

The Hon Pru Goward, MP
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Dear Ms Goward

It Stops Here: Standing together to end domestic and family violence reforms

Survey questions

1. What do you think are the critical elements of the strategies and actions for prevention to drive change?

Strategies and actions for prevention to drive change and the domestic and family violence (DV/FV) framework more broadly, should operate within a human rights framework and ensure compliance with Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979 (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC).

Children and young people must be educated about what constitutes healthy relationships and the dynamics of DV/FV in order to help prevent violence and drive change. Education about healthy relationships and the dynamics of DV/FV should form part of all primary and high school curriculums, and should be delivered in a culturally sensitive and inclusive way, making reference to additional dynamics experienced by CALD, ATSI, people with disabilities and LGBTI people in violent relationships.

Early intervention programs that support victims to be protective parents would also help to prevent violence and drive change. These programs should be available to families at risk of violence and should aim to educate people about the dynamics of DV/FV and make them aware of support services available to people wanting to escape unhealthy relationships.

We submit that non-government organisations providing services to victims and perpetrators and the community about domestic and family violence should be adequately resourced to enable them to provide these services and meet reporting and funding requirements.

2. What do you think must be done to prevent the intergenerational transfer of violence?

The first step to preventing the intergenerational transfer of violence is to empower and support primary victims of DV/FV to leave violent perpetrators.

Victims are more likely to leave violent perpetrators if they have trust that service providers will support them to leave violence and act to mitigate the social, financial and psychological costs to them and their children of leaving violent perpetrators.

Service providers need to acknowledge the social and economic barriers faced by victims seeking to leave violent perpetrators and ensure victims are adequately supported and resourced to overcome those barriers.

As stated in our response to survey question 1, victims of DV/FV should be supported by protective parents through early intervention programs. The 2008 Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW (Wood inquiry) found that the key to reducing risk of harm to children is “sufficiently resourcing flexible protection and early intervention services as to reduce the numbers of children and young people who require the state to step in to keep them safe” (Hon James Wood 2008 at i). Early intervention services should be available to parents and children and include social worker/support, housing and legal services. Removing children from victims of DV/FV should be avoided as it can further traumatise victims and their children.

Victims and their children must be supported through education, emotional and financial support to recover from the trauma of experiencing violence.

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