



violence free families

THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT

2010-2011

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



I have great pleasure in presenting this first full-year annual report of the Family Violence Prevention Foundation of Australia: "Violence Free Families".

Highlights of the year have been:

- Obtaining Harm Prevention Charity registration with the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Tax Deductible Gift Recipient status with the Australian Taxation Office in October, 2010.
- Achieving just under \$100,000 in donation revenue for the year, remembering that we had tax deductible status for only eight months. We are grateful to all of our donors, especially the anonymous donor who has provided the core funds that have allowed us to progress as far as we have, and the Rotary Club of Brighton which has continued its long-term support.
- Embarking with Monash University on the largest study ever undertaken into the long term effectiveness of different types of family violence prevention interventions, valued at \$700,000. The ultimate objectives of this study are more and better men's behaviour change programs.
- Investigating the possibility of a web-delivered men's behaviour change program. This is intended to reach men

who can't, or won't, attend physical group programs.

- Leading a team of six social welfare and other agencies in the St Kilda area in a pilot outreach program for women affected by family violence.
- The community support network through Rotary was successfully expanded from three to eight Rotary Clubs and the value of the work of the Foundation was recognised by the "Significant Achievement" Award of Rotary District 9800. This award, made to the Rotary Club of Brighton as the principal sponsor of the Foundation, goes to the top project in any category in the District's 70 Rotary Clubs. This adds to previous awards, including a national Crime Prevention Award in 2002.

We greatly appreciate the voluntary efforts of our many supporting committee members inside and outside Rotary and also gratefully acknowledge the many professional service organisations and individuals who gave their time and services to advance our work.

The future holds many challenges but the Foundation is off to a strong start and looks forward to making an effective and useful contribution to the reduction of family violence in the community.


Dr David Smyth, Chairman

VISION, RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

Our vision is summed up in our public name, Violence Free Families.

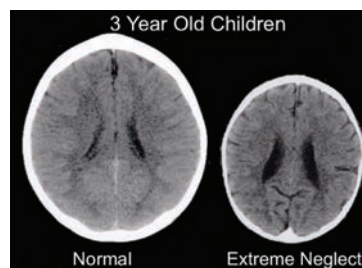
Fundamental to our existence is the belief that all children, and all adults, deserve the chance and have the right to live in homes free of violence and trauma.

The potential for community benefit is enormous and it is our ambition that Violence Free Families will gain public recognition commensurate with *beyondblue* in a few years' time.

Rationale

Family violence is:

- being witnessed or experienced by one child in four in the nation¹. Children suffer, whether as victims or witnesses of violence¹
- the leading cause of premature death and injury among women aged 15 to 44
- experienced in some form by one in three Australian women in their lifetimes
- the main cause of youth homelessness
- associated with street and workplace violence
- estimated to cost the community \$10bn² per year in medical costs, lost productivity and welfare, and children from violent families have a high probability of becoming violent in their adolescent and adult lives, within and outside the family. Approximately 1.3 million children in Australia are affected.



Devastating impact of severe abuse on brain size of three year old girl. Without help lasting damage can be done³.

Recent Federal Government reports^{4,5} have emphasised the serious nature of this problem and promised much but results have been slow to appear. Community activism can increase pressure on Federal and State Governments to move more vigorously.

Objectives

Our vision is "Violence Free Families". We aim to reduce all types of family violence: physical, psychological, financial and sexual. We provide a nation-wide community focus for action against violence.

Our charter is to reduce family violence by:

- research into and development of prevention programs
- supporting social welfare agencies in their work with perpetrators
- education and community awareness.

¹ Eg, *The Age*, 10 June 2011, p13: *Early trauma can shorten lifespan*: "There is mounting evidence that adversity during childhood involving neglect, physical and sexual abuse can significantly disrupt brain development, causing mental and physical problems later in life. They are more prone to premature aging, heart disease and cancer. Early treatment can help." (Edited extract).² Sources: reports by KPMG and Access Economics. ³ From studies conducted by researchers from The Child Trauma Academy (www.ChildTrauma.org) led by Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D. ⁴ *Time for Action* - The Plan of National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2009-2021, FACHSIA, March 2009. ⁵ FACHSIA, "The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women-Immediate Government Actions" Canberra, April 2009.

HISTORY

The Foundation was established in 2009 to build on the previous 14 years of experience of the Rotary Club of Brighton, Victoria, in family violence prevention activities.

- From 1995 to 2002 it provided men's behaviour change programs in the Bayside area through a non-profit company established for that purpose. In 2002 it transferred the operation of this service to prominent Melbourne counselling agency LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services. In that year, the program received a national Crime Prevention Award.
- From 2002 to 2006 it supported the Bayside program and others run by LifeWorks with funding and professional advice. Many thousands more families have now benefited and an ongoing survey shows an encouragingly high success rate, at least in the short term.
- In 2006, the Club commenced fund raising for a two year study into improving men's behaviour change programs and with the aid of Australian Rotary Health and LifeWorks, it sponsored successful research by Monash University, which was completed in August, 2009. The research report became the first publication of Violence Free Families⁶ and was distributed to government, academic and professional bodies.
- The Foundation continues an effort that has now been sustained over 16 years. In excess of \$500,000 has been raised, most of it from philanthropic institutions and individuals.

The benefit to the community has been most rewarding. The program started in the local community and helped hundreds of Bayside families from 1995 to 2002.

Since then, it has helped many more families through LifeWorks and now, through the Foundation, this work will expand to benefit victims of violence and abuse nationwide for years to come.

In July 2009, the Brighton Rotary Club, building on this extensive experience, decided to take its program to a new and higher level:

- In December, 2009 it incorporated the Family Violence Prevention Foundation of Australia, known as "Violence Free Families" (VFF), to fill a dismaying gap in the list of Australian charities.
- It broadened its support base in Rotary by inviting the Rotary Clubs of Brighton Beach and Brighton North to participate.
- It published the results of two years of research through Monash University, mentioned earlier.
- It commenced a challenging program of activities, described below.

⁶ Brown, Thea and Hampson, Ralph, "An Evaluation of Interventions with Domestic Violence Perpetrators", The Family Violence Prevention Foundation of Australia, Monash University Printers, 2009.

OUR ACTIVITIES

The immediate program of activities is:

A Web-delivered Men's Behaviour Change Program

Many men who need to attend behaviour change programs either can't or won't attend the normal group programs. Examples are shift workers, rural dwellers, fly-in fly-out itinerant workers, prominent people in their communities and those reluctant to admit having a problem.

The concept of web delivery is a world first as far as we know. It will provide all of the features of a standard group program with the exception of the need to attend in person. Virtual group sessions on the web using e-learning techniques developed by universities for virtual classrooms will replace the physical sessions.

Expressions of Interest will be invited from selected agencies early next financial year.

Major Research Project

This study will compare the results of the two main types of behaviour change programs in current use and assess their long term results. This major study will be the largest ever done and the second only in the world. It will start by contacting about 1,400 men and their partners, 2,800 participants in all, in 10 social welfare agencies in Victoria and Western Australia.

We have raised, in cash or in kind, approximately \$450,000 of the \$700,000 needed.

A contract has been signed with Monash University for the first two years and work commenced early in 2011.

The following key results are expected:

- Improved practice in this field by evaluating the contending types of intervention.
- Improved funding for programs. The value of men's behaviour change programs is poorly understood by policy makers and they are chronically under-funded. Three month waiting lists are normal and this is, effectively, denial of service because men lose interest. Positive results from the study will give decision makers greater confidence in allocating funds. Conversely, if the results are negative, some fundamental re-thinking is required.
- Encouragement of both perpetrators and victims of violence to seek help earlier because of assurance of a better outcome. Families typically experience 7 to 10 years of violence before seeking help. In this time, irreparable damage is done, especially to children.

The ultimate beneficiaries of this study will be the children and women in the community who suffer family violence and the proposal has been warmly welcomed by participating agencies and their field staff⁷.

This study is already attracting international interest and we have benefited from a constructive contribution of ideas on methodology and approach from a leading UK academic.

The current contract runs only to 31 December 2012 and we have an urgent need to raise the balance of the funds required to complete the study.

⁷ Typical agency comments: "We would have done this long ago ourselves if we had the numbers and the resources." and "You have put your finger right on the greatest gap in our knowledge in this area."

We are emphasising that this research is addressing fundamental issues relating to society's "hidden cancer" – family violence.

It is just as deadly and just as damaging as any medical problem and just as deserving of financial support from individuals and institutions.

Community Outreach Local Information Services

At 30 June, planning was complete for a pilot information afternoon in St Kilda in mid July.

The objective was to raise community awareness of the consequences of violence and provide information about the help that is available for victims and perpetrators. The pilot will be evaluated and future activities of this nature will be considered in the light of results.

Agencies participating with us in this venture are the St Kilda Salvation Army Family Support Service, St Kilda Legal Service, Inner South Community Health Service, Victoria Police, Port Philip Council and HomeGround Services.

Be the Hero

We are supporting the Victorian Women's Trust (VWT) in rolling out their excellent "Be the Hero" relationship education program for mid-teens boys in schools.

We will invite Rotary Clubs and others to help support a major promotional event in mid February 2012 at the Melbourne Town Hall.

An international speaker, Dr Jackson Katz, has been engaged by the VWT.

WHY SUPPORT

RESEARCH?

Family Violence is society's **HIDDEN CANCER**. It is often concealed, minimised or ignored. For most, it is too unpleasant to contemplate. **BUT** it kills, maims and psychologically damages probably more people than any medical complaint.

CANCER treatment has advanced enormously over recent decades. So has the treatment of many medical ailments.

HOW? Through **RESEARCH**.

FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION has advanced slowly.

WHY? Inadequate **RESEARCH** into interventions that work best.

HELP US to conduct international standard research to help protect our children and families.



DONATE

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible in Australia.



THE FUTURE

Violence Free Families believes that male violence is the most significant element in the complex and multi-faceted problem of family violence. VFF recognises that in a majority of incidents family violence is perpetrated by men against women, with children present in too many cases. Our current programs are therefore directed towards this element as a priority.

We recognise that the problem of family violence is so extensive in the community that only governments have the resources to deal with it on a comprehensive scale. We will advocate the allocation of greater resources, especially in view of the social and economic costs to the community.

Through VFF, our intention is to gain public recognition in much the same way as the awareness of depression and youth mental health has been raised in recent years.

We envisage VFF as a centre of excellence in family violence prevention which will include support to professionals, schools education, community education and more.

We note the model of the Family Violence Prevention Fund in the USA, which has been established for over twenty years and has been influential at policy and program levels.

At the program level, for the near future, we will focus on the projects already commenced.

Beyond that, we will continue to build our credibility and resources as a means to achieving our objectives more fully.



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THE DIRECTORS



Directors: Kaye Swanton, David Smyth, Barry Hickman and Norman Thomas.

We were pleased to welcome Kate Strain to the Board during the year, bringing the number of Directors to six.

The Directors are:

Dr David Smyth, BE (Elec), BA, PhD, FIE Aust., FIET, Chairman. He is a former Director of the Rotary Club of Brighton and current Chairman of its Family Violence Prevention Committee.

He was a consultant to the Board of Bayside Family Support (a provider of men's behaviour change programs), Chairman of John Knox Close (Victorian Housing Commission accommodation) for eight years and is former Director of Girrawheen Aged Care.

After a career as a telecommunications engineer and senior postal executive, for 17 years he was a UN and World Bank expert on postal legislation and business planning.

Professor Thea Brown, PhD, is Professor (Research) in the Department of Social Work at Monash University and former Head of

Department. She is also the director of the Well Being of Children Following Separation and Divorce, an inter-university research consortium.

Her research in the last decade has covered family violence, family breakdown and family law. She co-authored a recent book on "Child Abuse and Family Law". Another book on "Community Based Mediation Following Parental Separation" was published in 2011. She was the lead researcher in the two-year program completed in 2009 for the Rotary Club of Brighton, LifeWorks and Australian Rotary Health.



Director: Thea Brown



Director: Katherine Strain

Ms Kaye Swanton, Grad Cert Bus Mgmt, M App Sc, FAIM, is the CEO of LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services, which has been providing men's behaviour change programs and whole-of-family violence prevention strategies for over 20 years.

Kaye has a 25 year history in governance, strategic management and senior executive positions. She has been a city councillor and a company director.

Mr Barry Hickman, Director, Community Services, Rotary Club of Brighton; Company Director and Chief Executive of CI Studios, a promotional photography company. Through Rotary, he has also led fund raising activities and acted as a mentor for the White Lion foundation for youth in trouble with the law.

Mr Norman Thomas, Member Family Violence Prevention Committee, Rotary Club of Brighton, and former Director and Secretary of the club. He has held senior executive and board positions, including Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director with several companies.

He commenced his own consulting practice 25 years ago and has since led a wide variety of Australian and foreign companies through organisational change and strategic development. He is a past partner of Laney Pickett Thomas Consulting and is Managing Director of Norman Thomas Associates Pty Ltd and The Interim Manager. Through Rotary, he recently instigated and is leading a sailing program for disadvantaged youth.

Ms Katherine Strain, (appointed 22 October 2010) Co-founder and foundation Director of Brainwave Australia 1994 - 2008, a charity established to support treatment and care of children suffering from brain illnesses.

She has been a Synod Board member of St. Leonard's College, Brighton since 2002 and is Managing Director of Sandangel Pty Ltd, importer and distributor, and Rotary Foundation Director of the Rotary Club of Brighton North.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Addresses to Rotary and Other Community Organisations

In December 2010, directors Barry Hickman and David Smyth addressed the influential national Rotary Institute of past, present and immediate future District Governors, about 450 delegates and partners in all, in Perth. This address generated interest from several Districts in at least four States and the contacts made are still being pursued.

In April 2011, the same two directors, with director Kate Strain, addressed 650 delegates and partners at the Rotary District 9800 Conference in Adelaide. This address was rated highly among delegates and led to the participation of the five additional Rotary Clubs mentioned above, with others still considering joining.

Directors have addressed numerous Rotary and other service clubs and more addresses are planned.

Publicity for the Project

We have established a website, currently under redevelopment to make it more accessible from Google and to improve the content, especially by adding referral information for viewers needing help.

Two editions of a brochure were prepared and circulated widely at various Rotary functions, other service clubs and to interested individuals.

Newspaper advertising was used for the outreach program referred to above, as well as posters in relevant places throughout the St Kilda/Port Phillip area and an announcement in several weekly papers circulating in the area.

Publicity in the next 12 months will include the Melbourne Town Hall event for mid-teens boys in February referred to above, jointly with the Victorian Women's Trust, and the White Ribbon foundation, and possible assistance with cinema publicity for the Be The Hero program following this event.



Rotary President Paul Nicholson with the Significant Achievement Trophy for his club's work through Violence Free Families.

Rotary District Award

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Rotary Club of Brighton received the annual Rotary District Significant Achievement Award for its work, principally through the Foundation. It also received the Community Service Award at the same annual presentations. The citations read:

Community Service Award: "For the Club's family violence prevention program and the establishment of a national charity: Violence Free Families".

Significant Achievement Award: "For the Club's outstanding work in developing their family violence prevention program. Fundamental to the program is that children and all adults deserve the chance and have the right to live in their homes free of violence and trauma".

FUND RAISING

Breakdown of Revenue

Deductible Gift Recipient status was obtained on 27 October, 2010 and more active fund raising commenced in the new year. As mentioned above, the result was \$96,000. The pie chart shows that we are too reliant on one generous donor and need to diversify our revenue sources.

Among the service clubs, we are especially grateful to the Rotary Club of Brighton, which donated \$5,600 and paid expenses incurred by the Foundation totalling a further \$3,000 to \$4,000.

O'Keefe Submissions

Early in the calendar year we entered into a contract with O'Keefe Partners for ten submissions to philanthropic institutions. Seven submissions had been made before 30 June. At year end, three of those have been declined and four remain undetermined. The three outstanding submissions will be prepared in the new financial year.

Rotary Club Fund Raising

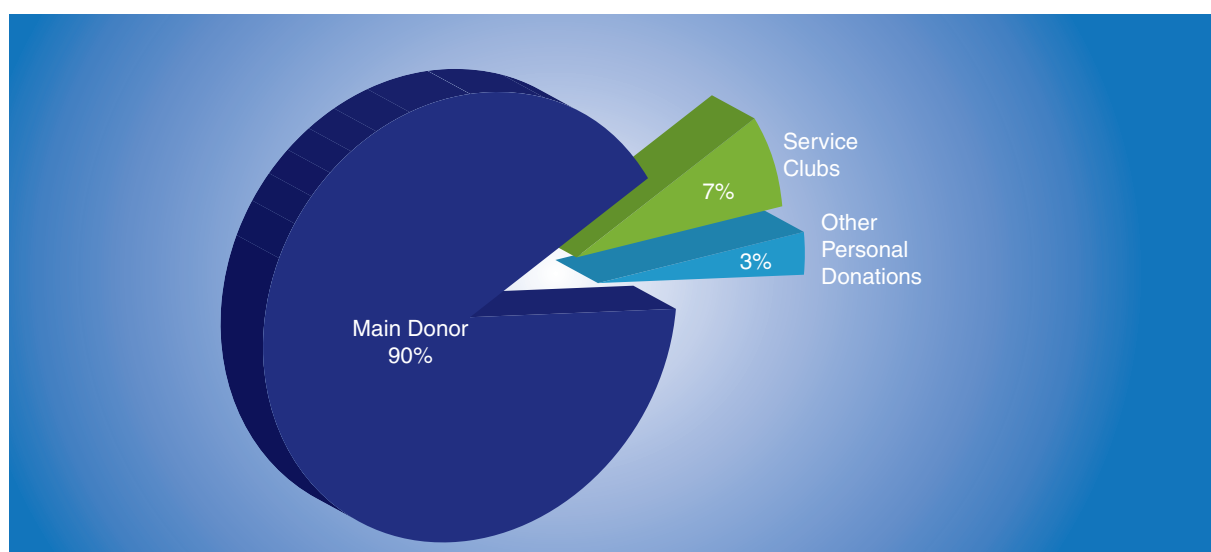
The Rotary Clubs of Tullamarine and East Keilor are currently investigating the possibility of running a fund raising event in support of our work. Rotary Directors are actively working with other clubs to secure financial, as well as human resource support and planning has commenced for a Bayside area fund raising event.

Other Fund Raising

The Foundation applied for a Proceeds of Crime Grant from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department without success and has an outstanding application with FaHCSIA for a Community Action Grant.

The brochures mentioned above attracted some donations in addition to their awareness raising function.

Approaches are being made to the Victorian State and Commonwealth Governments for additional funding.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Rotary Support

The Foundation relies very heavily on Rotary volunteers and this support is vital to realise our vision. A Rotary support committee of about 14 individuals from many professional and business backgrounds, drawn from eight Rotary clubs, is in place. Their inputs have included the preparation of a Business Plan and project work on each of the projects described above. A number of non Rotarians who share our vision are also supporting our work. The Foundation does not yet have any paid staff.

We have been pleased to welcome strong recognition and support from the Australian Women in Rotary network.

Support from Community Professionals

The activities of VFF have attracted widespread support from the professional community and the following organisations and individuals are involved in various capacities:

Organisation	Capacity
Monash University Department of Social Work	Professor (Research) is Director of VFF; also contracted for research
LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services	CEO is Director of VFF; research supervision and participation
Social Welfare Agencies (10 in all), including Anglicare, Relationships Australia (WA), Child and Family Services Ballarat, Bethany (Geelong), Kildonan Uniting Care (Preston) and others	Participation in long term study
Salvation Army St Kilda Family Support Services	Participation in community outreach project
Victoria Police, St Kilda Road Melbourne HQ	Supporter of and participant in outreach project
An experienced clinical psychologist and counsellor in men's behaviour change programs	Support and advice for web based behaviour change program
Monash University Faculty of Medicine and Nursing e-learning Division	Advice on group interactive component of web-delivered program



Support from Other Professionals

We gratefully recognise the assistance of the following people and organisations.

Organisation	Capacity
E. Barr (Brighton)	Honorary auditor
CI Studios (Melbourne and Sydney)	CEO is Director of VFF and member of Rotary Club of Brighton: PR and other support
Aitken Partners (Melbourne)	Legal support
Trusted Impact Pty Ltd (Albert Park)	Website development and advice on web security for behaviour change project
Asprey Creative (Fitzroy)	Logo development
Max Martin Designs (Moorabbin)	Assistance with Annual Report
Kim Edwards, Marketing and Communications Officer, LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services	Assistance with Annual Report

Donor Support

We are most grateful to the following donors.

Organisation	Capacity
Australian Rotary Health	Supporter of 2007/09 research project
A large Australian public company (anonymous by request)	Major donor supporting the research project
Mitcham RSL (Sunrise Day Club) and a number of private Rotary and non-Rotary individual donors	Donors

Collaborators

We are in various stages of discussion about joint activities with the:

- Victorian Women's Trust
- Australian Women in Rotary Network
- Jewish Task Force Against Family Violence
- White Ribbon Foundation.

Support Committees and their Membership

The Foundation has a Board and three committees. In total, the Board and Committees have over 30 individual members, some of them on several of the committees.

- The Rotary Support Committee Clubs: Brighton, Brighton North, Brighton Beach, Albert Park, Balwyn, Glen Eira, Tullamarine and East Keilor.

- The Academic Reference Committee.

This includes nine members and will shortly be expanded to 11. This diverse support base includes four practitioners in the delivery of men's behaviour change programs, two senior managers, a medical practitioner with a special interest in family medicine, a police officer and a solicitor with research ethics experience.

- The Community Outreach Committee.

This informal committee includes approximately eight social workers and support service providers in the St Kilda area, together with Rotary Support Committee members.

CONCLUSION

The Foundation is an ambitious and visionary undertaking.

Fundamental to the undertaking is the belief that children and adults all have the right to live in homes free of violence and trauma, in "Violence Free Families".

The potential for community benefit is enormous and it is our ambition that this work, and that of Violence Free Families will gain public recognition commensurate with *beyondblue* in a few years' time.

A lot has been achieved during the year and a solid foundation has been laid. We all look forward to building on this foundation during the coming year and making a demonstrable impact on one of the greatest social ills of our community.



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FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 30 JUNE 2011

THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

ABN 97 140 937 382

