



Edition 6, April 2016

WRISC News

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE

WRISC's response to report and recommendations

The Royal Commission into Family Violence released its report on March 29 with a list of 227 recommendations which the Victorian State Government has stated it will implement in full. Speaking on behalf of WRISC, Executive Officer Libby Jewson says she welcomes all the recommendations. A key theme running through the report is the need for organisations to work together and coordinate their responses to family violence in order to provide optimum support to women and their children. Libby says WRISC looks forward to the opportunity to respond to the Royal Commission's recommendations together with other organisations in the Central Highlands region.

In order to transform the way we respond to family violence in Victoria, new ways of thinking and collaborating will be required. New approaches need to be guided by and take into account the following:

- Reflecting the experience of victims
- A more sustained focus on supporting children and young people
- All services must be responsive to victims' needs
- Services must work better together
- A sustained focus on effective perpetrator interventions
- Moving beyond a crisis response
- Family violence must be a core area of responsibility for government
- Development and use of technological solutions
- Harnessing community effort

Another key theme running through the Royal Commission's report is that both prevention of and response to family violence is the responsibility of the whole Victorian community. For too long, family violence has been regarded as a private matter, hidden behind closed doors and the responsibility of the individuals involved. The Royal Commission has at last put it to the Victorian community that we all bear responsibility for challenging, and ultimately changing, the underlying values, beliefs and behaviours that underpin family violence, and fully supporting the needs of women and their children as they navigate their journey forward from living with family violence. It is heartening to see the Victorian State Government backing up its support of the recommendations with an initial injection of funds of half a billion dollars.



Facts about Family Violence

- Violence in family and intimate relationships is mostly committed by men against women
- Violence and abuse is about power and control. The person using the violence is seeking to control their partner or family member's behaviour or choices. Using violence is always a choice made by the person using violence.
- Violence and abuse of any form is unacceptable and a breach of human rights.

Girls' Art Therapy Group

The group ran for 7 weeks in Term 1 at the studio, WRISC. The participants were girls aged 8-14 years. The overall goals were to allow the girls to feel included and comfortable to share some of their thoughts. This was done in a relaxed atmosphere with the use of art materials, and was inclusive of some relaxation times.



"I know it is ok to make mistakes"



"I think of hearts and love"

Based on psychotherapeutic models of art therapy, this group continued to incorporate both therapy and creativity. Art activities created a means of feeling into work and emotions, with use of paint, pastels, pens, clay, collage and emotion cards. This helped to fulfil a personal creation of expressive works. The use of mindfulness relaxation was also effective in calming both body and mind.

WRISC acknowledges the support of United Way and The Ballarat

Foundation for making this group possible.



"My Dreamcatcher is holding my good dreams in"

ANROWS CONFERENCE

In February, Libby, Anita and Alison attended the ANROWS Inaugural National Research Conference on Violence against Women and their Children. The conference was an opportunity for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers to share their experiences, ideas and advice on how research can drive policy development and service responses.

Over the three days, WRISC's three delegates participated in a range of presentations and workshops, including:

- An expert panel on how to communicate your message and lobby
- Technology innovation for keeping women and their children safe, including apps
- The research of Dr David Mandel—a multilayered approach to family violence prevention
- Victoria Police—following up breaches of intervention orders
- Community led responses to family violence in the Aboriginal Community—advocacy and empowerment for Aboriginal women in their communities
- National burden of disease study examining the impact of violence against women
- Research on perpetrator interventions

Thanks to Sue Clout, Principal Strategic Adviser, Central Highlands Family Violence Committee, for her generous donation of giving our delegates the opportunity to attend.



ANROWS

Inaugural National Research Conference
on Violence against Women and their Children



WRISC exists to change the lives of women and children affected by family violence. We promote safe homes, strong families and respectful relationships.

125 Eureka St, Ballarat

(03) 5333 3666

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INCREASING DEMAND FOR WRISC'S SERVICES DRIVES SEARCH FOR NEW PREMISES

Following the release of the report of the Royal commission into Family Violence on March 29, 2016, the need for WRISC to find new, larger premises has become even more pressing.

More physical space is necessary to allow WRISC to respond to the ever growing level of requests for support in Ballarat and the surrounding region.

WRISC Board Vice-president, Julie McMahon, states that WRISC envisages the need to employ new support staff and will need a fit for purpose space that will accommodate staff and clients.

As a result of the Royal Commission's recommendations, the sector is expected to see a boost in funding as well as a boost in awareness of the issue of family violence, which will in turn most likely see a rise in the number of people seeking access to services.

WRISC Executive Officer, Libby Jewson, explains that the increasing demand for WRISC's services doesn't allow us to respond how we would like in terms of intake, short term response, medium term response and case management in the current premises.

However, WRISC is hampered financially in terms of finding the right building. Meetings have been held to discuss the funding problems with both sides of politics. With the state budget a week away, together with the funding boost expected as a result of the Royal Commission's recommendations, WRISC is hopeful of a positive outcome.

This report contains information from the original article by Matthew Dixon in The Courier, April 5, 2016. Read the full article [here](#).

Thank you to our recent donors/sponsors

Kind and generous donations from organisations, private philanthropists and various grants enable us to continue to service the increasing number of requests for help. We sincerely thank our loyal and generous supporters:

- Toiletries donated by **Alfredton Rotary**
- Bunnies made by **Val Bedggood**
- Blankets and art smocks for the children's program donated by **Soroptimists**
- Sanitary items organised by **Sarah Hibberd**
- Care packs donated by **Ballarat Anglicare**
- Care packs, sanitary items and Christmas special packs donated by **Share the Dignity**
- Care packs donated by **CWA of Victoria, Ballarat Dinner Branch**
- Games donated by **Exchange, Meet & Refer Ladies Network**



Can you help?

If you would like to make a contribution, our bank details are:

BSB: 063-507 Acct: 10042491 Name: WRISC Family Violence Support

OR

Donate online via PayPal [here](#).

Donations of \$2 or more to WRISC Family Violence Support are tax deductible.



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Thank you and farewell to Aboriginal Program Worker, Asha

WRISC would like to take the opportunity to thank Asha publically for her hard work and dedication during her time with us. Asha began at WRISC on student placement, after which she gained employment where she successfully undertook a variety of roles. Asha then progressed to the position of Aboriginal Program worker, a role in which she excelled. Asha has decided the time is right to move on to new challenges and will be moving to the Northern Territory to take up her new role of Aboriginal caseworker/field worker. We wish her every success in her new endeavour. Thanks again, Asha!

NEW CRAFT GROUP STARTING MAY 2016

For women who have experienced family violence or sexual assault

Run by WRISC Family Violence Support together with Ballarat CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault)

Please see flyer below for details.

CRAFT GROUP



For women who have experienced family violence or sexual assault

Bernadette

**Wrisc Family Violence
Support**

PH: 53333666



Rebecca

**Centre Against Sexual
Assault**

PH: 53203933

Starting May 2016

*Stress and anxiety relief/wellbeing

*Self esteem

*Skill building, creativity

*Importance of self care, fun and socialising

Where: Wrisc Family Violence Support, 125 Eureka St Ballarat East

When: Tuesdays 10am—12

Contact: Bernadette (Wrisc) or Rebecca (CASA) for further information.

