no major problems were experienced with the approach or technique

- any minor problems being experienced were readily rectified

- the approach or technique could be clearly articulated or described and hence was reproducible or able to be readily replicated

- the approach or technique was adaptable or flexible, and could be implemented in different communities or contexts, while still being responsive to needs as they arose

- the approach or technique logically contributed to the prevention or reduction of family violence

- the approach or technique was part of a planned process that could be readily linked together with other components of an anti-violence strategy or program (i.e. showed evidence of an integrative process)

- the approach or technique could enhance existing practices and invigorate existing levels of social capital

- the approach or technique was cost-effective and sustainable (i.e. did not require large expenditure of resources).

Some 49 out of 70 NIFVGP projects were identified as displaying aspects of good practice and 25 are featured on the NIFVGP website (http://www.indigenousviolence.net) with 16 being good practice examples. There were further areas in which good practice appeared, which included: cultural response; technical and cost effectiveness; project design, management and execution; staffing; partnerships; and community ownership.

Community grounding of projects

Upon completion of NIFVGP, one of the program mentors, Sandi Taylor, identified community grounding of projects as an essential component of good practice. She recommended that family violence projects be developed and driven by the Indigenous people experiencing its effects, as well as be community-owned and nurtured. Project designers need to draw on a framework of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural terms of reference (this framework acknowledges "the social relationships between each person and our own behaviours and ways of interacting"). Indigenous cultural obligations and integrity must also underpin such frameworks, for example, cultural and social capital, respect, values and beliefs (Taylor 2005).

A common principle highlighted throughout the international literature was that in order to be effective, programs had to be community-based and supported. In the Kanuhkwene project, described by Hagen and House (1995), the traditional concept of community was viewed by the Oneida women as an empowering influence in assisting understanding and appropriately addressing the needs of its members in regards to domestic violence, substance abuse and health care. Hagen and House (1995) suggested that the importance of community grew out of a recognition that mainstream services did not appropriately meet this group's needs. This community-based control led, amongst the Oneida women, to self-empowerment through connectedness to the community (Hagen and House 1995).

Similarly, Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.480) argued that it was necessary for community members to 'develop and deliver' their own programs, explaining that "[I]njustices of the past and present continue to cause many to question the intentions of those who are non-Aboriginal and want to 'help' Aboriginal families". They also suggested that it is the community that should decide "on where and how the program works". A family violence program should be able to work alongside other local services in order to provide a cohesive system of service delivery for family violence issues (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.481).

The Ngati Porou Community Injury Program evaluated by Brewin and Coggan (2004) provided an excellent example of a whole-of-community approach to addressing various important issues in this particular New Zealand community. One of the principles applied in this program was the active participation of community members who took on roles within resource and support networks to help reduce and prevent child abuse and domestic violence. Local recruits were employed to conduct face-to-face interviews to identify the community's views on the areas of most concern. A total of 476 Maori people from the Ngati Porou community participated in the surveys, demonstrating strong support for the program. Participant observation by the researchers also identified that a high level of participation by community members across the venues were utilised to distribute knowledge and information.

Brewin and Coggan (2004, p.14) explained that participation in the project "gave the people of Ngati Porou, New Zealand, an opportunity to take responsibility for their own destiny and, in doing so, they have been able to implement community participation and ownership at all levels". Involving community members in addressing an important issue such as family violence can be most advantageous because it is the community itself that can recognise what is most needed in its social group, how to deal with the issue in a culturally appropriate way and what techniques or methods work best.

Ensuring the involvement of Elders

Throughout the international literature, the importance of involving Elders in program content and processes, as well as strengthening inter-generational relationships, for example, those between Elders and youth, was considered an essential component of the programs (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.8). Similarly, Brown and Languedoc (2004) express the importance of incorporating teachings by Elders into programs through cultural techniques such as 'sharing circles' or ceremonies, as an important part of the healing process. Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.481) claim that "The roles of Elders as spiritual leaders and teachers reinforced the path clients have embarked on for self-understanding and change".

This trend is evident in the Australian context, where numerous programs, ranging from those dealing with criminal and community justice issues to those tackling violence and substance abuse in Indigenous communities and populations, utilise the cultural authority of Elders. (Refer to the program types discussed in Section 5 of this paper).

The engagement of men into programs

The engagement of men in programs was recognised by Larsen and Petersen (2001, p.131) in their review of Australian Indigenous domestic violence responses. They concluded that violence against Indigenous women would only be ameliorated by the involvement of both men and women.

As men are the perpetrators in much family violence, any serious long-term strategy to address it must incorporate men's programs. Many Indigenous projects emphasise the re-integration of male perpetrators back into the community after undergoing punishment, treatment and healing. In doing so, important caveats to project design include ensuring victim safety and perpetrator accountability at all times.

Of those NIFVGP projects focusing on adults, 11 projects were targeted specifically at men, including 'Strongmen' leadership, men after family violence and marriage break-up, and various other focus and healing groups. Forty-five projects claimed to have included men's behaviour as part of a multiple target strategy, but there was no clear evidence to evaluate this assertion. Another men's project targeted male perpetrators in prison but this only progressed to the pilot stage.

Self-empowerment and self-esteem as capacity-building by- products

A common theme discernible in the international literature was the need to focus on building and strengthening self-esteem, confidence and a sense of responsibility and self-respect amongst Indigenous women. Empowering women was considered a key factor in many of the programs reviewed. Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting indicated that supporting women "to heal, acquire skills, achieve self-sufficiency, wellness and happiness", would lead to the creation of "healthier families and communities" (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.8).

Hagen and House (1995) also emphasised the value of Maori women becoming self-empowered and beginning to exercise control over their lives through the Kanuhkwene Project. They achieved this by defining and addressing their own needs, and importantly, by addressing the gaps in mainstream service delivery by providing support and education to those women who experienced violence and abuse (Hagen & House 1995, p.5). This had not necessarily been a project goal, but was identified as an important outcome both for clients and workers (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.8).

Examining inter-generational family history and colonial experience as a healing method

Indigenous peoples in Canada, New Zealand and the United States face similar socio-cultural-historical problems as Australian Indigenous people. Dispossession and discrimination have had detrimental effects on Indigenous populations throughout the world.

In the case of Queensland, those involved in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody were able to demonstrate that Indigenous social structures had been dismantled or destroyed by three basic mechanisms: state policies of removal, the dormitory system and the disempowerment of Elders that was occasioned by mission and reserve control over Indigenous lives (Memmott et al, 2001, p.12). As summarised by Memmott et al. (2001, p.17):

The impact of personal, family and community disintegration in many Aboriginal societies, enacted by missions, statutes and regulations, and State and Commonwealth policies, is still being realised today and should not be underestimated if genuine and workable solutions to prevent violence in Indigenous communities are to be developed. What is required is treatment and 'healing' on a massive scale, including the healing of individuals, families and whole communities.

A range of other noted Australian researchers have examined the effect of certain colonial policies and practices enacted in Aboriginal people's lives and the serious impact they have produced in present-day communities (e.g. Reser 1990; Hunter 1991a; Cunneen 1992; Blagg 2000). A number of Aboriginal women have also conducted research and published findings with regard to the complex interactions between family violence and the history of dispossession (e.g. Lucashenko 1990; Atkinson 1996). Of particular importance here is the work of Dr Judy Atkinson on what she calls 'inter- or trans-generation trauma'. The healing program she has devised and applied, We Al-Li or the Indigenous Therapies Program, seeks to recognise that trauma, whether experienced by a single individual or a group in the past, when left unhealed, will create many problems for people and find expression in dysfunctional behaviours. To expunge this pain, the program advocates a group therapy approach aimed at recognising the complexity of these trauma lines in Aboriginal people's lives through discussion, art and music (Atkinson 2002). The program being conducted by Apunipima Cape York Health Council and discussed in Section 5 falls into a similar category of approach.

The literature on family violence from the United States and Canada was framed within the context of the colonial history of those countries. It generally commenced with a description of the violent and discriminatory processes of colonisation and the subsequent effects that dispossession and discrimination have had on Indigenous peoples (Hagen & House 1995, p.2; Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.1).

Much of the socio-economic and cultural problems highlighted in the international literature draw a relationship between the contemporary conditions of Indigenous communities (poverty, poor health, low education, high unemployment, crime, substance abuse, domestic violence and child abuse) and the history of colonisation (Hagen and House 1995; Saylors 2003; Brown and Languedoc 2004). This history has resulted in a range of problems that Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.481) described as 'barriers' that need to be overcome if clients were to reach self-disclosure and begin to address their identity and any other underlying issues.

Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.481) noted that an understanding of colonial history and its impact on Indigenous peoples was important in developing an understanding of how family dynamics have changed over the generations and the necessity of creating 'healthy families'. This was also evident in the paper by Saylors (2003) which highlighted the difficulties and challenges faced by Native American women who felt they were living in two worlds, Indigenous and Western. As a result of the acculturation process, the women became ashamed of being Indian and found it hard to 'fit into' a culture where the values conflicted with their

own traditional beliefs and values. Thus, Saylors (2003, p.59) argued for the need to gain "respect and awareness of one's own history and culture". It was considered important to regain and strengthen one's identity before healing could begin.

Cultural preference for group approaches in addition to one-on-one counselling

Throughout the international literature reviewed, it was commonly stated that Indigenous women often lacked self-esteem and confidence, and felt ashamed, humiliated or scared, which in turn affected their attendance rate at counselling services. The Indian Health Centre reviewed by Norton and Manson (1997, p.332), experienced problems with low client return rates amongst Indian women. Further to this, as women tended not to utilise mainstream services (primarily designed for non-Indigenous people) and preferred group therapy rather than one-on-one counselling, they did not receive the support and healing they required. The literature highlighted the importance of ensuring that programs were culturally tailored to appropriately address the needs of Indigenous women. Thus, the most effective counselling methods to deploy with these women involved an informal group setting, either a social activity or in the home environment (if the home environment did not pose a threat). Using these methods, Indian women were more likely to continue their counselling sessions (Norton & Manson 1997, pp.333-335).

The international literature emphasised the desire for a range of programs suited to a combination of client types. For example, Brown and Languedoc (2004, pp.482-483) suggested separate programs to cater for teens, children, men, women and parents as well as group sessions. The type of session would depend on client motive and readiness, safety needs, and would coincide with traditional teachings.

Capacity building through networking and partnerships

One strategic approach to enhancing the capacity of Indigenous community-based groups is to design projects in such a way that they build on and/or are strengthened by partnerships and networks within wider Australian society. This approach was incorporated as both a method and goal in the NIFVGP projects. A key principle of the NIFVGP was its emphasis on fostering collaborations between local community-based Indigenous organisations and other agencies, both in government (all levels) and non-government sectors (e.g. universities, industry). A corollary was to improve the understanding of, and commitment to, working with Indigenous cultural groups and the approaches maintained by non-Indigenous organisations.

Generally, the NIFVGP achieved its broad aim of fostering collaborations between agencies with these partnerships being both embedded in project aims and methods and often realised in actual practice. A large number of ISPs productively liaised and developed partnerships with other community groups. Project partners included Commonwealth and State government departments, local governments, police, hospitals, schools, media, health services, legal services, women's shelters, drug and alcohol services and other Indigenous agencies.

It is clear that most projects aimed for a high level of partnership formation, identifying a minimum of four or five relevant partners or networks. Some ISPs ensured partnership formation by including representatives of selected partner groups on their project steering committees. Such partnerships may have been entirely new or a pre-existing part of the ISPs' working patterns. One of the critical issues is whether new partnerships are sustained after their original formation or activation under such programs.

The Ngati Porou program in New Zealand, evaluated by Brewin and Coggan (2004), also highlighted the effectiveness of establishing partnerships with various community organisations and key stakeholders. The program engaged with various marae (tribal meeting places), Maori organisations, sporting groups and other stakeholders, who worked together to design iwi (local tribe) or specific injury prevention programs and information packages (Brewin & Coggan 2004, p.13). Information and knowledge was thus disseminated through various outlets and reached a larger target audience.

From the Canadian literature, partnerships between services and agencies were also considered an essential component of programs, as was the provision of input by staff and clients from other services and agencies, especially in the areas of health, legal aid, justice and other social services (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.481).

Information collection and dissemination on Indigenous family violence

In NIFVGP, most project information provided on the nature of family violence and the options for response occurred through structured activities utilising oral transmission. However, a number of NIFVGP projects also generated a range of educational and media products, including videos, cassettes, booklets and newsletters. The resulting rise in community awareness of family violence issues was a positive outcome of the NIFVGP, however, there was no accurate way to measure the extent of this effect. Eleven NIFVGP projects generated a range of educational and media products, the most successful of which were Tangentyere Council's Video News Series distributed to some 20 Night Patrols operating in remote communities throughout Central Australia. In a later funding round, Tangentyere Council converted its graphical incident report for low-literacy night patrollers into an online database to facilitate the electronic recording and evaluation of night patrol operations throughout its sphere of influence (refer to Section 5 of this paper for more detail).

Much useful resource material was also compiled on the NIFVGP website, including links to government reports, project profiles, research findings and good practice in addressing Indigenous family violence. The site experienced a reasonable level of visitation throughout the duration of the project. The evaluation revealed that it has potential as a particular style of resource, however, it needs to be made a more user-friendly service, specifically for under-resourced Indigenous organisations with low levels of technological skill. In order for a website of this kind to serve as a portal for disseminating the products of ISP projects, more resources must be injected into the process of collecting this material from the project groups. Relying on the groups to regularly and comprehensively self-document their progress in a format

that could be communicated on a website, could otherwise be a fruitless exercise. Mentors could have a valuable role in helping projects self-document and thereby, generate such material. It should also be recognised that these products will often only be supplied to the funding body at the end of a project, not at a time when they would be useful to other project teams.

A variety of approaches were used in the international projects to generate awareness of family violence and educate individuals, families, and communities about this issue. Brown and Languedoc (2004, p.482) stated that "[e]ducation of the public and clients were essential program components" in their review. Related to educating the community on family violence, is the promotion of Indigenous perspectives, as well as information being presented in a culturally-sensitive manner so as to reach the target audience.

In New Zealand, the Ngati Porou program developed a variety of methods of informing the public on the issues covered in their program, including education sessions, distribution of information packages, the provision of ongoing training in the identification of resource people to be employed, concerts, meetings, promotional campaigns, flyers, posters, radio and newspaper features, balloons, t-shirts, static displays, competitions, bumper stickers, media campaigns and workshops (Brewin & Coggan 2004, pp.8 10).

Training and skills acquisition within projects

Good practice projects are designed and implemented to include appropriate training and enhancement of skills in the field of family violence work. Out of 64 NIFVGP projects, 16 projects were involved in the training of a community or client group, ISP workers or Committee members and non-Indigenous personnel or Indigenous members. A number of projects provided cultural awareness training for non-Indigenous workers, other agencies and Indigenous members. Several training packages were developed, as well as five community resource books. Some projects that dealt with training also provided a workshop setting to assist the community to develop locally relevant family violence solutions as well as workshops to increase community women's cultural knowledge. Unfortunately, there is no objective way of assessing to what extent skills were transferred using these methods and techniques.

There exists a general lack of training opportunities in the Indigenous family violence sector. A Commonwealth funded policy initiative provided through TAFE colleges would fill this void. The Australian Government could fund a trial program of courses of accredited training for: (a) community violence workers (part of which to be carried out within their communities), and (b) regional mentors for violence projects; all to be planned in conjunction with Indigenous stakeholders who understand training needs and are mindful of current initiatives in this field.

The importance of good, capable program staff was a concept that emerged from the Canadian family violence programs assessed by Brown and Languedoc (2004). Properly trained staff were considered important in "maintaining a low turnover as well as consistency in approach" if clients were to build up trust with the same staff over time (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.480).

Flexibility and adaptability of projects in different community settings

One measure of a successful family violence strategy and/or activity is whether it can be replicated in other communities by drawing only on local people and resources. An example of such a strategy would be the Night Patrol concept, which has been adapted to many community settings across Australia by local Aboriginal peoples, usually employed through the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP), and with co-operation from local police. Taylor (2005) has argued that such adaptable programs forego the need to import a new skilled person and/or 'expert' into such communities, an approach that is not only costly but may well disempower the Aboriginal people in such a community.

Project Weaknesses and Deficiencies

Despite the NIFVGP projects displaying many strengths, most of which have been outlined above, this program was marred by a range of execution deficiencies involving both its overall design and the performance of Indigenous Service Providers (ISPs). It is useful to outline the various categories of problems that were noted in relation to the NIFVGP, and to the other projects discussed, to highlight the types of obstacles that ISPs are likely to encounter when designing and executing projects.

The following categories of problems are discussed in the remainder of this section:

- the difficulty of short-term (non-recurrent) funding
- vulnerability of smaller organisations
- addressing poor report writing, accountability and self-evaluation
- project targeting and the limits to achieving holistic or integrated outcomes
- the need to consider and design for targeting by violence types
- project execution and staffing problems
- inadequate quality of human resources
- problems associated with auspicing
- lack of experience and understanding of basic contract law
- hidden levels of community resistance to projects.

The difficulty of short-term (non-recurrent) funding

Difficulties are created by short timeframes being applied to projects that require slow preliminary work to build trust and begin to address a problem located within a long history of colonial dispossession, trauma, grief and loss. Such issues are deeply ingrained and it is recognised that long-term approaches are required to achieve effective results in the field of family violence (Success Works 2003).

However, the NIFVGP evaluation identified that although communities often voiced their need for an ongoing or recurrently funded service, only non-recurrent funding was possible under PADV. The limitation of this funding parameter

resulted in the funding body (OfW) having to make the best possible use of a non-recurrent resource. It meant that funds were not allocated according to need but according to how well proposals were planned, prepared and written. Short-term funding programs can be very difficult to administer, and not a lot of feedback may occur to support ongoing policy formation.

A significant number of ISPs faced difficulties in establishing a viable project without prospects of secure ongoing funding. This sometimes resulted in a decrease in motivation and morale, and may have resulted in some withdrawals from government partnerships. Whilst ISPs appreciated that their projects needed to continue in the long-term to have any significant effect on family violence levels, many experienced great difficulty in finding additional funding. Only consistent community-based programs with government support over generations are likely to result in safe social environments. In this sense, some groups were inadvertently set up for failure, with the end result being a rise in pessimism and apathy regarding one-off government funding programs.

This limited approach compounds the difficulties in recruiting staff in remote areas, as trained people are reluctant to take a short-term contract. One likely result within the ISP organisation is a perception of failure (even where the project has initially succeeded as a short-term one), when funds for continuation are not available and the project must be wound down. This is a very demoralising experience for the community. For example, Apunipima's Stepping Up Project, 'Establishing Community-based Counselling Services', was based on a model of providing support, healing and training through 'natural helpers' who responded to family violence events and presentations and would eventually raise community capacity. The project was carried out in a number of the Cape York Peninsula's discrete communities. As revealed in the previous discussion of this project (Section 5), the team responsible for it believed that a scheme of this kind would require at least five years to have any measurable effect on family violence levels.

The importance of secure funding was also a key issue expressed throughout the international literature. Consistent and on-going funding was important to both the clients and service providers as it sent a message of "the need for long-term investment into a program while it gets established in the community". Clients also like to be assured that a program will be available to them for follow-up support if and when it is needed. Service providers were conscious of the need to be available to clients for the long-term without having to stipulate a completion date for a program. It was considered important that a program be "available to clients as needed along their healing path" (Brown & Languedoc 2004, p.481).

Lack of secure funding was also a common problem discussed in the Canadian Learning Circle evaluated by Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting. Participants argued that while they appreciated small project grants that helped with the operation of their organisations, the amount was often not enough. Many organisations have had to "sustain their efforts out of sheer determination and commitment, sometimes at personal cost to themselves and their families" (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.8).

Organisations, such as the one run by the Oneida women from northern Wisconsin (Kanuhkwene project), are careful not to become overly dependent on outside funding because of the strict guidelines placed upon the organisation by the funding bodies regarding how money is spent and how it contributes to the success of the program. The Oneida women believe that this type of "Western accountability and evaluation" is in opposition to their community-grounded approach (Hagen & House 1995, p.5).

Taylor (2005) reflected that in relation to the NIFVGP experience, cost effectiveness is an essential good practice within such limited funding regimes. Utilising limited resources has to be achieved in innovative ways, but at the same time, create a positive impact in the community and/or with clients to address family violence.

Vulnerability of smaller organisations in executing family violence projects

Small Indigenous organisations are at a disadvantage, both in terms of winning grants and in effectively spending them. A dilemma that emerged through the NIFVGP was that larger and more articulate organisations had the capacity to write the successful grant applications, whilst many small, grassroots groups who needed support were ill-equipped to do the same. Although some smaller ISPs performed well because their projects were designed at a manageable scale and driven by a committed individual or family with a strong community support base, generally projects which were run within smaller organisations suffered from a lack of managerial and administrative experience and/or capacity. Smaller Indigenous organisations that wish to tackle family violence projects may have to consider forming collaborations with other Indigenous, government and/or industry-based partners to ensure they have adequate capacity to execute them. However, there must also be funds budgeted for managing the kinds of exchange essential to this kind of collaboration.

Addressing poor report writing, accountability and self-evaluation

In order to ensure the flow of government funding and their eligibility for future grants, ISPs need to adequately report on and perform their funded activities and outcomes. In NIFVGP, for a number of reasons, about two-thirds of the ISPs submitted poor quality and/or insufficient reports, and most did not meet their deadlines. This occurred because of unskilled administration staff, unskilled project coordinators, poor writing skills, high staff turnover, reporting considered a low priority and the failure to obtain assistance from the mentors and respond to their advice.

One of the NIFVGP requirements was for grant recipients to self-evaluate their projects against some nominated project criteria. About two-thirds of ISPs failed to achieve this goal in any meaningful way because they lacked understanding of self-evaluation techniques and how these had to be incorporated into the project plans. Even when ISPs had highly trained staff, few had made allowance in their budgets or were prepared to incorporate self-evaluation in their reporting. The expectation that written documentation will either partly or entirely assess whether a project has succeeded is a concept foreign to many Indigenous people in remote and rural areas.

One NIFVGP project from Western Australia was conducted by highly professional workers, yet it still out-sourced the evaluation process. This project had specifically requested and allocated a sum of $20,000 in its budget for the engagement of outside consultants to perform the evaluation. Had an obligatory cost item been included in all NIFVGP project budgets, a better ISP response to evaluation may have been obtained. Comments expressed by the facilitators of this Western Australian project regarding the project's self-evaluation included:

> it is an unrealistic expectation for funding bodies to expect communities with marginal resources to generate an evidence base for better practice in addressing violence given the stressors they face on a daily basis… [It noted also that] projects of minimal duration and investment such as this one have the capacity to generate mistrust… as communities become vulnerable and at risk of being labelled violent from their exposure to public scrutiny, without hope of ongoing support to build community capacity (cited in Success Works 2003).

Project targeting and the limits to achieving holistic or integrated outcomes

ISP projects targeted a broad range of groups categorised by gender (men/women), age (children/youth/adults) and whether victim or perpetrator. Most projects targeted several such groups but were not especially designed for any specific one. Some projects did have a more narrow approach by delineating specific age groups (about 20 projects) or by focusing on parent-child combinations, perpetrators in court, men after their violent marriage break-up, or children who had experienced family violence (about another 20 projects). The NIFVGP aim of embracing a wide cross-section of people within Indigenous communities was largely fulfilled.

At least 20 projects did not emphasise any explicit focus in their profiles concerning target groups (defined by the status of members as perpetrators, victims, or relatives of victims). They described themselves as generally targeting all such categories. It is clear that most projects purported to target more than one group and, in the majority of cases, several such groups. However, there was often ambiguity in the project documentation as to what extent, or with what effectiveness, an intention to target such groups was achieved.

A number of NIFVGP projects were said to target children in general. Of these, one was said to target school children and another was said to target, via workshops, children who had experienced family violence. One involved monitoring children's behaviour patterns. An additional seven projects targeted children who broadly fell into an age group ranging from the start to the end of puberty, or roughly from 11 to 19 years of age.

There were further projects that targeted the under-19 age group. There was one project specifically for young men, one for female youth, and two for female youths and young women combined. Another two projects targeted young mothers and their children (although one was not realised), while one project targeted fathers and their children. Two focused on young parents.

Of those NIFVGP projects focusing on adults, six were targeted specifically at women, using women's support groups, talking circles and the establishment of a women's centre. Eleven projects were targeted specifically at men, as described in the previous section on the engagement of men into programs.

The need to consider and design for targeting by violence type

Most NIFVGP projects were generally aimed at the prevention of family violence, however, few were specifically designed to target family violence according to its type or form of abuse.

The majority of NIFVGP grant funds were directed to projects involving early proactive or late reactive strategies, not early reactive or late proactive ones that intervene in violence just before or after it has started. The Program's selected projects did not deal with all the types and processes of responses (including both preventative and interventionist approaches) to family violence, thus limiting its overall success in terms of generating a holistic approach to family violence.

Only six projects were documented as involving some late proactive or early reactive strategies defined as threatening, imminent, actually occurring or very recently occurring violent incidents. There were several night patrol projects: one that provided 'hands-on' assistance in emergencies, one that purported to rescue people from violent circumstances, and one that implemented an emergency childcare scheme. By definition, night patrols involve "local Aboriginal people self-police[ing] their localities, either by vehicle or on foot, to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and/or offer a safe transportation service to a place of safety for those at risk" (Blagg & Valuri 2003a, quoted in Blagg & Valuri 2004, p.1).

It has to be recognised that becoming directly involved in violent incidents is dangerous for those intervening. Even well trained and equipped policing professionals approach such situations with great caution and endure a level of risk not acceptable to most community project workers.

Project execution and staffing problems

A range of execution factors affected the success of NIFVGP projects, including ISP staff stability, management, continuity, skills, support mechanisms and competing agendas as well as conflict between staff and influential community people. In particular, projects suffered from loss of coordinators, high staff turnover and staff suffering from stress or 'burn-out'. Stress emanated from excessive client loads, the tensions produced by clients themselves, unreasonable demands imposed by ISP Boards and threats received from the relatives of clients or perpetrators. A lack of capable and trained staff was a common problem, as was over-reliance on a single staff member whose performance situation became vulnerable. Worker assaults were noted by two ISPs and no doubt ISP staff bore the brunt of psychological violence in certain cases. The NIFVGP evaluation established that, overall, at least 23 projects suffered from staff turnover problems.

As early as mid-2001, some PADV 1 ISPs had reported at the Rekindling Family Relationships Forum that some of their staff were on call 24 hours a day in response to family violence episodes and were showing signs of 'burn-out'. Staff experience of emotional clients and first-hand violence impacted heavily on NIFVGP, resulting in similar 'burn-out' and rapid staff turnover. Staff turnover usually had a negative

impact on project continuity and the meeting of contractual goals and timelines. For example, in the case of a significant project in the Northern Territory, the project commenced with very good intentions and some initially promising outcomes, but it was never fully realised during the term of NIFVGP because of high staff turnover, resulting in a gradual loss of continuity or connection with the original project objectives.

At the end of NIFVGP, there were also two reported cases of Co-ordinator burnout, one of Co-ordinator departure, and one of Co-ordinator dismissal. In addition, four projects suffered from project discontinuity or disruption arising from the turnover of, or disunity amongst, Board Directors. The consistency with which the project was understood by Boards, and the extent of their support was correspondingly variable.

Inadequate quality of human resources

Certain ISPs had built unrealistic expectations into their project's aims and proposed outcomes, or the extent of work they thought achievable. Projects were sometimes too ambitious in terms of the quantity of work specified and the time set down, thereby stretching available resources, both human and financial. In some cases, ISP staff and even consultants lacked the expertise to design and apply a methodology that would achieve the stated project aims (personal communication 1 June 2004).

A lack of capable staff was a common problem within ISPs. ISPs reported a variable quantity and quality of information, reflecting the level of report writing skills by retained project staff. There were a number of instances where a project depended entirely on one capable person, who became overcommitted. There was a corresponding lack of back-up staff to take over when that person left, or was sacked. Another dimension of this problem was an over-reliance, in some cases, on project leaders and Elders who had many other responsibilities within the community and whose capacity to participate was thereby limited, to the point of impeding, at least temporarily, the project's progress (personal communication 1 June 2004).

There were uneven rates of computer skill and usage across ISPs. Some staff or workers had access to computers and were computer literate, while other people felt reluctant to use this technology. Another training shortfall that was problematic for some groups involved workers who conducted counselling and workshops without having any professional qualifications, which also reflected in the quality of reports being received.

In some cases, ISPs and their project staff experienced difficulty maintaining a commitment to their project goals and were distracted by other competing and pressing agendas from within the community. For some projects, their operation opened up or revealed new kinds of problems in the community and led to increased pressure to address those problems. Workers then became over-committed and the funding over-stretched.

Based on her experience as a mentor in NIFVGP, Taylor (2005) concluded that quality support models for family violence workers need to underpin the implementation of projects.

Two essential aspects of good practice involve: recognising that the family violence worker/s need a range of support mechanisms put in place so that they can provide a better and/or improved service to clients; and recognising that individuals and family groups also need a range of different supports to assist them to cope with the family dynamics and trauma associated with deteriorating relationships.

Problems associated with auspicing

The NIFVGP evaluation produced some interesting findings that concern the engagement of auspicing agents. The OfW provided contractual opportunities for ISPs who felt they had low administrative capacities to establish a partnership with an auspicing agent who would administer project funds and provide other support. In the case of one project, the auspicing agent withdrew from the project due to the poor performance of the ISP, thereby bringing about its termination. In the case of another project, the ISP wished to continue with its project but was unable to do so as the auspicing agency had ceased to function and the project funds were subsequently rendered 'unrecoverable'. Another case related to audit management and fraud control issues as reports formed the primary source being relied upon as evidence of project progress with rare instances of onsite inspections being conducted.

Lack of experience and understanding of basic contract law

In NIFVGP, many ISPs lacked a fundamental understanding of contract law and failed to appreciate, understand or read the many clauses contained in their funding agreements that outlined their duties, responsibilities and obligations in relation to their project. Contracts were too often signed without adequate advice being given to ISPs on these matters. Particular examples include some ISPs ignoring their obligation to spend NIFVGP funds on agreed project activities and spending them instead on alternate activities without an approved variation to the agreement. A second common problem was a failure to appreciate the timelines in funding agreements and the concomitant requirements to acquit government funds in financial year cycles.

Hidden levels of community resistance to projects

As ISPs' projects progressed during NIFVGP, mentors became aware of covert levels of resistance occurring within certain communities. In one or two communities, there was widespread resistance to participating in NIFVGP, a response which was based on past experiences of unsuccessful projects, while in other communities, there was resistance from family-based political factions. In some cases, the latter were in turn based on a division between local traditional owners and historical community residents.

Another critical oppositional outcome involved gender, with the men in certain communities either formally or informally failing to support, and to take responsibility for, project implementation, or alternatively, providing inconsistent support after giving token agreement for the project to commence. The worst outcome in this regard involved men taking political control of project resources or assets that

were originally intended for women's activities. This outcome may also be partly a result of poor project planning with a lack of clear agreement about male and female roles and responsibilities.

All of these forms of opposition, resistance or usurping of project control had a counter-productive and sometimes completely destructive impact on ISPs' projects.

7. Designing holistic and sustainable programs within Indigenous communities

This last section of the paper summarises models and strategies for tackling Indigenous family violence that emphasise the sustainability of programs within communities.

To effectively tackle such a complex problem as the epidemic proportions of family violence in Australian Indigenous communities, a correspondingly complex model or strategy is required. It must embody two key ideas. Firstly, that there are many facets to how and why family violence operates at such debilitating levels. These must all be considered for real change to be effected (which is one interpretation of what taking a holistic approach means). Also, that to have any significant impact, programs must survive through time or be sustainable. This section will try to formulate further ideas for building such models by drawing together what has already been devised by governments, in the form of a number of key strategic documents or principles, and what was found during the evaluation of the NIFVGP.

The Principles of the MCATSIA (Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs) Working Party on Family Violence

There have been a number of whole-of-government efforts to model a successful approach to family violence in Indigenous communities in the last five years. The 3 November 2000 communiqué delivered by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to take a leading role in driving changes in this regard, with the various Ministerial Councils to develop action plans, performance reporting strategies and benchmarks (Strategic Partners 2003, p.32). In April 2002, COAG commissioned, from the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services, a regular report on the key indicators of Indigenous disadvantage, including issues pertinent to family violence. In 2001, MCATSIA agreed to conduct an audit of existing family violence strategies after being addressed by representatives of ATSIC's Indigenous Women's Roundtable. It also endorsed a seven point strategy, as follows: "reducing alcohol and substance abuse; child safety and well-being; building community capacity (including cultural strength); improving the justice system; creating safe places in communities; improving relationships (focusing on perpetrators and those at risk of offending); and promoting shared leadership" (HREOC 2003). However, to the best of our knowledge, no such audit was finalised at the time.

As stated previously, the principles devised by MCATSIA's Working Party on Family Violence in 1999 informed the design of the NIFVGP, and they remain as the closest existing model for tackling family violence. They are particularly valuable as a basis for the following analysis because the NIFVGP remains

as the only evaluated national program of its kind. We believe that the experiences gained from this evaluation are vital to evolving this set of principles into a well informed model for success in this area.

The principles were set out in the report Working Together Against Violence (OSW 2001b), which reviewed the first three years of PADV. The principles are presented below.

For outcomes to be sustainable, responses to Indigenous family violence must address short, medium and long term needs. Programs should be based on an approach which:

1. Recognises the underlying causes of family violence, including substance abuse, loss of identity and the impact of colonisation

2. Recognises the importance of protecting children and supporting them to break the 'cycles' of family and community violence

3. Incorporates practices that maintain and sustain children's safety, protection and rights via education and other methods of intervention

4. Is locally based and has a high degree of Indigenous community ownership

5. Uses models of service delivery and activities that are determined at the community level, rather than prescribing a centrally determined model or approach

6. Attempts to integrate traditional owners into any community-based responses and seeks the support of community leaders

7. Recognises the complex nature of family and community violence in Indigenous communities, including the importance of involving and targeting men as well as women and children in the solutions

8. Is initiated, planned and implemented by a core group of local people that is representative of the wider community

9. Provides a small funding component to enable the development of a small core of people within the community who can take a long-term view of the problem. The core group should be initially resourced to undertake planning, consultation and community development activities. Additional follow-up funding could then be provided for the implementation of strategies and responses based on needs determined through the initial planning stage

10. Adopts holistic approaches to the problem, enabling the implementation of a range of different concurrent activities, including community education, preventive activities, support groups for victims, awareness groups and post-prison follow-up for perpetrators, support for carers (including grandmothers etc), and activities and resources for children and young people. Where appropriate, different levels of service provision could be provided through a 'one-stop-shop' model

11.   Is flexible, responsive and able to adapt to the specific needs of the local community. Under this approach, activities may vary over time and in different localities, depending on the specific needs of communities

12.   Does not focus solely on crisis intervention/support services, but attempts to integrate local culture, art, dance and music into community-based activities

13.   Encourages the development of strong links with any other relevant service providers in the community, including those responding to needs in the areas of housing, economic development, employment, education and training

14.   Collaborates with and seeks input from policing and justice structures within the community

15.   Operates in a whole-of-community and whole-of-family context that is sensitive to the wider family and social systems of people

16.   Has minimal layers of bureaucracy between the community-based project and the funding agency, and utilises regionally based contact officers who can advise on the development of program activities

17.   Has access to a regionally based Indigenous family violence worker whose role is to assist, coordinate programs and support services

18.   Is linked to other programs at the regional and national levels, particularly in respect of information exchange between activities, and should promote more best practice models of service delivery through funding programs. A national clearinghouse could play a significant role in collating and disseminating information about innovative and effective responses that have been developed by communities

19.   Actively involves communities in the evaluation and assessment of program activities

20.   Is directed to areas of highest need rather than areas of largest population

21.   Has small, efficient and transparent administrative structures that are accountable and based within the local community

22.   Has a demonstrated track record and credibility within the community, and people delivering services through the program should be skilled and knowledgeable

23.   Aims to teach participants new and enhanced skills that have application beyond the period of involvement in the project. An important aspect of this process would be the transfer of skills from experienced Indigenous community workers to a 'new' generation of workers

24.   Incorporates processes to prevent worker burn-out and provide continuing support for hands-on workers (including debriefing) (OSW 2001b).

In this list, we find many of the good practice elements that were mentioned in the previous section, including cultural grounding (item 6), community grounding (items 4 and 5), engagement of men (item 7), the addressing of colonial experiences and impacts (item 1), use of partnerships and networks (items 13 and 14), the incorporation of information dissemination (item 18), training and skills acquisition (item 23), and flexibility of project design (item 11). The list also contains principles that were revealed in the weaknesses of the NIFVGP projects noted in the previous section, including the need to secure long-term funding (item 9), employ strategies for integrated outcomes (item 10), finding capable staff able to deal with the difficulty of the task (item 24), and address issues of organisational performance and accountability (items 19 and 21).

Different definitions of 'holistic' approaches

'Holistic' is a catchcry term that is often heard when addressing the need for systematic responses to addressing Indigenous family violence. It is instructive to briefly discuss the alternate meanings of the term 'holistic violence program' as they are employed in the family violence literature, and how certain approaches may be defined as displaying this quality.

In the Memmott et al. (2001) report for National Crime Prevention, the term 'composite programs' was utilised as a synonym for 'holistic approaches'. Composite programs were defined as comprising:

> ... *several sub-programs which may (a) target different forms of violence in a community, (b) target different categories of offenders or victims, or (c) employ different methods of combating or preventing violence. When a composite program is devised to systematically deal with all types of violence in a community, it is often termed a holistic approach or a holistic program. This is usually preceded by a careful analysis of the extent and nature of violence in a community and the development of a community-based action plan or strategic plan* (Memmott et al, 2001, p.73).

In so far as the targeting of different categories of offenders and victims is viewed as representing a holistic approach, the NIFVGP's aim of embracing a wide cross-section of people within Indigenous communities was largely fulfilled. NIFVGP projects targeted a broad range of groups categorised by gender, age and whether victim or perpetrator, with most targeting several groups without being specifically designed for any particular one. Some projects had a more focused approach by delineating specific age groups or parent-child combinations, perpetrators in Court, men after their violent marriage break-up, or children who had experienced family violence.

The Memmott et al. (2001) definition of holistic approach also requires the inclusion of projects dealing with a range of strategies, broadly defined above as preventative and intervention strategies. However, only six NIFVGP projects involved early reactive or late proactive approaches and these did not deal with all the types and processes of responses, thus limiting the overall success of the program in terms of generating a holistic approach.

We note that there is also a range of different conceptual approaches to defining 'holistic violence' programs in the international literature. Hagen and House (1995) provided two varying types of definitions for the concept 'holistic'.

Firstly, they used the term to refer to "connecting both the social and natural worlds, and with all that is surrounding". The term was used in this context to describe the community-based approach used in the Kanuhkwene project that was based on "a holistic way of life that empowers by connecting people and the environment", in comparison to mainstream service delivery that was viewed as largely individualistic (Hagen & House 1995, p.1). Secondly, a holistic approach was highlighted in the project's mission "to empower women, without failing to recognise the equal balance between men and women" (Hagen & House 1995, p.2).

Similar to Hagen and House (1995), Saylors' use of the term 'holistic' (in reference to the Women's Circle), is used to describe the linkage between the individual's physical and spiritual wellness to that of the community and natural world (Saylors 2003, p.60). Such a holistic approach was considered an appropriate way of acknowledging and addressing the diversity of clients and the various situations they faced.

Brewin and Coggan (2004) use the term 'holistic' to describe the overarching framework used in the Ngati Porou project. In this evaluation, 'holistic' and 'collaborative' approaches referred to the project's intentional utilisation of various traditional components to achieve a common goal. The project design and process was framed within a Maori framework and based on Maori cultural ideology. The program used tribal meeting places to discuss and disseminate knowledge and information, acknowledged Maori aspirations, employed Maori persons, used Maori and English on publications and in the media, used traditional concepts and practices and engaged with numerous agencies and groups associated with the Maori community (Brewin & Coggan 2004, pp.6-10).

Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting's (2002) use of the term 'holistic' is similar to that of Brewin and Coggan (2004), in that they apply the term to an approach that incorporated a number of cultural elements into a program. Their review of the Aboriginal Women's Program Family Violence Initiative highlighted the importance of the use of a combination of traditions and practices, as well as the importance of strengthening relationships between men, women, families and communities. Such an encapsulation of important factors and elements is said to play a positive role in creating healthier communities (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.10).

Health Canada (1997, p.8), while employing the phrase "a holistic connection of body-mind-spirit", also expands the concept by adding a much larger range of dimensions to the concept of an 'holistic' approach, such as the following: program management that values client process as much as staff defined results; a focus on healing at all levels (individual, family, community, global); a view of program development as unfolding; use of a range of programming, including art therapy; and use of the medicine wheel and similar symbols of holistic approaches both within programs and among different programs.

Recommendations regarding future program design

The following recommendations regarding future program design are drawn from the information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP. We recommend that the existing demonstrated project strengths of NIFVGP should be preserved in any future nationally or state-funded Indigenous violence programs. These include: the use of national Indigenous role models; strong cultural grounding of projects; holistic approaches in communities across genders and generations; networking and partnerships; information collection and dissemination on family violence; culturally-adapted good practices; maintenance of an Indigenous family violence website; provision of mentoring services for Indigenous Services Providers (ISPs) and cross-cultural training for workers and service providers. The following further recommendations are made for the planning of any future large-scale Indigenous family violence programs, and are based on information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP.

Ensuring adequate ISP capacity to execute particular projects

The NIFVGP highlighted the need for a careful match to be achieved between the scope and nature of a proposed project and the capacity of the executing organisation and its human resources. There is widespread under-resourcing and instability in many Aboriginal organisations. Since addressing family violence is one of the most challenging and demanding service delivery areas, ISPs need to have additional capacity-building strategies designed into their projects to ensure positive outcomes. The use of mentors in project design and assessment phases would be advantageous in overcoming some of these difficulties, which will be discussed further below.

In ensuring adequate ISP capacity, consideration should be given to such criteria as:

- workers are reasonably likely to be available
- worker skills are in place
- the board or committee of the ISP is functional and relatively stable (perhaps assessed through referee reports)
- other resources needed are budgeted for or actually available (housing, transport, office facilities)
- administrative capacity for report writing, budgetary control and acquittal is identifiable, in place and stable
- community support is based on a demonstrated understanding of the proposed project
- there are no organisational conflicts likely to impinge on project performance
- project design is technically valid for the project aims
- any project accommodation that might be needed is actually available.

There is also a need to take into account the degree to which the project is integrated into community development plans and wider (e.g. regional) violence strategic plans.

Reporting requirements

The capacity for ISP reporting to a funding body with respect to transparency and accountability has to be addressed. Cultural contexts that emphasise practical action and response, and devalue reporting, perhaps due to Indigenous attitudes to the written word, may be dealt with by additional resourcing of ISPs (perhaps additional mentoring).

The necessary human resources need to be in place for providing capacity and support for ISPs to fulfil their reporting requirements. For example, it could be valuable for an ISP to obtain assistance in cash-flow budgeting and project scheduling (e.g. written guidance, proforma documents and one-on-one mentoring), and to develop implementation and reporting milestones only after revised cash-flow budget and implementation schedules are submitted.

A financial incentive (such as the release of a final payment including compensation for the ISP's administrative and audit costs) could be made conditional upon receipt of the audit and final reports for the project. This would help to motivate ISPs that were found to have often dragged toward the end of a number of NIFVGP projects. Similarly, staged project achievements with accompanying reports should perhaps be the trigger for the release of progress payments rather than dates fixed within the contract. These steps would need to be assessed and applied differently to each project depending on its content. It may be valuable to identify the due date for progress reports as being within a project stage (rather than at a fixed date per se), and linked to a project milestone, but no later than an ultimate deadline.

Projects that require self-evaluation need to be adequately planned in the initial stages. One suggestion that could improve the formal evaluation process is for project workers to complete specially designed self-evaluative 'tick sheets', recording quantitative information with mentor assistance. Mentors could then do additional qualitative evaluations to supplement these sheets. A milestone good practice example that is relevant here is the Tangentyere Council Night Patrol's pictorial database reporting system and online website (refer to Section 5 for detail). Alternatively, resources should be provided for specialised external evaluation support.

Maintaining the partnerships approach

NIFVGP reinforced the need to develop a cross-sectoral approach to Indigenous violence (community-controlled but with support from Local, State and Federal governments as well as Indigenous and private sector organisations). Ten-year Memoranda of Agreements are recommended to sustain the established partnerships across the first generation of clients.

Matching project timelines to community timeframes

There is a need to accommodate the nature of Aboriginal community timeframes, which in turn prolong nominal project timelines, which may not fit neatly within Government's financial year. ISPs need the freedom to design their own implementation schedules after the date for receipt of funds is known. ISP workloads vary (e.g. due to wet/dry seasonal factors in the north), and the applicant often does not know whether their application will be successful and when funds will be released, so by the time they are released the ISP may be submerged in additional crises that present a new array of priorities.

Taylor (2005) has described timing and responsiveness as a key good practice element, such as striking at the right time to intervene and/or be proactive to deal with a situation and/or set of circumstances related to facilitating a response to family violence. The challenge is to identify the critical factors that will determine the right time to intervene (Taylor 2005).

Recognising the stability and capacity of larger regional organisations as the basis for long-term regional strategies

NIFVGP demonstrated that the best Indigenous projects have tended to occur within larger well-established Indigenous regional organisations with relative political stability and established infrastructural resources (e.g. Tangentyere; Apunipima; SNAICC – Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care - see Bedford 2002; Through Young Black Eyes, A handbook to protect children from the impact of family violence and child abuse; and also, SNAICC good practice profile on Indigenous Violence website: www.indigenousviolence.net). There is a need for long-term support for these more stable Indigenous Aboriginal organisations that provide family violence services for communities within their region. A firm recommendation of the information provided by the Office for Women on projects funded under the NIFVGP was that regional family violence programs be based in large stable Indigenous organisations, accompanied by a process of accreditation.

Such regional organisations should also be funded to provide an Indigenous mentoring service for community-based organisations tackling violence at a local level. Such mentors could carry out independent evaluations of local projects. Another local possibility is the creation of staffing positions in CDEP-based violence prevention projects.

It would seem appropriate for the Commonwealth to fund some Indigenous Family Violence Pilot Projects for entire regions (refer to the COAG trials), providing support for both local community organisations and a regional support organisation, with evaluation leading to an expanded approach to other targeted regions in Australia.

Longer-term funding arrangements

The issue of a long-term funding commitment is fundamental to progress on the issues of Indigenous family violence. Projects will yield limited results as long as they only have a short-term structure, and the development of appropriate supporting knowledge and skills will be rendered potentially unusable without a degree of longitudinal stability. A relevant recommendation of the National Forum on Indigenous Family Violence (OSW 2001a, pp.7-8) was that funding be provided for ten-year long local projects with regular reviews and evaluations, including specific funds for culturally appropriate violence counselling and education programs.

Use of targeted regional services rather than an open competitive grant system

A related question that was raised by the NIFVGP evaluation was how to engage Indigenous regions that show negligible response to such advertised competitive grant programs.

Why was there so little interest in NIFVGP from some ten needy regions of Aboriginal Australia? Was it a case of poor advertising about NIFVGP in these regions, a lack of resources to prepare applications, or general apathy? It cannot be assumed that there is an absence of violence in these regions. We conclude that any future program should not be solely an advertised competitive grant program, but as a matter of policy, must have a capacity to direct funds into identified and targeted regions to foster regional capacity building in community-based organisations.

Useful examples of composite and holistic Indigenous violence programs that were being conducted by community-based organisations in the 1990s were outlined in Memmott et al. (2001, pp.87-91). These included the Tangentyere Council's Four Corners Council and Social Behaviour Project, the Aboriginal Family Violence Strategy of the Northern Territory's Women's Health Strategy Unit, and the Palm Island Council Strategy.

Large-scale gatherings of violence program workers to share knowledge and experiences

During the NIFVGP, the Office for Women organised a number of relatively successful large-scale gatherings of violence program workers to share knowledge and experiences, and to network with one another. The NIFVGP program was commenced with a national forum Rekindling Family Relationships (described in Section 2), which was closely followed by regional forums during the Walking into Doors Campaign. After the completion of NIFVGP, further showcasing forums of good practice projects and research findings were organised in Brisbane, Cairns, Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne.

In North America, such gatherings may be termed 'Learning Circles'. They have been viewed as an effective means of exchanging 'learnings' between different groups in order to highlight experiences, evaluate strategies and problems encountered, as well as to determine future directions. Learning Circles bring together a diversity of cultures and project types. They are effective forums for collaborating and exchanging ideas on activities in relation to issues such as healing and wellness, training, education, awareness initiatives and capacity-building activities (Jamieson Hart Graves Consulting 2002, p.4).

It is at such forums that successful projects and ideologies can be 'showcased', generating opportunities for good practice projects and ideas to be adopted by other communities, thereby disseminating throughout Aboriginal regions and nations (e.g. the spread of Night Patrols). Such gatherings provide an important contribution to capacity building at both regional and national levels.

Mentoring Schemes – National, regional and local

A national mentoring service for Indigenous organisations receiving grant funds was a key design component of the NIFVGP. This idea of mentoring Indigenous groups running projects emerged from the experience gained from projects funded by the non-Aboriginal PADV streams, which had been running during 1998 and 1999. Community groups carrying out domestic violence and associated legal projects had many good ideas but had often failed due to their lack of

skill in implementing or reporting on their project outcomes. Many of the people involved were volunteers working after-hours, so they did not perceive report writing as their primary role. Those overseeing the NIFVGP concluded that if mentors were made available to such grassroots organisations, they could circulate information that might bridge this gap. In general terms, mentor assistance was funded under the NIFVGP to support recipient organisations in evaluating and monitoring their own projects and to document good practices emerging from their activities, as well as to facilitate networking and information-sharing between organisations. It was envisaged that this assistance would increase the ability of communities to respond more effectively to family violence (OSW 2000, pp.2-3).

Where good working relationships were established between the mentor and the ISP, mentoring proved to be of significant value to the NIFVGP. The role of the mentor could encompass all of the following:

- to encourage each ISP to document project progress, facilitating evaluation and information sharing by the ISP

- to prepare and distribute culturally appropriate Work Notes to each ISP, providing guidance in relation to the documentation, self-evaluation and reporting of their projects and information-sharing

- to encourage ISPs in the formation of information-sharing networks and use of the website

- to identify emerging good practice models in conjunction with ISPs (through their identification of such)

- to provide support for ISPs to engage in a process of self-evaluation

- to generally support ISPs in their reporting and project management duties.

Independent support, advice and encouragement were provided to many ISPs while good practice examples were collected and performance problems documented. The mentors were well positioned to assist a number of poorly performing projects that required a sensitive approach be taken to assessing if and how they were to be reinvigorated and progress restored.

Importance of National Indigenous Mentors

One finding of the Walking into Doors Campaign was that highly visual material and face-to-face workshops were effective methods of targeting Indigenous communities. In particular, Aboriginal people talking to one another about family violence proved to be a powerful and appropriate strategy for promoting change (Cultural Perspectives, n.d., p.4). This finding indicates the potential for highly regarded mentors in the Aboriginal community to participate in similar anti-violence programs. Both national and regional Indigenous role models and mentors should be considered in designing these programs. (A further evaluative finding from both this Campaign and the National Forum was the importance of choosing a culturally appropriate venue for workshops or conferences).

NIFVGP Mentoring deficiencies

The mentor program of NIFVGP may have been more successful if granted a more substantial travel budget that would have allowed more face-to-face contact between mentors and ISPs. It is recommended that in any future program mentoring arrangements be in place before projects are up and running, so that mentors can assist with planning, early implementation and resourcing, as well as provide forewarning of likely problems. Unfortunately, no direct correlations were made between the ten Walking into Doors forums and the NIFVGP projects. Yet, there was significant potential for an ongoing national mentoring role to be assumed by Archie Roach and Ruby Hunter.

Improving Regional and Local Mentoring Services

The NIFVGP Mentoring Scheme was of significant value to ISPs, however, its value would have been greatly improved if it had been extended and more closely integrated into the program's design. Funding could be made available (subject to an appropriate and speedy approval process) for the engagement of other formal, informal and specialist mentors. It has been suggested that some mentors may be available within the ISP organisation, for example, in operational or cultural roles. 'Informal' implies that the project coordinator could call in particular types of mentors when they are needed. It would be possible to have a number of local mentors and a regional mentor (to effect face-to-face contact and reduce travel costs) as well as the national mentors that were utilised in NIFVGP.

Mentors should be appointed at the inception of programs (at the point when applications are assessed) to allow them to achieve a mutual understanding with the ISPs of their capacities and styles of operation. Early mentor appointment would enable ISPs to receive capacity building support from the commencement of their projects and ensure they are implemented to a best practice standard. Mentors could assist ISPs to develop project implementation and control systems. Similarly, they could help to ensure that project documentation is implemented from commencement, avoiding late crisis reporting. The idea of the NIFVGP Work Notes, which were produced and distributed to ISPs, would be useful in providing a common standard for both written reporting and self-evaluation by ISPs.

Funding needs to be available for mentors to travel and meet with the ISPs. A flexible brief and budget for these visits is needed in recognition of the valuable capacity-building potential of this service.

Conclusion

The state of good practice in addressing Indigenous family violence is only emerging in Australia, partly due to the escalation of the problem over the past 25 years and the relative lack of independent evaluations of individual projects and programs. The findings indicate that only a small number of successful projects or programs have been documented and evaluated. Of these, most consist of a component of night patrol, and/or of an early reactive or preventative approach. Few were aimed at the intervention stage.

From our experience, we suspect that good practices are widespread, if not sporadic in the Indigenous family violence sector, but due to the priorities of addressing this problem, Indigenous service providers are seldom able or even motivated to document these practices. What is also clear is that there are so many ingredients and elements to running a good practice project in this field, that it is unusual (and probably unreasonable) to expect to find a project that is executed proficiently in all of its dimensions and goals. This is particularly so because of the difficult and stressful circumstances of simply entering into the Indigenous family violence campaign, and secondly, because of the comparative lack of professional resources and capacity in many Indigenous communities.

These thoughts have led to a structure in this paper that has emphasised elements and principles that contribute to the success of individual projects, as well as those that can mitigate against the success of projects with respect to their administration and execution. It is also equally important for projects and programs to focus on the priority of the safety of victims of family violence, including women and children, within any context of holistic approaches toward community restoration and healing.

This last section of the paper goes beyond the elements of individual projects to the issue of the sustainability of multiple projects with an integrated and holistic approach, over a sustained period of time, which extends beyond the single policy cycle of elected governments. This highlights the need to plan across generations and to organise resources, service provision, training and skills transfer at regional, State, and national levels, as well as involving multiple partnerships between Indigenous communities, government and non-government sectors.

Abbreviations & Acronyms

ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (Commonwealth)
ATSIS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services
CDEP	Community Development Employment Program (Commonwealth)
CIPP	Community Injury Prevention Project (New Zealand)
COAG	Council of Australian Governments (Commonwealth and States)
CYP	Cape York Peninsula
FaCSIA	Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Commonwealth)
FVPLS	Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program (ATSIC, ATSIS then Attorney-General Commonwealth)
FVPP	Family Violence Partnership Programme
FVRAP	Family Violence Regional Activities Programme
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (Commonwealth)
ICC	Indigenous Coordination Centre (established under ATSIS)
ISP	Indigenous Service Provider
MCATSIA	Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
NACS	National Anti-Crime Strategy
NCAVAC	National Campaign Against Violence and Crime
n.d.	not dated

NIFVGP	National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme, Office of the Status of Women (Commonwealth)
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
NZ	New Zealand
OfW	Office for Women (Commonwealth) (formerly known as Office of the Status of Women)
OSW	Office of the Status of Women (Commonwealth)
PADV	Partnerships Against Domestic Violence, Office of the Status of Women (Commonwealth)
RANP	Remote Area Night Patrol, Central Australia
REACh	Responding Early Assisting Children Program, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Commonwealth)
SNAICC	Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (Melbourne)
TAFE	Technical and Further Education (Commonwealth)

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