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Strength in the Difference

A practice exchange forum for family services and
family violence services



Presented by:



**WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH**

18 July 2017



What to expect from today

Hear from Family Safety Victoria about the family violence reforms including Support and Safety Hubs

Understand the unique role of each service system and the specialisations they hold

Unpack how different services identify, assess and manage family violence risk

Explore how different services respond to the needs of children



Agenda

Setting the scene

Sarah Johnson, Family Violence Regional Integration Coordinator

Activity One

What do you value about your colleagues' work with families experiencing family violence?

Presentation

Family Safety Victoria

[BREAK]

Panel

Case study discussion with family services and family violence practitioners

Activity Two

Case study responding to risk and the needs of children

Feedback

Reflecting on 'strength in the difference'



About NIFVS

Northern Integrated Family Violence Services (NIFVS) is the partnership that leads the integration of family violence and related services in Melbourne's northern metropolitan region.

Our Mission

To maintain and continually develop the integrated family violence service system in the North, in order to improve the safety of women and children and to hold perpetrators accountable for their use of violence.

Our Partners

- 25 committee members
- 125 services responding to family violence
- 840 professionals linked to various initiatives

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Family Violence System

Aims to improve the safety of women and children and to hold perpetrators accountable for their use of violence (NIFVS Mission)

Women

- **L17 Intake:** Berry Street Northern Family and Domestic Violence Service
- **Refuge and outreach:** Crossroads Family Violence Service and Georgina Martina Inc.
- **Counselling and group work:** NIFVS Counselling and Support Alliance
- **Statewide:** Safe Steps, Elizabeth Morgan House and InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence

Children

- **L17 Intake:** Police reports are received by Berry Street NFDVS, Child Protection and ChildFIRST and jointly triaged. VACCA consults.
- **Case management:** Bright Futures Children's Specialist Support Service
- **Counselling and group work:** Turtle (Berry Street), Dolphin (Anglicare), Bright Futures and the NIFVS Counselling and Support Alliance

Men

- **L17 Intake:** Plenty Valley Community Health Men's Active Referral Service. Centre for Males (VACSAL) and Men's Unit (VAHS) receive L17s from PVCH
- **MBC providers:** Kildonan UnitingCare, Sunbury Community Health Service, Plenty Valley Community Health Service and Anglicare
- **Statewide:** Men's Referral Service



Family Services System

Aims to promote the safety, stability and development of vulnerable children, young people and their families ... working with both parents where possible. (Strategic Framework for Family Services, 2007).

Child FIRST
North East
(managed by
CPS)

North East Child and Family Services Alliance members:

- Anglicare
- Berry Street
- Brotherhood of St Laurence – EMC
- Children's Protection Society (CPS)
- City of Darebin
- City of Yarra
- Cohealth
- Uniting Kildonan
- Victoria Aboriginal Child Care Agency

Child FIRST
Hume
Moreland
(managed
by Uniting
Kildonan)

Hume Moreland Child and Family Services Alliance members:

- Anglicare
- Uniting Kildonan
- Uniting Lentara
- Merri Community Health
- Sunbury Community Health
- Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency



Why are we here?

'Greater collaboration between specialist family violence services and Integrated Family Services is necessary to ensure that families experiencing family violence do not fall between the cracks'. (RCFV Summary, p.23)

In the future, intake for both family violence and family services will be provided via Support and Safety Hubs.

North East Melbourne Area is one of five Hub 'launch sites' to be developed by December 2017.

Family services and family violence services have been identified as 'core services' for Hubs to work with.





Why 'Strength in the Difference'

We know there is overlap in the work of family services and family violence.

- 61% of the women who had experienced violence had children in their care at the time. (Personal Safety Survey, 2014)
- Up to 90% of family services cases clients have evidence of current or past family violence.

However it is important to recognise the unique differences.

| Family Violence | Family Services |
|---|---|
| Focus on gendered nature of family violence | Focus on the best interests of the child in the context of their family |
| Work with women without kids | Work with families where no family violence is present |
| Work with high risk and complex cases | Clients often have past or current family violence issues, but only a small percent are high risk |



Survey Results – What you said

Q: Which practice framework/ model/ code of practice do you use in your work?

1. Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF)
2. Best Interests Framework for Vulnerable Children and Youth
3. DHS Practice Guidelines: Women and children's counselling and support programs
4. Working with families where an adult is violent: Best interests case practice model
5. DVVic Code of Practice for Specialist Family Violence Services for Women and Children



Survey Results – What you said

Q: When working with a family, how do you respond when the risk of family violence increases?

- Risk Assessment
- Safety Plan
- Referral
- Report / Notification (eg child protection)
- Take Action (eg Intervention Order, liaise with Police, home security, find safe housing)

Interestingly, few attendees identified that would consult with supervisor or another service.



Survey Results – What you said

Q: What do you think needs to change in order to strengthen responses to family violence across both family violence service and family services?

1. More funding and resources
2. Collaboration
3. Improved communication
4. Further integration
5. Better information sharing



What we know about collaboration

NIFVS Moving Towards Greater Collaboration Forum (March 2016) mapped out these principles for collaboration:

Practice approaches

- Shared goals and vision
- Awareness of others' theoretical frameworks
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Accessing/ offering secondary consultation
- Accessing opportunities for joint training/forums
- Understanding intake and referral pathways into other sectors
- Good will

Formal mechanisms

- Information sharing agreements
- MOUs
- Shared data management systems
- Standard risk assessment (eg CRAF)
- Governance structures supporting collaboration
- Coordinator responsible for liaison
- Co-location and joint casework/care teams



Activity One

At your table, introduce yourself and your role.

Name one thing you value about the unique role of:

a) family violence workers (if you are a family services worker) or

b) family services workers (if you are a family violence worker) or

c) Either (if you don't identify as being a family violence or family services worker).

Write what you value on a paper person (**blue** for family services and **red** for family violence).

[15 minutes]



Take a break



Please add your paper person to the display

See you in 20 minutes

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Panel Discussion

Olivia Carter Family Services, Children's Protection Society

Tara Kornhauser Northern Domestic and Family Violence Service, Berry Street

Peter Coburn Men's Behaviour Change Program, Uniting Kildonan

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Activity Two

It is six months later and Tahli tells you that Stefan breached his intervention order last week by calling her and threatening to kill her if she doesn't let him come home. She stated that she did not report this breach to the police as she has no evidence and feels that she won't be believed.

Step One: Record your responses on worksheets provided:

- a) What are the practice considerations for your role in managing this increase in family violence risk?
- b) What are the key considerations relating to the two children and how would you respond to their needs?

Step Two: Discuss, then feedback to the room:

What have you learned about the unique role of family violence practice and family services practice?



Staying Involved

There are a number of ways to stay connected with the work of integration in the family violence sector:

- Get involved in the **Cross Agency Reflective Practice Project**
- Attend **Regional Family Violence Induction (13 Sept)**
- Participate in **Identifying Family Violence Training (16 Aug)**
- Join a **Local Family Violence Network**
- Run a **Week Without Violence** event in October
- Order **Family Violence Help Cards and posters**
- We will subscribe to monthly **NIFVS eNews**

www.nifvs.org.au



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www.nifvs.org.au

Women's Health In the North
680 High Street Thornbury 3071
info@whin.org.au
03 9484 1666



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