



UPDATES

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

CASE STUDY	2
BOOK LAUNCH	3
"CIRCUS IN A TEA CUP"	5
BDVAS SERVICE INFORMATION	6

The Management Committee of Domestic Violence Resource Centre Inc. (DVRC) welcomes three new management committee members to the organisation who bring a range of experiences and skills with them.

Cheryl Sullivan, *Senior Associate, Clayton Utz.*

Dr Yvonne Brunetto, *Senior Lecturer, Dept of Management, Griffith University.*

Dr Gwenneth Roberts, *Honorary Research Consultant, University of Queensland.* Gwenneth's contribution has begun with the joint sponsorship of DVRC and the Australasian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies in launching the book "Intimate Partner Abuse and Health Professionals: New Approaches to Domestic Violence" see page 4 for more details.

We are also very happy to have the new Co-ordinator at the Brisbane Domestic Violence Advocacy Service; Chris Rackemann. Chris's experience in both child protection and domestic violence will be a valuable resource and contribution. We need to continue exploring how we as non government workers engage with women, their children and partners when they are affected by domestic and family violence in their lives. 2006 will also see us begin a new cycle for strategic planning. Our strategic directions will certainly include a strong commitment to working in partnership with government and non government services, that are engaged

with women, children and men in attempting to seek solutions that will end the violence in their homes and intimate relationships.

I recently attended a reception hosted by the Governor Quentin Bryce to celebrate 21 years of service to women and children escaping domestic violence and being accommodated at Chisholm. The governor in her speech referred to the incidence of domestic, sexual and family violence as being a global disgrace. Despite 21 years of service and raising community awareness still we have many women and children experiencing the harm and impact of domestic violence on their life choices as they go about their daily lives. The Management Committee and staff of DVRC congratulate all the women who have worked on the committee, as volunteers and as paid workers at Chisholm alongside the thousands of women who have sought refuge and safety in creating and maintaining a refuge in society in the face of violence for women and children.

DVRC looks forward to another year of working together as an organisation and with others who support us in a vision of a world where violence against women and children and all vulnerable people will be considered an economic and social priority by governments and widely recognised by our communities as unacceptable.

By Karyn Walsh, Chairperson, DVRC Inc.



Case Study - Spousal Domestic Violence

For the purpose of this case study the names have been changed to protect the individuals identities.

Presenting Issues

Carly and Mick have been married for 17 years. They are both New Zealand citizens but have resided in Australia for the past few years. There are 2 sons and 1 daughter from the relationship, Steve aged 9, Mark aged 7 and Tessa, aged 6 years.

Carly and Mick own their own home. Carly is a stay at home mother whilst Mick works full-time as a private contractor in a trade.

Carly was referred to the Brisbane Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (BDVAS) through a social worker at Centrelink. Carly spoke of a pattern of behaviours from Mick in the past 4 years that has made her very uncomfortable and has now reached a point whereby she is fearful of him and has concerns for her safety as well as that of her 3 children. These behaviours range from stalking and spying on Carly, deviant sexual behaviours, sexual violence, and neglect of the children as well as the need to exert absolute control over the family. Carly was concerned that Mick may have a mental health problem and that he was not prepared to seek professional assistance for it. Carly was also at a point of considering a separation as the home situation was causing her great distress. She felt that she and the children were living in fear of Mick and that his behaviour was becoming more erratic, unpredictable, obsessive and aggressive.

Carly is very close to her parents and has her parents' full support although they live in New Zealand. Carly also has a few very close friends in Brisbane whom are aware of her situation and are supportive of her decision to separate.

Advocacy and Support Provided by BDAVAS

Upon the initial assessment, Carly and the Advocate made a comprehensive safety plan to prepare for separation. These included:

1. Emergency contacts for Carly at any hours.
2. A safe date and time was set for separation to occur.
3. Carly to continue saving and putting money aside.
4. Carly to arrange for a removalist service to come on the day to move some of her belongings and place in storage.
5. BDAVAS to arrange refuge for Carly and the children.
6. BDAVAS to arrange with Centrelink for Carly to be exempted from seeking child maintenance and to have a crisis payment upon separation.
7. BDAVAS and Carly to apply for an urgent Domestic Violence Protection Order a day prior to separation.
8. BDAVAS and Carly to arrange with the local Police for a safe date for PUV to be served.
9. BDAVAS to arrange for Carly to receive legal advice in relation to DV, children's issues and property settlement and to check if Carly would be eligible for Legal Aid.
10. Discussed the option of applying for an involuntary mental health assessment for Mick.

Carly's back up plan if the above did not work was to fly to New Zealand and stay with her parents.

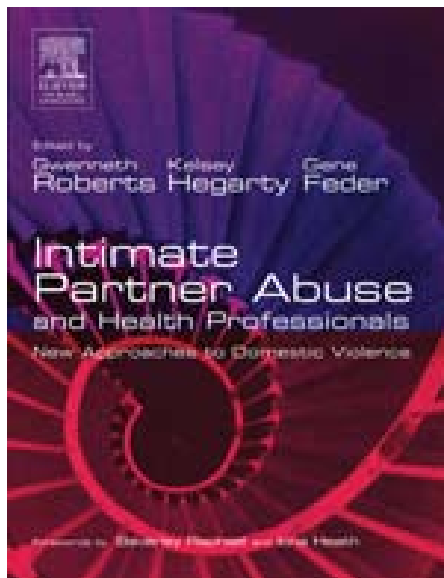
Outcomes

BDVAS and Carly kept in close contact in the days leading to separation. Fortunately Carly was able to separate as planned. Carly and the children stayed in refuge for 3 weeks before securing their own private rental property. Carly was not eligible for Legal Aid due to the joint assets of the marriage. However, Carly was granted an urgent DVPO the day prior to separation and was eventually granted a final order a few weeks afterwards. A month after separation, Mick was seen around 3pm in front of the children's school, thus BDAVAS assisted Carly to vary her order to specify that Mick was not come or approach the school.

Carly currently has a private solicitor to assist her with children issues and property settlement. Carly and the 3 children are currently going to Kinctions for counselling in relation to their experiences of domestic violence.



Incorporating the Brisbane Domestic Violence Advocacy Service



Domestic Violence Resource Centre Inc. in conjunction with Australasian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, Qld. Chapter invites you to the book launch of
“Intimate Partner Abuse and Health Professionals: New Approaches to Domestic Violence”.

Edited by

Gwenneth Roberts, PhD, Uni of Qld, RN

Kelsey Hegarty, PhD, Dept of GP, Uni of Melbourne

Gene Feder, MD, Queen Mary’s School of Medicine and Dentistry, London, UK

3.00pm to 5.00pm - Seminar:

“Domestic Violence and Health Professionals: Building Partnerships with Community”.

Key Note Speaker

Associate Professor Kelsey Hegarty, Dept. of GP, Uni of Melbourne

5.00pm to 5:45pm - Drinks and Nibbles

5:45pm to 7.00pm - Book Launch

Guest Speaker

Emeritus Professor Beverley Raphael,

Friday 24th March 2006

3.00pm to 7.00pm

Hotel Diana, Annerley Rd, Woolloongabba

Entry by donation.

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

Please make Cheque/money orders payable to
“Domestic Violence Resource Centre Inc.”
Credit Card facilities available at the door.

QA/CPE/PD points have been applied for.

Please RSVP to DVRC Inc.
for catering purposes by 21st March 2006
tel: 07 3217 2544 or E-mail:
admin@dvrc.org.au



Circus in a Tea Cup

Vulcana Women's Circus in collaboration with the Brisbane Domestic Violence Advocacy Service, has invited women who have been affected by domestic or family violence, to come together through a series of workshops, to develop, manage and deliver their own cultural event – 'Circus in a Tea Cup'.

Through weekly three-hourly workshops, that will run for a period of approximately sixteen weeks, the women will be involved in creating, learning and expanding on their own individual strengths and skills, to produce a piece of work that encompasses their abilities, competence and talents, in recognition and reflection of their lives and experiences. Through a combination of interactions with peers, and participation in the physical circus activities, 'Circus in a Tea Cup' aims to recognize, acknowledge and highlight, the accomplishments and survival skills of the women involved in the production, and also of the many women that could not be a part of this.

The workshops began in February 2006, and the group consists of thirteen women – including workers from BDVAS and Vulcana. The workshops are running in their sixth week now, and include learning and presenting such skills as: juggling, hoola-hoop work, plate spinning, group balancing, tumbling and performing hand-stands etc. Whilst these are the initial skills that we are currently involved in learning, there is more! As we acquire more experience and confidence with the work, there will be further introduction of more physically demanding activities like: "Tissu work", walking with stilts, and combinations of all of the above.

So far, 'Circus in a Tea Cup' is an extremely fun, but challenging exercise. Just when you think you didn't have muscles-you find them, or when you think that you can't possibly do something-you learn you can!

BDVAS will keep you updated on the groups' progress. We currently have booked at the Powerhouse where we will demonstrate our fantastic skills through a performance on the 31st May 2006.



Above - A group participant learning the hoola-hoop.





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Check us out on the net

www.dvrc.org.au

Brisbane Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (BDVAS)

is the regional domestic violence service for the
Brisbane Metropolitan area.

The following principles underpin our service delivery:

- Domestic and family violence is a fundamental violation of human rights and is unacceptable in any form.
- Violence in many forms is a crime and should not be tolerated by society.
- Women and children are predominantly victims of domestic and family violence.
- All family members have the right to safety in the community and where they reside.
- All individuals experiencing domestic and family violence have a right to be treated with respect, dignity and with a non-judgmental attitude.
- All individuals experiencing domestic and family violence have the right to choose what options they pursue to address the violence.

The BDVAS is an activity of the
Domestic Violence Resource Centre Inc. (DVRC).

DVRC's Training Room

Located at "The Precinct", West End.

The training room is a private, well equipped space that is perfect for staff or committee meetings, training sessions or workshops. Facilities include seating for up to 40 people, Overhead Projector/PowerPoint Projector System, Electronic Whiteboard, Tea and Coffee making facilities.

Very reasonable rates apply.

If you are interested please call

07 3217 2544 or e-mail admin@dvrc.org