



violence free families

THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT

2011-2012

CONTENTS

Our Vision, Rationale and Objectives	2
History	3
Our Activities	4-5
The Directors	6-7
PR & Fund Raising	8
Support	9
The Future	10
Financial Statements	11



violence free families

The Family Violence Prevention Foundation of Australia trading as Violence Free Families.

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 through the Foundation, Violence Free Families will become a household name and a reality for all families in Australia.

www.violencefreefamilies.org.au

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Research, development and education were the themes of the family violence prevention work of Violence Free Families during the year.

- Our long-term research project was approved by the Ethics Committees of Monash University, the Victorian Department of Justice and the research committees of participant organisations. We are now entering the data collection phase with six social welfare agencies in three States participating.
- Our development project is a Men's Behaviour Change Program to be delivered on the web. The concept is attracting the attention of the Courts and social welfare agencies. The Rotary Club of Balwyn will assist in managing the upcoming contract and with fund raising to ensure its progress.
- Our third project will be a new education program building on our collaboration during the year with the Victorian Women's Trust. We are investigating a range of options for 2013.

Recognition of our work this year has been most satisfying and encouraging.

- In February, Rotary District 9800 endorsed our program for the next three years. This followed the receipt of the District Significant Achievement Award last year. District Endorsement gives us the moral and practical support of all 69 member clubs.

a grant to be paid over two years towards the costs of our MBCP research project.

We were most grateful for the support of the Women in Rotary Network and the Rotary Club of Albert Park, particularly at their first International Women's Day Breakfast at Crown Casino in February, which attracted over 700 people.

Fund raising has required constant effort, to underwrite the research project and our newer projects. We greatly appreciated Brighton Rotary's financial support as well as that of several other clubs and the Collier Charitable Fund. We will need to continue vigorous fund raising to bring our projects to fruition.

Finally, we are very fortunate to have the enthusiasm of our directors and the Rotary support committee, which is now drawn from nine clubs, including one in District 9790. We are also indebted to LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services for its ongoing contributions, in kind and voluntary. All of our supporters are volunteers and many devote a great deal of time working to improve the quality of life of families that are troubled by violence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Smyth'.

Dr David Smyth, Chairman

- The Commonwealth Government awarded

VISION, RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

Our vision is summed up in our public name, 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. 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.

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 services. 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.

Objectives

Our charter is to reduce family violence through:

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

¹Eg, *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).²Sources: reports by KPMG and Access Economics.



HISTORY

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

From 1995 to 2002 the Club 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 the Club supported the Bayside program and others run by LifeWorks with funding and professional advice. Thousands more families have now benefited and an ongoing survey showed an encouragingly high success rate, at least in the short term.

In 2006, the Club sponsored a two-year study by Monash University into improving men's behaviour change programs, with the aid of Australian Rotary Health and LifeWorks. This was completed in August, 2009.

The Foundation continues the commitment of Rotary, a commitment that has now been sustained over 17 years, and is engaging wider community support. In excess of \$600,000 has been raised, largely from philanthropic institutions, individuals, donors and Rotary fundraising activities. The benefit to the community has been most rewarding.

OUR ACTIVITIES



An Online Men's Behaviour Change Program

Many men who need to attend behaviour change programs can't attend the normal face-to-face group programs. Examples are shift workers, rural dwellers and fly-in fly-out itinerant workers.

The concept of web delivery of a behaviour change program, is a world first as far as we know. It will be similar to a standard face-to-face group program with the exception of the need to attend in person.

Virtual group sessions on the web, adapting techniques developed by universities for virtual classrooms, will replace the physical sessions. Negotiations with interested agencies are proceeding.

The Rotary Club of Balwyn has taken a keen interest in the concept and has undertaken to provide project management services and assist with fund raising. A Memorandum of Understanding for this purpose was signed in May 2012.

Behaviour Change Program Long-term Research Project

This study is comparing the results of the main types of behaviour change programs in current use and assessing 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 800 men and their partners, in six social welfare agencies in three states.

We have raised, in cash or in kind, approximately one third of the \$700,000 needed. We were delighted to receive Commonwealth Government funding of \$100,000 for the study in late 2012 following their evaluation of the project

Work commenced early in 2011 and our initial contract with Monash University has been extended to 30 June 2013.

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. Long 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, fundamental re-thinking is required.

- Encouragement of both perpetrators and victims of violence to seek help earlier because of assurance of a better outcome. At present families typically experience seven to ten 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. The research proposal has been warmly welcomed by participating agencies and their field staff.

Our survey questionnaire benefitted from the input of an expert from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, acting in a private capacity, and we are grateful to her for many constructive suggestions.

During the year, the Board established a Research Reference Committee to oversee the project.

The following chart shows that the greatest part of our expenditure this year was on the project.

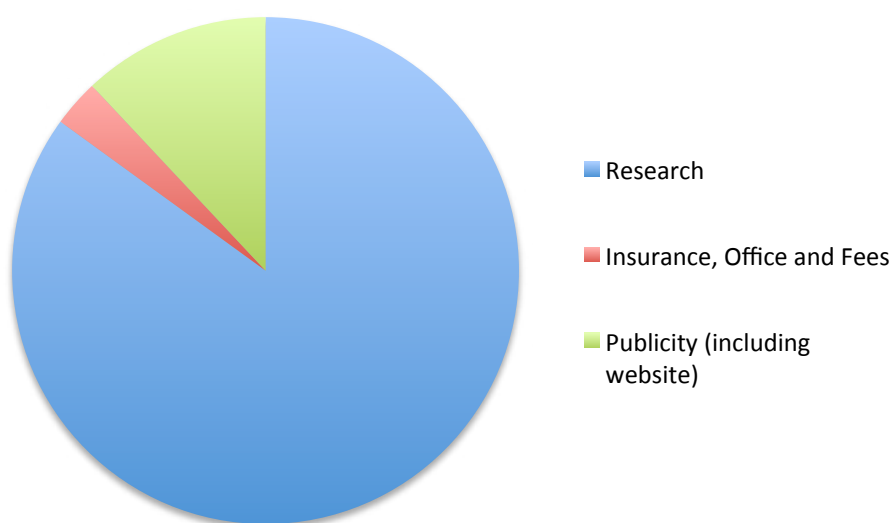


Figure 1: Violence Free Families Expenditure Breakdown, 2011/2012

Education

Violence Free Families was pleased to support the Victorian Women's Trust (VWT) in rolling out their excellent "Be the Hero" relationship education program for mid-teen boys in schools and it looks forward to ongoing collaboration.

We invited Rotary Clubs and others to attend a major promotional event held in mid February 2012 at the Melbourne Town Hall by the Victorian Women's Trust. International speaker, Dr Jackson Katz, spoke at the event, along with other leading figures in family violence prevention work.

Dr Katz, also participated in a week long series of public and private events in Melbourne and Sydney while he was in Australia.

Violence Free Families is currently examining the whole field of violence prevention education to determine how it can best add further value.

THE DIRECTORS



Directors: Kaye Swanton, Norman Thomas, David Smyth, Katherine Strain, Barry Hickman and Kerry Kornhauser. (Absent: Thea Brown)

We were pleased to welcome Ms Kerry Kornhauser to the Board during the year, bringing the number of Directors to seven. The Directors are:



Dr David Smyth

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

David 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 served as 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.

Thea's 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 evaluation completed in 2009 for the Rotary Club of Brighton, LifeWorks and Australian Rotary Health.



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 and is a member of the Research Reference Committee.



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 now Managing Director of Norman Thomas Associates Pty Ltd. He also leads a sailing program for disadvantaged youth.



Ms Katherine Strain

Kate was the co-founder and foundation Director of Brainwave Australia 1994 - 2008, a charity established to support treatment and care of children suffering from brain illnesses. From 2002-2012 she was a Synod Board member of St. Leonard's College, Brighton. She is Managing Director of Sandangel Pty Ltd, importer and distributor, and a Director of the Rotary Club of Brighton North.



Ms Kerry Kornhauser (appointed 22 July 2011).

Kerry started her career in the advertising industry with the Clemenger's & George Patterson agencies. She continued in the private health sector, creating the biggest private hospital chain. She now holds a management position in a corporate hotel in Carlton.

She joined the Rotary Club of Albert Park in 2008 and was awarded the Royce Abbey Award in 2009. After taking on various Board positions, she was President of the Club in 2011/12. Kerry is also leader of the Women in Rotary Network, with a mission to increase the percentage of women members from 17% to 20%.

Board Meeting Attendance Record

Director	Number of meetings eligible to attend	Number of meetings attended
T. Brown	5	4
B.Hickman	5	5
K. Kornhauser	3	3
D.Smyth	5	5
K.Strain	5	4
K. Swanton	5	5
N.Thomas	5	5

PR & FUNDRAISING

Website

The website was redeveloped to improve the content and to make it more accessible through Google. Further developments are planned for the coming year.

Publicity to Rotary and Other Community Organisations

Violence Free Families took a stand at the Annual District Conference of Rotary in March at the Convention Centre in Melbourne. This generated a high level of enquiry and led to invitations to address more Rotary Clubs.

Rotary District Endorsement

Last year, 2010/11, the Rotary Club of Brighton received the annual Rotary District Significant Achievement Award for its family violence prevention work, recognising its leading role in the Foundation. It received the Community Service Award at the same time.

During 2011/12, the District, which contains 69 clubs throughout a large part of Victoria, gave its official recognition and support for the work of the Foundation by designating Violence Free Families as a District Endorsed Project for the next three years.

Rotary Club Fund Raising

The main contributor among the Rotary Clubs was the Brighton Club of Victoria, donating \$30,000 (\$5,000 of this being from their 2010/11 year) and the Rotary Club of Albert Park which raised \$8,000 in support of Violence Free Families.

We are most grateful to both of these clubs, and to all of the other clubs that made donations, bringing the total from Rotary to \$40,200.

Other Fund Raising

Philanthropic contributions came from the Collier Charitable Fund (\$20,000) and our corporate benefactor from previous years completed its pledge with a further \$15,000. The Foundation values this support most highly.

Commonwealth Grant

As mentioned above, the Foundation applied for funding from the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to support its longitudinal study with Monash University. We are delighted to receive a grant totalling \$100,000 over two years, with the first instalment of \$50,000 received during this reporting period.

Breakdown of Revenue

Income for the year was \$136,000. The pie chart shows that the Foundation had a better spread of sources of income than last year, but the income base remains fragile.

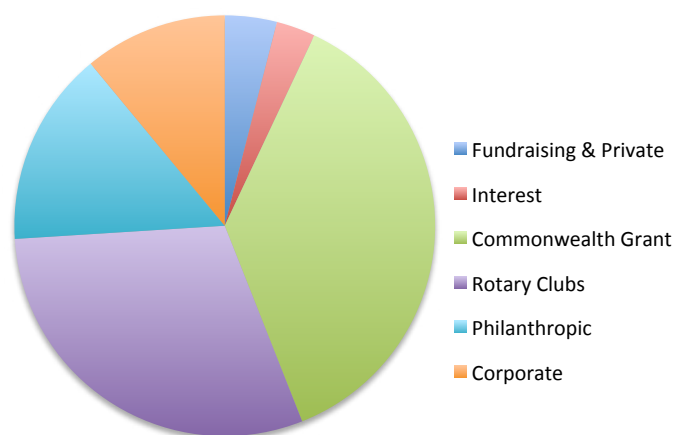


Figure 2: Violence Free Families Revenue Breakdown, 2011/2012

SUPPORT

Rotary Support

The Foundation relies heavily on Rotary volunteers and their support is vital to realise our vision.

A committee of 14 individuals from many professional and business backgrounds, drawn from nine Rotary clubs, is in place. Its inputs have included the preparation of a Strategic Plan and work on each of the projects described earlier.

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 by the Australian Women in Rotary network.

Community Support

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

- Monash University Department of Social Work.
- LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services; the CEO is a Director of Violence Free Families.
- Social Welfare Agencies including LifeWorks, Relationships Australia (WA), Child and Family Services Ballarat, MonashLink, and others who are participating in the long term research study
- Buxton Real Estate, for provision of advertising signboards for the Snow Ball fund raiser.
- Advice on web delivered behaviour change program from Monash University Faculty of Medicine and Nursing e-learning Division.



- Snapsite Pty. Ltd, website development and listing.
- Ms Kim Edwards, Marketing and Communications Officer, LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services, design and other assistance with Annual Report.

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 This committee includes members from the following clubs: Brighton, Brighton North, Brighton Beach, Albert Park, Balwyn, Diamond Creek, Glen Eira, Melbourne and Tullamarine.

- The Academic Reference Committee. A diverse committee of nine members includes 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.

THE FUTURE

Violence Free Families believes that male violence is the most significant element in the complex and multi-faceted problem of family violence. It 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 therefore advocate for 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, community education and more.

We note the model of the Family Violence Prevention Fund in the USA, which has been established for over thirty years and has been influential at government 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 of achieving our objectives more fully.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL RESULTS

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2012

	Note	2012 \$	2011 \$
Revenues from ordinary activities	1	136120	95541
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax		63862	71767
Total comprehensive income		63862	71767

BALANCE SHEET AT 30 JUNE 2012

		\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank (General Account)		80453	6777
Cash at bank (DGR Account)		94005	88856
Receivables		539	0
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		174997	95633
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment		0	0
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		0	0
TOTAL ASSETS	2	174997	95663
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provision for research contract	3	34503	19000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		34503	19000
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Directors' Loans		0	0
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		0	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES		34503	19000
NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)		140494	76633
COMPANY EQUITY		\$	\$
Retained Profits brought forward		76633	4865
Retained profits 2011/12		63682	71767
TOTAL EQUITY		140494	76633

NOTES

1. See details under "Fundraising" in main report.
2. The Directors have determined that the Company should hold reserves sufficient to guarantee payments for the research contract for at least 18 months ahead at any given time
3. Provision for payments under research contract with Monash University.



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