

UPDATE SUMMARY

May 2014

Taking Action: Tasmania's Primary Prevention Strategy to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2012-2022

The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in February 2011. As a signatory to the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022* (the National Plan) each jurisdiction has been tasked with developing their own implementation plan.

During the development of the *National Plan: Tasmanian Implementation Plan – First Action Plan 2010-2013* (TIP), a mapping of the response to family violence and sexual assault in Tasmania was undertaken. Through the mapping process it was evident that Tasmania is well positioned to address three of the four National Priorities of the National Plan (Enhancing Service Delivery; Strengthening Justice Responses; and Building the Evidence Base).

The mapping process also revealed that Tasmania required a more strategic approach to the National Priority; Building Primary Prevention Capacity. As a result, a key action in the TIP has been the development of a primary prevention strategy in order to address family violence before it occurs. *Taking Action: Tasmania's Primary Prevention Strategy to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2012-2022* (Taking Action) was launched at the inaugural women's gathering of key sector stakeholders in September 2013.

There are two major objectives of Taking Action. The first is concerted and early intervention into the cycle of inter-generational violence, so that family violence does not worsen the impacts of child abuse and neglect, nor contribute to the creation of children who grow into adults who accept this violence. The second is to address the major causes of violence against women and children that include:

- Gender roles and relations
- Social norms and practices relating to violence; and
- Access to resources and systems of support.

The outputs of Taking Action will evolve as new evidence emerges on the efficacy of approaches to changing individual and community attitudes to violence against women and children.

A number of Tasmanian Government agencies are progressing strategies that support Taking Action. In addition specific actions that are able to be undertaken within existing resources have commenced.

Progress to date:

- Ongoing work with White Ribbon Ambassadors and organisations to promote the male-led White Ribbon movement to end men's violence against women.

- Best practice family violence workplace arrangements were introduced into the Tasmanian State Service (TSS) in February 2013, and while not a primary prevention action, these workplace arrangements raise awareness of family violence as a whole-of-community concern.
- The implementation of the Department of Education (DOE)'s *Relationships and sexuality education in Tasmanian government schools strategy 2012-2014* has commenced. Respect and relationships are two of the key values of *Learners First*, the Department of Education's strategic plan. This strategy was developed to promote respectful relationships and incorporate gender issues in sexuality education. The strategy has also incorporated a collaborative project with the Department of Health and Human Services to develop the *Relationships and Sexuality Education Providers List*. The list references key government and non-government agencies that provide evidence based services and programs to schools.
- Work on the promotion of gender equality, so that all women and girls are supported to participate fully and equally in all aspects of society is ongoing. Gender equality is a core strategy in reducing violence against women within *The Tasmanian Women's Plan 2013-18* (the Plan) that was released alongside Taking Action in September 2013.
- Continuing support for the *Multicultural Language Service Guidelines for Tasmanian Government Agencies*. These guidelines aim to raise awareness of the need to use suitably accredited translators and interpreters in communicating the issues of violence against women and children in culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Family violence has been added as one of the priority areas for funding in the Community Support Levy Charitable Organisations Grants Program 2013-14. As a consequence, the Women's Shelter Inc successfully obtained a community grant of \$27 477 to develop the Mentors in Violence Prevention Program Pilot Project. The Pilot Project will use a 'bystander' approach to equip the broader community with the skills needed to challenge and prevent violence wherever it is encountered.
- In 2014 Tasmania provided input into the development of the Australian National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), previously known as the National Centre for Excellence to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (NCE,) draft National Research Agenda (NRA) that includes a strategic research theme focusing on the design, evaluation and monitoring of primary prevention programs. The NRA was launched on Friday 16 May 2014 and maybe be accessed at <http://www.anrows.org.au/>
- The Tasmanian Government supports the ANROWS NRA through its annual contribution of \$35 100 (GST exclusive) till 2016. It is funded through equal contributions from the Department of Justice; Department of Police and Emergency Management; Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education.

Future Progress:

- During 2014, Vic Health in partnership with the National Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children (the Foundation) and ANROWS will be developing a National Framework for the Prevention of Violence against Women (the National Prevention Framework). A key focus of the National Prevention Framework will be to outline a high-level strategic approach across States, Territories and the Commonwealth, that will be aligned with the National Plan – Second Action Plan to guide both (a) prevention policy, and (b) prevention programming.
- The National Prevention Framework will ensure a shared understanding across the nation of primary prevention and will also provide a strong national message of the importance of reducing violence against women and their children.