



violence free families

THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014

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violence free families

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

The Foundation is an ambitious and visionary undertaking.

Our fundamental belief is 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 Violence Free Families will become a household name —and a reality —for all families in Australia.

www.violencefreefamilies.org.au

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Violence Free Families continued its focus on developing new and better men's behaviour change programs. These are small-group programs that run for a minimum of 26 contact hours under the guidance of trained facilitators. They are considered to be one of the the most effective ways of helping families by improving men's behaviour.

Significant progress was made this year in developing a world-first online, multi-media behaviour change program for violent men. Our established research program with Monash University into the long term results of conventional men's behaviour change programs continued with data collection and early analysis.

The Online Behavior Change Program

This project progressed from contract awards in August 2013 through development of materials to the completion of the first 14-week field trial in June. The project consortium, including LifeWorks Relationships and Education Services (for technical services and delivery), Gippsland TAFE (for e-learning expertise and experience in online suicide prevention programs) and Trusted Impact Pty Ltd (for information security services), worked with dedication and enthusiasm. The University of Melbourne is evaluating the trials on an ongoing basis. The initial results, while too early to be statistically significant, have been most encouraging, and the concept shows considerable potential.

Research

Agencies in three States are participating in this research, giving us an opportunity to compare the different types of program used

in different States. The study will continue for several more years, as we follow up men who have completed programs to see whether the impact is durable. While the numbers are a little below expectations, information from the early analysis, if confirmed, indicate a need for significant changes to established programs and surrounding support systems.

Funding and Community Support

Once again, we record our grateful thanks to the Rotary movement for its support and high-level endorsement of our programs. Representatives of Violence Free Families addressed numerous Rotary Clubs and conferences throughout the year. We also shared a promotional stand with Women in Rotary at the 25,000-delegate Rotary International Convention in Sydney, attracting a high degree of interest from both Australian and foreign delegates.

Funding from Rotary, philanthropic institutions and concerned individuals has made our work possible and we greatly appreciate their contributions.

Our Team

The dedicated work of our directors and the community support shows the depth of concern about family violence and its prevention. All of our work is done by volunteers in a most committed and professional way, leading to the solid progress detailed in this report and allowing us to minimise overheads to unavoidable essentials.

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

Dr David Smyth, Chairman

VISION AND RATIONALE

Vision

Our vision is summed up in our trading 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, have the right to live in homes free of violence and trauma. The potential for community benefit is enormous.

Rationale

Family violence is:

- witnessed or experienced by one child in four in the nation. Children suffer, whether as victims or witnesses of violence
- 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 \$10bn 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 1.5 million children in Australia are affected.



While much media attention is focused on the tip of the volcano, Violence Free Families is concerned that the community revulsion at the terrible events commonly reported should not result in neglect of the huge numbers of families living with lower but still highly destructive levels of violence.



HISTORY

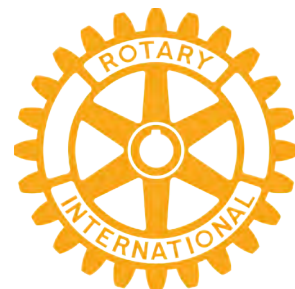
The Family Violence Prevention Foundation of Australia, trading as Violence Free Families, was established in 2009 to build on the previous 14 years of experience in family violence prevention activities by the Rotary Club of Brighton, Victoria.

From 1995 to 2002 the Club provided men's behaviour change programs in the Bayside area through "Bayside Family Support", a non-profit company established for that purpose. In 2002 it transferred the operation of this service to prominent Melbourne counselling agency LifeWorks Relationships 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 benefitted 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 a commitment that has now been sustained over 19 years, and is engaging wider community support. Over that time, over \$900,000 has been raised, largely from philanthropic institutions, Rotary fundraising activities and individual donors. The benefit to the community has been most rewarding.



CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Many men in need of help cannot access a face-to-face group behaviour change program. This includes men who live in rural areas, shift workers, and those who live in areas without programs

An Online Men's Behaviour Change Program

In an age where technology is used for long-range medicine, research, and education of many kinds, when most households have access to the Internet, and with the National Broadband Network rolling out, we are embracing the opportunity to make use of this technology for men's behaviour change programs.

Violence Free Families has re-worked the conventional face-to-face group program model for the new medium, using not only the web, but other technology as well, such as videos, emails, SMS messages and phone calls. The challenge of loss of direct body language communication between the program facilitators and participants in the group has been met by exciting and creative adaptations, and the new program also pays special attention to privacy and partner safety.

The concept of web delivery of a behaviour change program is a world first as far as we know.

It has all of the features of a face-to-face group program, with the exception of the need to attend in person. The physical groups are replaced by online groups, adapting techniques developed by universities for virtual classrooms, and using other techniques

that have been found effective for public health learning. All of the usual safeguards for the safety of family members are taken, with extra measures in view of the trial status of the online programs.

The program covers all of the aspects of conventional face-to-face programs, and goes beyond them in some respects.

Violence Free Families put together a talented team to develop this new program and run field trials. The team has three members:

- LifeWorks Relationships Counselling and Education Services (based in Melbourne), which is taking the leading role in coordinating program development and delivering the trials;
- Federation Training (incorporating Gippsland Institute of Technical and Further Education), who are moderating sessions and contributing their expertise in distance learning and experience of an online suicide prevention program; and
- Trusted Impact Pty Ltd, an information security firm that is ensuring safeguards for confidential interactions. Clients of Trusted Impact include numerous Government bodies and blue chip companies.

The University of Melbourne is evaluating the trials on an ongoing basis, assessing both the processes used in the program and the outcomes achieved. Its report on the first trial has now been received and it shows excellent results. A summary is in the box on this page and the full report is available on our website.

Two more trials of the new program are planned for 2014/15.

Upon successful completion of the trial phase, the new program will open up new opportunities to assist people experiencing or dealing with family violence. In the future, the online program could be adapted for indigenous communities, other specific ethnic and religious communities and alternative programs.

The Rotary Club of Balwyn has taken a keen interest in the concept and has provided generous financial support.

First Trial of Online Men's Behaviour Change Program Gets Big Tick

The University of Melbourne's evaluation report on the first trial of the new online men's behaviour change program says that the men participating, their partners and the program facilitators were unanimous in expressing a high degree of satisfaction with the outcome.

Key features of the evaluation were:

- The program meets or exceeds all requirements for the usual face-to-face programs.
- Men felt comfortable in the online space and were able to open up about their problems more freely than if they had been face-to-face.
- Partners' feedback was positive and no safety issues were identified.
- Facilitators believed that the lack of visual contact with men did not affect the outcome adversely and agreed that it "felt just like a face-to-face program".
- The technology worked well, with very few difficulties.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Research Study into the Long Term Effectiveness of Male Family Violence Prevention Programs in Australia

This ambitious study is examining the results of behaviour change programs for violent men over the long term. These programs are believed to be one of the most effective ways of helping men to stop their violence but no large scale systematic study of them has ever been conducted in Australia.

Violence Free Families is raising the funds for this study and has commissioned two very highly experienced and qualified researchers to lead it. They are supported by a talented and diverse academic reference committee.

Independence of the Enquiry

The study is intellectually and financially independent of any provider or sponsor of programs with the exception of LifeWorks, which is providing some professional advice and support.

What is the study about?

The study is assessing the short and long term results of men's behaviour change programs. Data is collected through a series of questionnaires to participants and their partners. Additional data is coming from interviews and web data collection. Partner assessments are an important part of the study plan.

A total of seven agencies, from Victoria, NSW and WA, are participating.

Why are we doing this study?

The following key results are expected from the study:

- better quality programs through comparing the results of the different types of program in current use.
- improved funding for programs (from both Government and community sources) because decision makers can have greater confidence that the money will be well spent. However, if the results are negative, fundamental re-thinking is required.

The financial value of men's behaviour change programs seems to be poorly understood and they are chronically under-funded. Long waiting lists are normal and this is, effectively, denial of service because men lose interest. 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. It has been warmly welcomed by participating agencies and, especially, their field staff.

The need for more research into intervention programs has been recognised in the Federal Government's policy on domestic violence

prevention, issued in April 2009[1] and was further supported by its 2012 survey of agencies providing programs by IBIS Research. The study addresses the top five priorities of agencies for research, as identified by the IBIS study and has been partly funded by a Commonwealth Government grant.

Who is doing the study?

The lead researchers are:

- Professor Emeritus Thea Brown, former Professor of Social Work and Research Professor at Monash University, and
- Dr Catherine Flynn, Senior Lecturer in Social Work at Monash University, with special responsibilities for honours studies.

They are supported by a reference committee that brings together a cross-section of members with a wide range of relevant skills and knowledge to provide significant input and advice. It includes:

- three program managers from agencies located in several states,
- a legal expert with human research ethics committee experience,
- a medical practitioner with special interest in family medicine,
- an agency chief executive,
- a professional manager with a research background.

The committee has also consulted international experts on forensic psychology and survey questionnaire design.

Ethical considerations

The study design has been examined in detail and cleared by the human resource ethics committees of Monash University, the Victorian Department of Justice and five agencies.

Web survey

As part of the study, we are inviting the opinions of partners and men with first hand experience of behaviour change programs, sometimes known as anger management programs. Readers of this report who have had such an experience, or know of someone who has, are invited to complete the questionnaire on our website.

[1] Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, *The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women – Immediate Government Actions* Canberra, April 2009.

THE DIRECTORS



The Board: Barry Hickman, Kaye Swanton, Tom Crampton, Kerry Kornhauser, Kate Strain, David Smyth, Norm Thomas (Absent: Thea Brown)

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 a former Director of Girrawheen Aged Care. After a career as a telecommunications engineer and senior postal executive, he served for 17 years as a UN and World Bank expert on postal legislation and business planning.

Professor Emeritus 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, MAICD, 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, a company director and is a member of the Research Committee.



Mr Barry Hickman

Company Director and former Chief Executive of CI Studios, a promotional photography company.

He is a former Director, Community Services and President Elect of the Rotary Club of Brighton. Through Rotary, he has led fund raising activities, acted as a mentor for the White Lion Foundation for youth in trouble with the law and shared leadership of an international award-winning water and sanitation project in Cambodia.



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 President of the Rotary Club of Brighton North.



Ms Kerry Kornhauser

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 serving in 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 30%.



Mr Tom Crampton

BA, MBA, is the Managing Director of Trusted Impact Pty Ltd, a specialised consulting firm focused on information security. He has more than 25 years of management consulting, technology and business leadership experience working throughout Asia, North America, Europe and Australia. Tom is a member of the Rotary Club of Melbourne and was awarded the Rotary Royce Abbey Award in 2014.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & FUNDRAISING

Website

Our website was further developed during the year by Rotary volunteers and more work is planned.

Publicity to Rotary and Other Community Organisations

Violence Free Families presented to two large Rotary conferences early in 2014 and gratifying levels of interest were shown. It also took a stand, shared with "Women in Rotary", at Rotary International's 25,000 attendee Convention in Sydney in May. This event was a rare opportunity to showcase our work internationally and resulted in a great deal of interest, with over 100 club enquiries received.

There were also many addresses to individual Rotary Clubs and negotiations are continuing with some of them to develop joint programs. Several donations were received, for which VFF was most grateful.

Rotary District Endorsement

Rotary District 9800, which contains 70 clubs serving a large part of Victoria, continued its official recognition and support for the work of the Foundation by designating Violence Free Families as a District Endorsed program.

Fund Raising

Fund raising continued to be difficult. Our total of \$155,000 was again slightly ahead of the previous year, and again a tribute to our many hard-working supporters. This figure includes

deferred income, net accrued income, cash income and expenses for the online program paid on our behalf.

The chart below shows the breakdown of sources of income. A second significant contribution from an anonymous philanthropic institution was most gratefully received and allowed us to extend the contract for our long-term study.

Rotary Clubs continued to provide most valuable support. A total of \$91,845 was received, including \$55,000 from the Rotary Club of Balwyn to pay for expenses of the online men's behaviour change program development and trials. Women in Rotary (sponsored by the Rotary Club of Albert Park), contributed \$15,600 from the proceeds of its 2014 International Women's Day Breakfast.

Breakdown of Revenue

Cash income for the year was \$154,806.70, including deferred income. The pie chart shows that the Foundation had a better spread of sources of income than last year, but the income base remains fragile.



Information Stand at Rotary President's Training Course

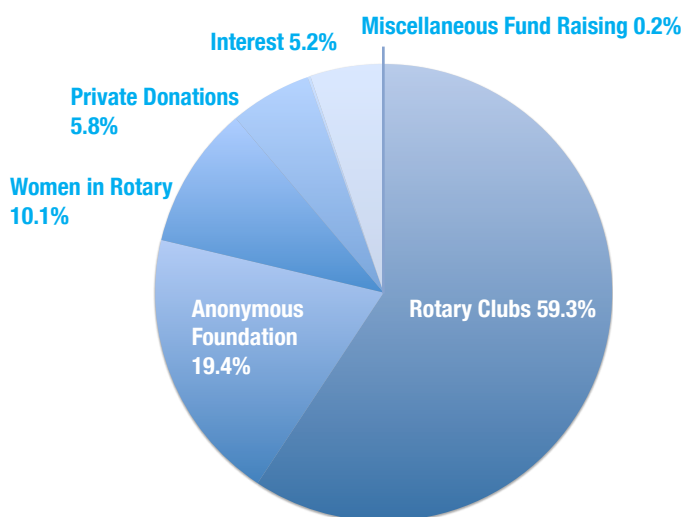


Figure 1: Violence Free Families Revenue Breakdown (cash basis), 2013/14

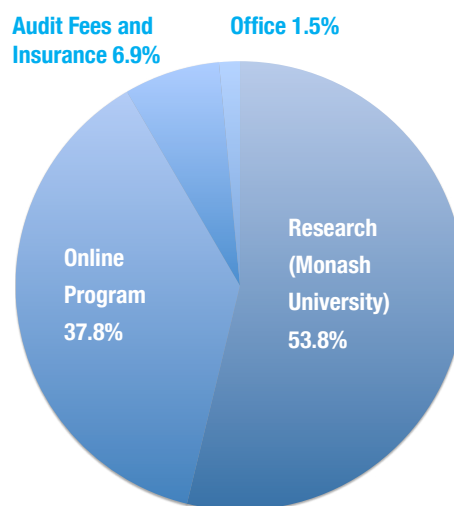


Figure 2: Expenditure (cash basis)

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

VFF continues to rely heavily on Rotary volunteers and their support is vital to realising our vision. A committee of 14 individuals from many professional and business backgrounds, drawn from nine Rotary clubs, assists with various aspects.

A number of non Rotarians who share our vision also help. We do not have any paid staff.

We have been pleased to welcome strong recognition by the Australian Women in Rotary network for the third year. Its outstanding International Women's Day Breakfasts at Crown Casino in Melbourne attracted just on 1300 attendees in 2014.

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 also a Director of Violence Free Families. It played a leading and coordinating role in the online men's behaviour change project.
- Social Welfare Agencies including LifeWorks, Child and Family Services

Ballarat, Relationships Australia (NSW), Catholic Care (NSW), Relationships Australia (WA), MonashLink and others who are participating in the long term research study.

- Advice on the online behaviour change project from Federation Training (incorporating Gippsland TAFE) and Trusted Impact Pty Ltd, South Melbourne.
- The University of Melbourne Centre for Program Evaluation, Graduate School of Management for advice and evaluation of the online behaviour change program trials.
- The Baker Foundation.
- Streamscape Pty Ltd for website management.
- Ms Justine Dalla Riva, Manager, Marketing and Communications, LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services, design and other assistance with this Annual Report.
- Mr Stuart McArthur and Ms Rebecca Heitbaum for management of the website and Facebook content.

We record our sincere thanks to all of these contributors to our work.



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 the allocation of greater resources, especially in view of the social and economic costs to the community. In this connection, we welcomed the establishment of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration's Inquiry into Family Violence late in the reporting year.

At the program level, for the near future, we will focus on the projects already commenced and a new education initiative under development.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL RESULTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 JUNE 2014

	Notes	2014	2013
CURRENT ASSETS		\$	\$
General Current Account (GEN)		18,388	3,388
Public Fund (DGR) Current Account		20,097	5,127
Receivables (GEN Account)		0	20,000
Fixed Deposits (GEN)		12,000	92,486
Fixed Deposits (DGR)		134,335	120,045
Accrued Income (GEN)		63	429
Accrued Income (GEN)		1,256	2,083
TOTAL		186,140	243,559
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property Plant & Equipment at cost		0	0
TOTAL		0	0
TOTAL ASSETS		186,140	243,559
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provision for Contracts	1,2	67,236	36,845
Deferred income GEN		5,000	73,025
Deferred Income DGR	3	40,000	24,871
TOTAL		112,236	24,871
Non Current Liabilities		0	0
TOTAL		0	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES		112,236	134,741
NET ASSETS/LIABILITIES		73,904	108,817
COMPANY EQUITY			
Retained Profits brought forward		108,817	140,494
Retained Profits this year		-34,914	-31,677
TOTAL COMPANY EQUITY		73,904	108,817

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME STATEMENT

	Notes	2014	2013
		\$	\$
Total revenues from ordinary activities	4	126,171	52,503
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax		-34,914	-31,677
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		-34,914	-31,677

Notes

1. The directors have determined that no contracts should be entered into without the necessary assets in hand or firmly promised.
2. Contractual obligations to Monash University and other contractors for research and online projects.
3. Income received for specific projects that would be returned if no spent on the designated project.
4. See details under "Fundraising" report.



violence **free** families

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ABN 97 140 937 382

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