

Aware

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

Special “good practice” edition

Welcome to the special “good practice” edition of *ACSSA Aware*, the newsletter of the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault. We are keen, in this special one-off edition, to highlight examples of good practice in service provision from each state and territory, in the spirit of sharing information and experiences across the sector.

Sharing “good practice”

In this addition we wanted to cover a diverse range of initiatives, and asked representatives from the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence to select programs or projects that were particularly innovative. Of course, with all the wonderful work being done by services throughout the country, there were a myriad of good programs to choose from.

However, for the purposes of this special edition newsletter, we have been able to document one program from each state and territory that services felt not only reflected good practice, but also would be important to profile and share with other services in different parts of the country. We will, however, continue our tradition of profiling examples of good practice in regular editions of *Aware*, so in time we hope to cover many of the high-quality initiatives being carried out by services and policy makers across Australia.

The good practice initiatives presented in this edition have been assessed according to whether they meet the following criteria. They each respectively:

- take account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault;
- position diversity as key to the development, understanding and delivery of good practice models;
- contribute to improving systems’ responses to sexual assault, or are directed at preventing sexual assault;
- demonstrate a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault;
- have a clearly defined conceptual framework;
- include processes of accountability and evaluation; and
- demonstrate a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use).

After each state and territory nominated the program or project they would like to have included in the special edition newsletter, ACSSA researchers made direct contact with the specific project workers or organisations involved. Each organisation was then asked to complete ACSSA’s “good practice questionnaire”. In the questionnaire, organisations: describe the program, its aims and objectives, the area it services, its target groups, how long it has operated and so forth; as well as the program’s philosophical framework, the research upon which it draws, the resources produced through the program, and the process through which it is evaluated. The organisation is then asked to nominate which criteria of good practice they believe the program meets. The information provided in this edition was therefore dependent on the information provided by the services themselves. Where appropriate, additional information was sought from individual workers or from those who could detail how the project was developed or established.



Australian Government

Australian Institute
of Family Studies
Australian Centre for the
Study of Sexual Assault

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault aims to improve access to current information on sexual assault in order to assist policy makers and other interested in this area to develop evidence-based strategies to prevent, respond to, and ultimately reduce the incidence of sexual assault.

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault is funded by the Office for Women, Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services, through the National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault. The Centre is hosted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

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We have presented each program in two parts: the first is a checklist of the program's good practice elements as nominated by the organisation or service responsible for the program; the second is a description of the various aspects of the program. Following the presentation of the programs is a table outlining contact details for further information on each program, research upon which the program draws, program outcomes in terms of publications, pamphlets, and funding sources. The programs detailed in the body of the newsletter are arranged alphabetically according to state/territory.

This special edition is by no means the "be all and end all" of good practice in service responses to sexual assault. ACSSA's online Good Practice Database is constantly growing, and can be accessed at www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/gpdb/goodpractice.html. This database is a national collection of programs and/or approaches that aim to improve our understanding of, as well as our responses to, sexual assault. We hope that the database will be used to inform the work of other service providers who are developing or refining best practice models in responding to sexual assault.

We encourage service providers, policy and program developers, educators and trainers, researchers and others working to address sexual violence to contribute information about their own projects and programs to our Good Practice Database. ACSSA is happy to assist those with time and resource constraints to complete an application for entry.

Submissions can be made by completing a brief questionnaire, and are assessed by ACSSA research staff against certain criteria (outlined above). The questionnaire can be completed online at the above web address, or downloaded as a Word document. Alternatively, call ACSSA on (03) 9214 7888 to have a copy mailed to you. Questionnaires may be returned to ACSSA at the Australian Institute of Family Studies, 300 Queen Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000. Email: acssa@aifs.gov.au. Fax: (03) 9214 7839.

As always, ACSSA remains keen to receive feedback on how we can better meet the needs of those committed to working against sexual assault, so please continue to provide us with your comments on current or future publications. If this is the first issue of *Aware* you've read, earlier editions can be requested via email or by returning the form on the back page of this issue. And don't forget, all our publications are available online at <http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa>

ACSSA PUBLICATIONS

As there are so few forums in which those working in the field can share information with one another, we are very keen to accept articles for publication within the newsletter (we now accept articles up to 5000 words). News of conferences, training, research projects, book reviews and the like are also welcomed (up to 1500 words). If you would like to contribute an article or review to ACSSA *Aware*, you can access our "contributor's guidelines" from the website or contact ACSSA directly.

Access our online Good Practice Database at:
www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/gpdb/goodpractice.html

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Views expressed in the Centre's publications are those of individual authors and may not necessarily reflect ACSSA or Institute policy.

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Good practice around Australia

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care (FAMSAC)

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Has a clearly defined conceptual framework
- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Positions diversity as key to the development, understanding and delivery of good practice models
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (i.e. other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)
- ✓ Aims for postgraduate training for all service providers
- ✓ Established a system for clinical peer review and quality assurance

The Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care (FAMSAC) service is co-located within Canberra Sexual Health Centre at the Canberra Hospital. FAMSAC is an ongoing, multi-faceted new program serving the Australian Capital Territory and nearby New South Wales centres.

The primary aim of FAMSAC is to provide high quality forensic and medical care to people who have experienced sexual assault. Staff strive to provide evidenced-based forensic and medical care to victims, while treating survivors and those supporting them with compassion and respect. This includes allowing people to choose the gender of the examining medical practitioner, as well as providing streamlined therapeutic and forensic medical procedures with appropriate follow-up.

All forensic, medical treatment and counselling services are available to victims at their initial contact with the health system. This means that clients who have experienced sexual assault undergo only one intimate physical examination with counselling support offered by the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre. Part of FAMSAC staff's commitment to good clinical practice and the implementation of evidence-based practice is through the provision of medical and forensic care combined with counselling services, and in initiating follow-up of clients within 48 hours of the initial consultation and, with consent, to follow them up until 12 weeks. To date, FAMSAC has supported 323 individuals following sexual assault.

Clinical services are supported by pamphlets on "forensic evidence", "rape-related pregnancy", "coping after sexual assault", "supporting a woman after sexual assault", "information for parents whose teenage has experienced sexual assault/rape", "supporting a man after sexual assault", and a pamphlet on "your rights". These resources are based on those developed by staff from Yarrow Place in South Australia.

In addition to providing clinical services FAMSAC offers the community and other service providers awareness and education programs. FAMSAC clinicians have presented aspects of sexual assault care and information on the FAMSAC service at the Australasian Sexual Health Conferences and published articles in peer-reviewed journals. FAMSAC also offers financial support to doctors who provide clinical services in order for them to undertake graduate studies in forensic and sexual assault medicine.

The service is evaluated on two levels, firstly by external stakeholders such as sexual assault and health services, and secondly by clients, via written evaluation following attendance. For the stakeholder ►

evaluation, a postal survey to all involved external services is undertaken annually. FAMSAC has received 68 survey responses over the last three years. Comments have been consistent and positive. Several suggestions on ways to improve community awareness of the service have been implemented. For clients, an anonymous questionnaire is given to them at the 12-week follow-up visit. On completion, this can be placed in the drop box in the front of the clinic or posted for return to the service. Sixty five questionnaires have been completed over the past three years. Data from these questionnaires has again been positive and used to improve the service. A comprehensive report on the past three years of service is available from FAMSAC (for contact details see table on page 13 and 14).

NEW SOUTH WALES

Rape Crisis Online

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

Rape Crisis Online is a therapeutic-response program for victims of sexual assault. It offers an alternative way for callers to access New South Wales Rape Crisis Centre counsellors by providing a real time, online, person-to-person crisis intervention service accessed via the Centre's website. The project started in April 2005 and the Internet site will go live in July 2005 at: <http://www.nswrapecrisis.com.au/>. The program's target group is women and children. The development of Rape Crisis Online has been based on the experiences of the existing online component of Kids Helpline Australia and the New South Wales Rape Crisis Centre telephone service. Kids Helpline is an early intervention service, and three per cent of their online contacts are considered crisis contacts. Sexual assault is considered a crisis contact.

Research indicates that young people feel comfortable in an online environment, so it is envisaged that this project will increase access to counselling particularly for young people. Additionally the family computer is usually situated in a more private part of the house rather than the living area where the telephone, and the rest of the family, are often located.

Online access will be for one to two contacts only, after which callers will be encouraged to make telephone contact with the service. Online contact gives the person the opportunity to "check the Centre out" before committing to the more personal voice-to-voice contact. Information will be provided and counsellors will encourage callers to overcome the shame, fear and other barriers many victims experience and to seek the help they have a right to.

As with all New South Wales Rape Crisis Centre services, Rape Crisis Online is based on feminist principles and aims to be holistic, empowering, accountable and accessible. The Centre operates from a trauma response model. The project has been developed specifically to increase access to counselling services.

One way in which the Rape Crisis Online service reflects good practice is by taking into account contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault. Research indicates that 65 per cent of people under 25 years use the Internet as their first source of information gathering in relation to health. Rape Crisis Online builds on the 25,000 plus hits to the Centre's website by providing a way for visitors to make contact directly with a counsellor. It also includes a process of accountability and evaluation, in that an internal evaluation has been planned with measures of success being assessed according to the following criteria:

- an increase in the number of callers who make contact for the first time;
- an increase in the number of callers who indicate they may speak with Police;
- number of callers who indicate they would not have made initial contact by phone; and
- service user feedback.

Respect Relate Stop Rape

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Positions diversity as key to the development, understanding and delivery of good practice models
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation

“Respect Relate Stop Rape” is an ongoing community awareness/education program in the Casuarina local community in the Northern Territory. It is run by the Ruby Gaea Darwin Centre Against Rape and targets young women and men in Years 9 to 10 of high school. The program operates over four in-school sessions and aims to empower young people to break the silence around sexual violence. It gives participants the knowledge and skills to better understand sexual violence and to stay safe.

The program is for Year 9 to 10 students in schools, and is conducted by two outside facilitators. The students are divided into same-sex groups for the first three sessions, with a mixed boys and girls group for the final session.

The program aims to:

- support young people to break the silence that surrounds sexual violence;
- raise young people’s awareness and understanding of the social context of sexual violence;
- help young people to recognise sexual violence and promote the values and skills to help stay safe; and
- to promote support structures so young people can get help when they need it.

The objectives of the program are to:

- create a climate of trust and empowerment;
- encourage participation from students;
- develop student understanding of what sexual violence is and its long and short-term effects;
- provide strategies for recognising sexual violence and develop skills in building healthy relationships, keeping safe and accessing appropriate support; and
- provide referrals for getting information, help and support.

The program is grounded in feminist philosophy and informed by feminist practice. Inherent to the program’s design is the idea that feminist philosophy and practice is vitally relevant to young men and women.

The program uses the traditional tools of social deconstruction and gives them contemporary relevance. The success of the program relies on the young people feeling safe and supported. It aims to create an environment where young people are free to examine and to challenge the relationship between gender, power and violence.

The original program was 12 months in development and extensively researched. In 2003 it was independently evaluated by a youth worker using action research, in consultation with facilitators who delivered the program, participating schools, teachers and students. The method used was a written evaluation following attendance. Feedback on each session was given by students and by facilitators. The data gathered was used to inform the redesign of the program to what it is today. Evaluation is ongoing and reflective to ensure it meets the needs of the target group.



This logo was designed in consultation with young people. It is circular and in interconnected like learning, and there is an opening for change.

Resource book: “Working with young women who self harm”

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Has a clearly defined conceptual framework
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

In 2003, Zig Zag Young Women’s Resource Centre developed this book, entitled “Working with Young Women who Self Harm”, to serve as a resource for counsellors and other sexual assault workers. The authors discuss concepts for workers supporting young women who self-harm and offer guidelines for the group setting. The book explores the use of the Buddhist notion of mindfulness in supporting young women who self-harm. It outlines young women’s understanding of self-harm and how it is used in recovery from sexual assault. The second part of the book describes the group work process from the preparation stage to the evaluation stage. The therapy model that has been incorporated into the group-work is “dialectical behaviour therapy”, based on the work of Marsha Lineham, information on which is included in the book. This therapy is based on Buddhist meditation and practices, and understandings of the mind. The therapy has been evaluated in the United States and has been found to be useful for work with people diagnosed with “borderline personality disorder”. Dialectical behaviour therapy is now used in psychiatric institutions in Australia and the United Kingdom.



The objective of this resource is to guide counsellors and others in working in a non-harmful, non-judgemental and understanding manner with young women. The book provides guidelines as to what are helpful or unhelpful responses to self-harm, and provides guidance on the self-care and self-knowledge of the counsellor herself.

The philosophies underpinning this resource, which are also the philosophies by which Zig Zag operates, are that of social justice and feminism. These philosophies are articulated strongly throughout the resource, both in the explanations of the process of group work, and also during the critiques of the traditional and more recent medical practices used in work with young women who self harm. The authors recognise the link between violence, abuse, oppression and marginalisation with self-harm, and articulate this link throughout the book. The authors also recognise that many conventional/medical responses to young women who self harm are not helpful, in that they often attempt to spontaneously halt the self-harm from occurring without assisting the young women to find other ways to cope.

The second part of the book describes the group work process from the preparation stage to the evaluation stage, thus enabling its replication by other counsellors or group workers/leaders. The group-work therapy based on the resource book, is evaluated following attendance through written questionnaires.

Rather than rely on textbooks that are written purely from the ‘professionals’ point of view, the authors of this book reflect back what young women, and their own practices and experiences, have told them works and is useful or not useful in a counselling context. This knowledge is used to underpin the group-work process outlined.

Throughout the guide the authors emphasise the need for self-reflective practice, as well as the need to respect young women’s own choices regarding their healing process. It highlights the need to work in a way that acknowledges and addresses diversity, and to work with individuals rather than “symptoms”. It makes a distinction between self-harm and suicidal behaviours, and emphasises the importance of this distinction.

Sharing community education campaigns: Postcard and bus advertisements

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

Women's Health Statewide and Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service are running a two-part community awareness and education campaign on childhood sexual assault.

The first is a "Postcard Campaign", which will take place throughout South Australia in 2005 and is based on the "Truthaboutrape" postcard campaign previously run in Manchester in the United Kingdom. The postcard campaign is being coordinated by Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service and Women's Health Statewide as part of the new Children, Youth and Women's Health Service in South Australia.

The second part is an Adelaide-metro "Bus Campaign", which started in January 2003 and was developed as part of Women's Health Statewide's activities for the international "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence"¹. Both parts of the campaign use a dandelion image, which was chosen as it evoked memories of making childlike wishes, and blowing spores as an indication of the passing of time.

The target group for both parts of the campaign is the general community, including adult survivors, male victims, Indigenous people, people from a diverse range of cultures, people with disabilities, rural populations, service providers, criminal justice and police personnel, and offenders. The bus campaign is limited to Adelaide, and the postcard campaign will cover the whole of South Australia. Both parts of the campaign are based on a philosophy incorporating a feminist view of the rape victim's rights approach and an understanding of the barriers associated with disclosing sexual assault.

A 36-page evaluation of the campaign is available from Yarrow Place (contact details are in the table on page 15). The evaluation criteria that was used measured:

- demand and distribution for posters and postcards;
- creation of an identity (for example, identification of the dandelion image); and
- anecdotal stories from workers.

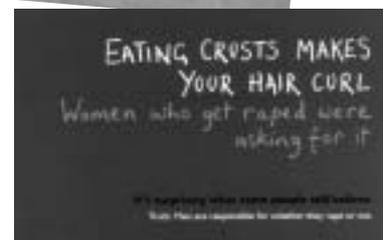
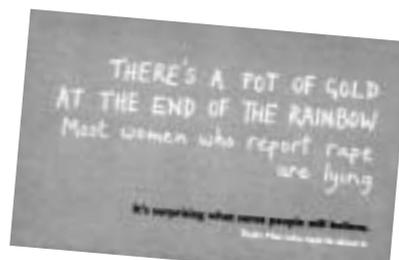
An unexpected outcome was discovered when an evaluation was undertaken with survivor groups: that of the positive therapeutic impact of the community campaign on women in the groups. Therefore, although the general community was the target group, women and men in the community who have been subjected to sexual abuse during childhood would be expected to benefit. With this in mind, the program developers aimed to be accountable to the general public but ultimately to the women and men it sought to support.

Postcard campaign

The postcards were developed by the United Kingdom "Truthaboutrape" campaign to expose the truth about rape in an imaginative and thought-provoking way. They use humour and "shock tactics" to stimulate and challenge people's perceptions and assumptions about rape. All postcards consist of a pair of myths followed by the "strap-line", for example:

"It's surprising what some people still believe" . . . followed by a "truth-line" or "fact-line".

1 The "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence" Campaign was a highly successful collaborative venture between government and non-government organisations to raise awareness of the prevalence of adults who have been subjected to childhood sexual abuse and the importance of listening and believing adults who have been subjected to sexual abuse during childhood when they disclose. ➤



The final truth-line on the cards read:

- Truth: Women of all ages, backgrounds and races get raped
- Truth: Men are responsible for whether they rape or not
- Truth: Rape is always a crime – whether he’s a relative, friend, acquaintance or stranger
- Truth: Women are raped every day in this country
- Truth: Men who rape lie about it
- Truth: Rape is a form of control not a loss of control

The objective is to adapt and/or further develop postcards from the United Kingdom “Truthaboutrape” campaign to a South Australian context.

Bus campaign

The objectives of the bus campaign were: firstly, to develop, design and promote with key stakeholders an advertising campaign that elevates the level of consciousness in the general community about the prevalence of childhood sexual abuse using the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence” international campaign as a platform; and secondly, to build the capacity of the community to respond appropriately to disclosures made by adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood.

In order to achieve these objectives, Women’s Health Statewide and Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service decided to:

- develop and design an advertisement to be displayed on Adelaide buses over the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence”;
- develop and design posters to be available to organisations and others in the community;
- create a logo or symbol to be used as a representation for adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood;
- hold a launch to draw the media, departmental and political decision makers to the campaign, which will include a speech by a well-known South Australian personality;
- develop an “Avant Card” postcard to be distributed to community areas (cafes, cinemas and retail outlets); and
- develop, design and promote a pamphlet for partners, family members and friends of adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood.

The aim of the Adelaide bus campaign was to link with the international “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence”, in order to raise community consciousness of the prevalence of adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood, as well as highlight the importance of listening to and believing adults when they disclose sexual abuse that occurred in childhood. The slogans used were:

*One in three women are survivors of childhood sexual abuse; we are your grandmothers, mothers, sisters, daughters, partners, cousins, friends . . .
Listen, believe, make our journey easier . . .*

*One in six men are survivors of childhood sexual abuse; we are your grandfathers, fathers, brothers, sons, partners, cousins, friends . . .
Listen, believe, make our journey easier . . .*

The campaign was important and unique in that it was the first awareness-raising event in the world to focus on the experiences of adults subjected to sexual abuse during childhood.



Kids Quest Project

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Has a clearly defined conceptual framework
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

The Tasmanian Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS) developed "Kids Quest" as both a community awareness/education program and a therapeutic-response program for child victim/survivors of sexual assault. The program's target group are children and parent/carers in the Hobart area. SASS is currently running a trial, to be completed by 30 June 2005, which will inform the development of the program for 2005-2006.

Research on the outcomes for children victim/survivors of sexual assault who do not access counselling/group work interventions indicates that ongoing developmental, behavioural and emotional problems are common. The effects on relationship and parenting skills when children become adults means that the repercussions of child sexual abuse may become inter-generational. The outlook for a child with unresolved sexualised behaviours is especially poor. The Kids Quest program aims to:

- break down the isolation experienced by children, parents/carers, and families as a result of child sexual abuse;
- provide informational and support programs for parents/carers so that they are better equipped to support their children and themselves;
- decrease the risk of children who have been subjected to sexual abuse from being further victimised through promotion of resilience, age-appropriate self-efficacy and pro-social skills;
- address the effects of traumatic experience on children who have been abused; and
- provide early intervention for children displaying sexualised behaviours, especially those at risk of offending against others.

The Kids Quest program is taking a consciously constructionist/narrative approach, and is incorporating other modalities when appropriate. For example, the program incorporates interventions from Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy where behaviour-change is a key objective; Attachment Therapy where disrupted primary attachment is a central issue for the child; and Solution-Oriented Therapy for problem-solving interventions.

Narrative therapy is regarded by SASS as a valuable standpoint in this work. Constructionist philosophy understands that, for human beings, making sense of experiences of the world is mediated through language (cognition). It is by "telling the story" of an event that people come to make meaning of it. How we tell the story reflects and informs our emotional response. Cognitive and emotional narratives are central to how an individual perceives their world and their place in it. Changing a negative narrative to a positive narrative may enhance all aspects of self-image. For children especially, story-telling is a key learning mechanism and SASS is seeking to use vehicles for therapy that are already familiar to children.

The Kids Quest program is composed of two parts – therapeutic group work for children, and information group work for parents/carers.

Therapeutic group work for children

The program recognises that all children are not the same. Over the long term, through the development of a range of groups the program aims to address, for example, the differing needs of boys and girls; the needs and developmental capacities of children at different ages; different cultural values and interests of minority communities; children displaying sexualised behaviours; children who have been severely traumatised; and needs of sibling groups (whether or not all have been subject to abuse). ➤

The program also recognises a number of contra-indications that may militate against group work for an individual child. For example, the presence of psychosis or other mental illness; significant developmental delay; the likelihood of Court action; and the ability of an individual child to participate, at that time, in a particular group. The program trial (March to June 2005) involves 6 weekly sessions of group work for eight girls aged 7 to 11 years. The group will be run on two successive occasions and will take a mainly “narrative” approach.

Anticipated outcomes include:

- normalised responses to the experience of abuse;
- increased self-esteem, self-efficacy and problem solving ability; and
- breaking down of isolation, reduction of estrangement from peers and develop pro-social skills.

Information group work for parents/carers

Parents/carers are also involved in the children’s group work in a number of ways since SASS seeks to locate the benefits of group work and counselling in the main arena of a child’s life. Parents/carers are invited to a preliminary information session where SASS explains the work of the group and discuss ways primary caregivers can be involved and assist their child. This includes supporting the child with a weekly “Quest”. For the final session of the group, parents/carers are invited to celebrate the conclusion of the group and the children have the opportunity to share the outcomes of the group with the adults, in a non-threatening way.

The program trial involves three weekly sessions of group work for parents, carers and others having a significant care-taking role for children who have been sexually abused. The group will be run on two successive occasions and is taking a cognitive approach. Several models will be explored for understanding the child’s experience and needs, and for promoting wellbeing in the parents/carers. A therapeutic group program is anticipated for the future.

The program recognises a number of contra-indications that may mean group work is not appropriate for an individual adult. These include mental illness, the degree of traumatisation of the adult, and a family being in a crisis stage.

Anticipated outcomes include:

- breaking down isolation experienced by parents and carers following disclosure of child sexual abuse;
- increased knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of perpetration and of victimisation;
- increased understanding of the ways children respond to the experience of sexual abuse and to the repercussions of disclosure;
- increased knowledge and understanding of appropriate responses to the needs of a child who has been sexually abused; and
- understanding processes and responsibilities involved in Family Court, Child Protection, police and other systems.

Kids Quest is building on the ideas and findings of previous work in this area. Consultation with others working in this area has been invaluable, and strategies have been developed to fit the local situation. Good practice elements include:

- development of group work modules that respect and address the needs of children based on characteristics such as sex, age, culture, degree of traumatisation, whether the perpetrator was male or female;
- recognition of the confidentiality of a child’s experience – in group work, parents/carers are discouraged from disclosing non-essential, personal information about their child;
- the use of a variety of therapeutic modalities rather than reliance on one;
- challenging the stigma of sexual abuse and normalising responses to it;
- taking a no-blame approach with children and carers, and recognising survival strategies as skills and strengths not weaknesses;
- an evaluation strategy that is quantitative and qualitative, that uses formal and informal mechanisms, and that examines many aspects of the program: results of evaluation will be used dynamically to inform the refinement and further development of the program and, hopefully, can inform the wider debate regarding group work and other therapeutic interventions in the field of child sexual abuse.

CASA Forum Inc

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Positions diversity as key to the development, understanding and delivery of good practice models
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Has a clearly defined conceptual framework
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

The Victorian CASA Forum Inc is the peak body of the state's 15 Centres Against Sexual Assault, and the Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line (After Hours). It started in 1987 and is ongoing.

Together, members of CASA Forum work to ensure that women, children and men who are victim/survivors of sexual assault have access to comprehensive and timely support and intervention to address their needs. They also work towards the elimination of sexual violence through community and professional education, informing government policy, advocating for law reform and facilitating research to increase community understanding of the nature and incidence of sexual assault. In addition to therapeutic-response programs and victim/survivor advocacy, CASA's services also provide community awareness/education programs, service provider training, and training for community groups.

The Forum promotes a close working relationship with mutual respect and understanding between services, which allows for the provision of a 24-hour statewide service system, clear catchment areas, joint priorities, a unified voice with funding bodies, and the opportunity for discussion to ensure informed policy and practice. It also facilitates continuing education for workers in the field through the counsellor/advocates forum and occasional workshops and forums.

The Forum has provided representation and input on every key working group and advisory body that have addressed the issue of legal, policy and social reform for sexual assault in Victoria since its inception. It has also produced two publications: the *Victorian Standards of Practice for Centres Against Sexual Assault*, and *Where Can I Go to If I Am Sexually Assaulted?* The latter is available in 7 languages and there is also a version for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Forum reflects good practice through various initiatives, such as:

- The introduction in 2004 of a single 1800 number across the state which provides access to the closest regional CASA during business hours and the Sexual Assault Crisis Line after hours. This facilitates promotion of a single contact number for access to services across the state and avoids the situation of the victim/survivor having to guess which CASA to contact.
- The establishment of the Sexual Assault Crisis Line (after hours) in 1991. Originally called TelSASA (Telephone Service Against Sexual Assault), the service was established to provide a minimum of universal access to counselling, information and referral across the state and act as a back up after hours support to the 15 regional CASAs. It provides a single point of access after hours to crisis care for victim/survivors of recent sexual assault for the nine services across the state that provide an after hours service. This ensures easy access and early intervention at the point of crisis for victim/survivors, police and others affected by, or charged with the responsibility of responding to, sexual assault.
- The development of the *Victorian Standards of Practice for Centres Against Sexual Assault* which have been recognised as setting a benchmark for the provision of counselling and advocacy for victim/survivors of sexual assault in Victoria.

The Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault Forum is committed to addressing all inequalities within society that result in the perpetration of sexual violence against women, children and men. ➤

The Victorian CASA Forum therefore acknowledges that:

1. Sexual assault is both a consequence and a reinforcer of the power disparity existing between men and women/children.
2. Sexual assault occurs along a continuum of violent behaviour which includes: any uninvited sexual behaviour which makes the recipient feel uncomfortable, harassed or afraid; unwanted touching or remarks; sexual harassment; coerced sexual activity; and rape with physical violence and threat to life.
3. The impact of sexual assault on the lives of victim/survivors is multi-faceted and complex. It includes emotional, social, psychological, legal, health and political consequences.
4. In order to facilitate a victim/survivor's recovery from sexual violence, the Forum recognises the importance of responding to each aspect in an appropriate and effective manner.
5. The impact of sexual assault can be compounded by factors relating to the stratification of society by gender, culture, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, religion, ability and socio-economic class.

Consistent with the above knowledge is the belief that:

- sexual assault is a crime against the individual and society;
- the entire community and all tiers of government need to recognise and respond to its occurrence and take action to work towards its elimination;
- all CASAs must work toward the empowerment of service users, through the adoption of a service management (victims' rights advocacy) model where the focus of service provision must be on recent and past victim/survivors of sexual assault;
- within this model service users are offered: choices and information about the services; help with looking at their options; and support in making informed choices and decisions in regards to the systems with which they will come into contact; and
- the experience and resulting needs of victim/survivors of sexual assault must influence the scope and direction of services provided by CASAs.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Workshop: "Another Layer of Trauma"

Good practice criteria

- ✓ Takes account of contemporary research and practice developments in the field of sexual assault
- ✓ Positions diversity as key to the development, understanding and delivery of good practice models
- ✓ Contributes to improving systems' responses to sexual assault, or is directed at preventing sexual assault
- ✓ Demonstrates a sensitivity towards the barriers faced by victim/survivors in disclosing and reporting sexual assault
- ✓ Has a clearly defined conceptual framework
- ✓ Includes processes of accountability and evaluation
- ✓ Demonstrates a capacity for replication (that is, other services/organisations could adapt/re-model the program for their use)

The Perth Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC) developed a full-day workshop, entitled "Another Layer of Trauma". It is run by Dorinda Cox (Aboriginal Liaison Officer at SARC) and Helen Milroy (a child psychologist working with the Western Australian Department of Health).

The workshop focuses on the traumatic impact of sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities. It analyses and discusses this in the context of the multiple layers of trauma, both historical and current, that Aboriginal people have experienced. This validates the experience of Aboriginal people, and recognises the historical issues of dispossession and assimilation that Aboriginal people have suffered. It also enables non-Aboriginal people to be aware of the layers of trauma that may exist for Aboriginal people, especially victim/survivors of sexual assault and abuse. These layers of trauma cannot be underestimated when working with Aboriginal clients, and the workshop serves in this aspect as service-provider training on the issues and the level of sensitivity required. Implications in terms of dealing with sexual abuse are specifically explored.

The workshop can be held in local communities, urban or regional centres. Its target groups are Indigenous communities and service providers. As a good practice program it is multi-faceted. First, the workshop functions as a community awareness/education program on historical and current issues of dispossession and assimilation that create multiple layers of trauma for Aboriginal people. Second, it serves as a training program for service providers, increasing sensitivity to these layers of trauma and providing advice on dealing with this in the context of sexual assault. Finally, the workshop offers the possibility of a therapeutic response for victim/survivors of sexual abuse and other trauma, with evaluation feedback indicating victim/survivors felt their experiences were articulated, validated and respected.

The workshop draws on research by Carol Thomas (1993) in *Sexual Assault: Issues for Aboriginal Women*, as well as by Jane Lloyd and Nanette Rogers (1993) in *Crossing the Last Frontier: Problems Facing Aboriginal Women Victims of Rape in Central Australia*.

The initial workshop ran in September 2004, drawing 50 participants, and another was planned for April 2005. Evaluation of the program is external, with written evaluations by participants following workshop attendance. All evaluations received at the last workshop were overwhelmingly positive about the impact of the workshop.

GOOD PRACTICE AROUND AUSTRALIA				
Initiative / program and funding	Address and contact details	Resources and program outcomes	Informing research	Evaluation
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY				
<p>Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care (FAMSAC)</p> <p>Program funding: Australian Capital Territory Health</p>	<p>Forensic & Medical Sexual Assault Care (FAMSAC) Building 5 Level 1 Canberra Hospital Canberra 2606 ACT http://health.act.gov.au/sexualhealth</p> <p>Contact: Cassandra Beaumont-Brown Clinical Nurse Coordinator Ph: (02) 6244 2184 Fax: (02) 6285 3395 cass.beaumont-brown@act.gov.au</p>	<p>Pamphlets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAMSAC Information pamphlets are available at: http://health.act.gov.au/sexualhealth. • Forensic evidence. • Rape-related pregnancy. • Coping after sexual assault. • Supporting a woman after sexual assault. • Information for parents who's teenage has experienced sexual assault/rape. • Supporting a man after sexual assault. • Your rights. <p>Posters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Assault Symposium /Australasian Sexual Health Conference Christchurch 2003. • Sexual Assault Medicine from Scratch: Forensic education program. • Sexual Assault Symposium /Australasian Sexual Health Conference Christchurch 2003. Strong Foundations a Nurse Coordinator. • Sexual Assault Symposium /Australasian Sexual Health Conference Adelaide 2004 Forensic & Medical Sexual Assault Clinicians Australia. 	<p>Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mein JK, Palmer CM, Shand MC, Templeton DJ, Parekh V. (2003), "Management of acute adult sexual assault" <i>Med J Aust</i>, vol. 178, no. 5, pp. 226-230. • Parekh V, Beaumont Brown C. (2003), "Follow up of patients who have been recently sexually assaulted", <i>Sex Transm Infect</i>, vol. 79, p. 349. • Parekh V. (2004), <i>A taboo topic for dinner conversation</i>, (eds) Tang S, Ding J, Annual Publication of the Australian Chinese Medical Association Inc. Ivy Printing, Victoria, p.56. • Parekh V, Currie M, & Beaumont Brown C. (2005), "A postgraduate sexual assault medicine program: Sexual assault medicine from scratch", <i>Science Medicine and the Law</i>, vol. 44, no. 2 (Accepted for publication). • Parekh V., "Responding To Sexual Assault-Medico legal services in the ACT", <i>The Key to Closing the Gap</i>, The Canberra Hospital (June 2002, Aug 2003 Aug 2004). <p>Conference papers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Assault Satellite Symposium, Perth 2002 Parekh V. Case presentation. • Sexual Assault Satellite Symposium, Adelaide 2004 Parekh V, Martin S, Tyson A, Beaumont-Brown C. Case presentations. • Sexual Assault Satellite Symposium, Adelaide 2004 Parekh V & Brennan P. The Great Debate: Should photographs of genital injuries be taken. 	<p>A postal survey to all involved external services is undertaken annually. Comments have been consistent and extremely positive with suggestions on improving community awareness of the service. This was acted on.</p> <p>A non-identifiable questionnaire is given to clients at the 12-week follow up visit. This can be placed in the drop box in the front of the clinic or posted for return to the service. This qualitative data is again very positive.</p>

Initiative / program and funding	Address and contact details	Resources and program outcomes	Informing research	Evaluation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian College of Legal Medicine Weekend of Clinical Forensic Medicine Sydney 2004 Parekh V. Issues with photography in sexual assault Books and Guidelines. • Parekh V. (ed) Fairley K, Russel D, Bradford D. (May 2005). Sexual Assault, Chapter 26. In Sexual Health Medicine – A Clinical Approach. (Accepted for publication). • Parekh V. (2005). National management guidelines for sexually transmissible infections: Sexual assault reference chapter. The Venereology Society of Victoria Incorporated. • Pharmacy Guild of Australia Guidelines for emergency contraception. 	

NEW SOUTH WALES

<p>Rape Crisis Online</p> <p>Program funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New South Wales Law and Justice Foundation • New South Wales Department of Health • National Rugby League (NRL) • Private donations 	<p>New South Wales Rape Crisis Centre P.O. Box 555 Drummoyne 2047 NSW www.nswrapecrisis.com.au</p> <p>Contact: Karen Willis Manager Ph: (02) 9819 7357 Fax: (02) 9819 6295 karen@nswrapecrisis.com.au</p>	<p>Website at: www.nswrapecrisis.com.au</p> <p>Rape Crisis Online will be up and running in July 2005. The service will be promoted once staffing has been finalised.</p>	<p>Research indicates that young people feel comfortable in an online environment.</p> <p>Australian Bureau of Statistics (2000), <i>Use of the internet by householders, August 2000</i>, catalogue no. 8147, ABS, Canberra.</p> <p>Better Health Channel, Health information on the internet, Victorian Government. Available: http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bharticles.nsf/pages/Health_information_on_the_Internet?OpenDocument.</p>	<p>Evaluation has not yet been completed, but an internal evaluation is planned along the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an increase in the number of callers who make contact for the first time; • an increase in the number of callers who indicate they may speak with Police; • number of callers who indicate they would not have made initial contact by phone; and • service user feedback.
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NORTHER TERRITORY

<p>Respect Relate Stop Rape</p> <p>Program funding: Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services</p>	<p>Ruby Gaea Darwin Centre Against Rape PO Box 42082 Casuarina 0811 NT No website</p> <p>Contact: Naomi Brennan Coordinator Ph: (08) 89450155 Fax: (08) 89452783 rubbygaea@octa4.net.au</p>	<p>Schools education program.</p>	<p>The program is grounded in feminist philosophy and informed by feminist practice. It uses the traditional tools of social deconstruction and gives them a contemporary relevance.</p> <p>The program was initially trialled using external action research by a youth worker in consultation with facilitators who delivered the program, participating schools, teachers and students. Data gathered was used to inform the redesign of the program to what it is today. Feedback on each session was given from students and from facilitators.</p>	<p>Evaluation is ongoing and reflective to ensure it meets the needs of the target group. It takes the form of written questionnaires completed by participants and facilitators.</p>
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GOOD PRACTICE AROUND AUSTRALIA

continued

Initiative / program and funding	Address and contact details	Resources and program outcomes	Informing research	Evaluation
QUEENSLAND				
<p>Working with young women who self harm</p> <p>Program funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland Health Sexual Assault Support and Prevention Program ZONTA Club of Brisbane North 	<p>Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre Inc. 575 Old Cleveland Road Camp Hill 4152 QLD www.zigzag.org.au</p> <p>Contact: Erica Fernandez Sexual Assault Worker Ph: (07) 3843 1823 Fax: (07) 3398 5400</p>	<p>Book "Working with Young Women Who Self Harm" available from Zig Zag through phone, fax or email. Cost \$10.00.</p>	<p>Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) has been evaluated in the United States and has been found to be useful for work with people diagnosed with "borderline personality disorder". DBT is now used in psychiatric institutions in Australia and the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>Written evaluations following attendance at workshops based on the book.</p>
SOUTH AUSTRALIA				
<p>Sharing community education campaigns: Bus advertisements and postcard advertisements</p> <p>Program funding: <i>Bus Campaign</i> - South Australian Department of Health plus donations from a multiple of services, including NGOs. <i>Postcard Campaign</i> - seeking support from the South Australian Government and "Avant Cards".</p>	<p>Women's Health Statewide & Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service 55 King William Rd North Adelaide 5063 SA www.whs.sa.gov.au</p> <p>Contact: Vanessa Swan Director: Yarrow Place, Ann-Marie Hayes Director: Women's Health Statewide Ph: (08) 8226 8777 Fax: (08) 8226 8778 swanv@mail.wch.sa.gov.au</p>	<p>"It's not my shame", Holden Evaluation: http://www.whs.sa.gov.au/pub/16_days_evaluation.pdf</p> <p>"Truthaboutrape" website: http://www.truthaboutrape.co.uk/</p>	<p>A research project was carried out in Adelaide in 2002 to explore the current service needs of adults subjected to child sexual abuse, which indicated that the most unhelpful responses that survivors had to deal with in the community were disbelief or minimisation of their experience.</p> <p>This research presented in the Women's Safety Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996) found that many women felt guilt and shame following rape because they blamed themselves for the assault.</p>	<p>Evaluated by various methods, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demand and distribution for posters and postcards; creation of an identity, for example, dandelion; and anecdotal stories from workers. <p>See full evaluation report for detailed evaluation (available online at http://www.whs.sa.gov.au/pub/16_days_evaluation.pdf)</p>
TASMANIA				
<p>Kids Quest Project</p> <p>Program funding: Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania</p>	<p>Sexual Assault Support Service Inc PO Box 217 North Hobart 7000 TAS www.sass.org.au</p> <p>Contact: Karen Jones Chief Executive Officer Ph (03) 6231-1811 Fax (03) 6231-5370 ceo@sass.org.au</p>	<p>Workshop.</p>	<p>The Sexual Assault Support Service has provided its Children's Counselling Service for three years. The experience and understanding gained during this time has been invaluable in directing the group work program.</p> <p>A literature search of group programs has been conducted for the pilot stage of the project. A more extensive review of practice and experience in Australia and elsewhere will be carried out in the development phase.</p> <p>Research on the outcomes for children who do not access counselling/group work interventions indicates that ongoing developmental, behavioural and emotional problems are common. The effects on relationship and parenting skills when children become adult means that the repercussions of child sexual abuse may become inter-generational.</p>	<p>For the final session of the group, parents/carers are invited to celebrate the conclusion of the group and the children have the opportunity to share the outcomes of the group with the adults, in a non-threatening way.</p>

GOOD PRACTICE AROUND AUSTRALIA

continued

Initiative / program and funding	Address and contact details	Resources and program outcomes	Informing research	Evaluation
VICTORIA				
<p>CASA Forum Inc</p> <p>Program funding: Individual services funded by the Victorian Department of Human Services</p>	<p>CASA House 270 Cardigan Street Carlton 3053 VIC www.casaforum.org.au</p> <p>Contact: Marg D'Arcy / Helen Makregiorgos Ph: (03) 9347 3066 marg.darcy@rwh.org.au</p>	<p>Service network, plus website at: http://casa.org.au/</p>	<p>Publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Victorian Standards of Practice for Centres Against Sexual Assault.</i> • <i>Where Can I Go to If I Am Sexually Assaulted?</i> Available in seven languages and a version for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. 	<p>Informal feedback from services.</p>
WESTERN AUSTRALIA				
<p>Another Layer of Trauma</p> <p>Program funding: Western Australian Department of Health</p>	<p>Sexual Assault Resource Centre PO Box 842, Subiaco 6902 WA No website</p> <p>Contact: Dorinda Cox Aboriginal Liaison Officer Ph: (08) 9340 1820 Fax: (08) 9340 1815 dorinda.cox@health.wa.gov.au</p>	<p>Workshop.</p>	<p>Thomas, Carol (1993), "<i>Sexual Assault: Issues for Aboriginal Women</i>", in P.W. Eastal (ed.), <i>Without consent: confronting adult sexual violence</i>; proceedings of a conference held, 27-29 October 1992. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology, 1993, pp. 139-147.</p> <p>Lloyd, Jane & Rogers, Nanette (1993), "Crossing the Last Frontier: Problems facing Aboriginal Women Victims of Rape in Central Australia", in P.W. Eastal (ed.), <i>Without consent: confronting adult sexual violence</i>; proceedings of a conference held, 27-29 October 1992, Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, pp. 149-164.</p>	<p>Written evaluations following attendance. All evaluations received were very positive and there are currently 80 people registered for the next workshop in April 2005.</p>

Visit ACSSA's online database

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/gpdb/goodpractice.html>

The Good Practice programs currently featured on the ACSSA website are:

About Date Rape Website

Provides non-judgmental and supportive information to young people seeking help or information about date rape and sexual assault.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign

Community awareness campaign to promote understanding around adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Celebrate Don't Violate

Health promotion and crime prevention strategy targeting school leavers.

Feeling Safe Together

Safety programs in primary schools through training of staff, parents and children.

Information Kit About Sexual Assault for the Deaf Community

Information brochure and DVD about sexual assault, specifically designed to meet the needs of the deaf community.

Professional and Community Training in Sexuality and Disability

Training workshops and seminars for support workers, service providers and carers of people with disabilities in the area of sexuality.

Protocol: A Coordinated Approach to Better Respond to Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault

A protocol developed to ensure all victims of drug-facilitated sexual assault receive appropriate treatment and referrals, and to improve the current services provided to victims/survivors of drug-facilitated sexual assault by promoting a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of service providers.

Respect, Protect, Connect

School-based peer educator program for years 7 to 12.

"Responding to Sexual Assault and Promoting Sexual Safety" within Queensland Health inpatient mental health services

The responding to sexual assault and promoting sexual safety initiative has undertaken extensive Statewide consultation to develop local area policy and procedures for responding to victims of recent and past sexual assault and promoting sexual safety within Queensland Health inpatient mental health services for consumers aged 16 years and over.

Joint Springvale Monash Community Legal Service/South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault Clinic (SECASA)

Provision of legal representation to victim/survivors of sexual assault and training of law students in dealing with sexual assault matters.

Sexual Assault and Intellectual Disability Kit

Resource for teaching people with an intellectual disability about sexual assault.

Sexual Violence Services Tampon Card

Innovative method of distributing sexual assault information to women in a discreet, confidential manner.

Shredded

A short video drama and education kit based on the stories of women from the Annie North Women's Refuge and Domestic Violence Service. It explores the murky and uncertain lines between what is normal couple conflict and what clearly becomes an unhealthy relationship of power and control, which emotionally affects the whole family.

Southern Sexual Abuse Counselling and Prevention Program

Adolescent sex offender treatment program.

Statewide Drink Spiking Community Education Campaign

Distribution of educational messages to patrons in over 130 selected licensed venues (hotels, nightclubs and bars), in metropolitan and regional Victoria on the dangers and other harms associated with drink spiking.

The Man Who Stole my Mother's Face

Award-winning documentary available on DVD, VHS and online. It explores the unsolved case of the rape of the filmmaker's own mother.

The Right to Party Safely

Research on the incidence and prevalence of sexual assaults occurring in and around licensed venues, and development of responses.

Understanding and Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence

A one-day training program designed to increase the knowledge and skills of refuge and domestic violence workers in relation to Intimate Partner Sexual Assault (IPSA).

Working with Older Women: Resources and Standards for Responding to Current or Past Violence

Training and resource manual for sexual assault and domestic violence workers.

Issues Paper Number 4

Penetrative Sexual Offences against Adults in Australia: The Current State of the Law

This issues paper aims to provide a plain language account of the current state of the law relating to key penetrative sexual offences against adults in Australia. It also aims to outline the legal issues relating to some parts of the law of evidence, which have significant impacts upon procedures in sexual offence trials and on victim-complainants' experiences in court. It seeks to provide an accessible introduction to the current status of the laws governing sexual offences to allow sexual assault workers, counsellors and victim-complainants to more readily understand the relevant criminal law. In doing so, it aims to supplement existing guides, which provide support and information about going to court as a complainant witness in a sexual offence trial.

Briefing Paper Number 5

Trafficking in Women for Sexual Exploitation

Recent years have seen many changes in international and national responses to, and legislation on, trafficking in persons. In this paper we review some of the theoretical approaches to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, as well as legislative, policy and service responses. We aim to provide an overview of recent developments and navigate the varied and often opposing modes of analysis surrounding the issue. ACSSA intends this paper to serve as an informative resource for services, policy makers and researchers on the subject of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation in Australia.

ACSSA Aware 8

Feature: *Prevention of Sexual Assault: Working with Adolescents within the Education System*

Aware 8 includes a feature article that focuses on preventing and responding to the sexual assault of young people. The article reflects on past sexual assault prevention initiatives with young women and men, and considers these in the light of the changes in adolescent behaviour reported in the *Sex in Australia* study. There is also an overview of state/territory-based policies covering sexual assault, and a number of updates from around the sector, including a discussion of the report, *A Fair Chance*, on proposals for sexual assault law reform in New South Wales.

Issues Papers

***Home Truths: A Conference in Review* Issues Paper Number 3: March 2005**

This Issues Paper provides a review of some of the major themes and issues that emerged during the recent *Home Truths* Conference held in Melbourne on September 15-17, 2004. The paper aims to convey the hum of ideas that were expressed and challenged throughout the three days. We aim to highlight how delegates variously responded to new ideas or challenges, and to consolidate what areas participants say are obvious next steps for governments, policy workers, service providers and communities to extend their collective efforts.

***Mapping Health Sector and Interagency Protocols on Sexual Assault* Issues Paper Number 2: March 2005**

In response to broad enquiry from sexual assault services around Australia this ACSSA Issues Paper looks at the range of formal health sector protocols that currently exist to guide service responses to victim/survivors of sexual assault, throughout Australia's different states and territories. The specific protocols reviewed here tend to be those that guide interaction between medical, counselling and police services who respond to sexual assault in terms of crisis care and, sometimes, beyond.

***Just "Keeping the Peace" - A Reluctance to Respond to Male Partner Sexual Violence* Issues Paper Number 1: March 2004**

The first ACSSA Issues Paper examines the issue of male partner sexual violence through considering: the historical and contemporary legal treatment of male partner sexual violence; current gaps in researching the incidence and prevalence of male partner sexual violence; the difficulties women face in recognising or naming their experience of sexual violence by a male partner *as rape*; the impact and consequences of sexual violence on women's physical health and emotional well-being; and the reluctance of support services to respond to the specific issue of sexual violence by male intimates.

Briefing Papers

***Sexual Assault and Family Violence in Indigenous Communities: Walking the Talk* Briefing Paper 4: September 2004**

ACSSA's fourth Briefing Paper looks at family violence and sexual assault in Indigenous communities. It provides a brief overview of state and federal policies on Indigenous family violence and reviews a number of relevant documents on sexual assault. The Briefing Paper also provides a literature review and contains "snapshot" interviews with a number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous sexual assault service providers about the developments that are happening in their communities to address sexual assault.

***Responding to Sexual Assault in Rural Communities* Briefing Paper 3: June 2004**

The third briefing paper looks at many of the problems faced by rural communities in responding to sexual assault, which mirror those that confront victims and service providers who live in cities. However, responding to issues of isolation, the levels of rural conservatism, and the denial of sexual assault within rural communities remains distinct.

Beyond "Drink Spiking": Drug and Alcohol Facilitated Sexual Assault Briefing Paper 2: November 2003

The second Briefing Paper critically examines a very topical area in the sexual assault field: the issue of drink spiking. The paper seeks to situate the problem of drink spiking in the broader context of drug and alcohol facilitated sexual assault.

What Lies behind the Hidden Figure of Sexual Assault? Issues of Prevalence and Disclosure Briefing Paper 1: September 2003

The first Briefing Paper looks at the hidden prevalence of sexual assault and considers how the experiences of victim/survivors of sexual assault are even less visible if they speaking from the position of being homeless, or as victims whose first language is not English, or where they were assaulted as children.

Newsletters

ACSSA Aware 6: May 2005 Feature: Sexual Assault and Mental Health in Australia

Aware 6 includes a feature article that looks at the relationship between mental health and sexual assault, both in terms of how sexual assault impacts on women's mental health as well as looking at the vulnerability of people with mental illness to sexual assault.

ACSSA Aware 5: January 2005 Feature: Sexual Offences Law and Procedure

The feature article in *Aware 5* looks at some of the major findings of the *Final Report* of the Victorian Law Reform Commission: *Sexual Offences Law and Procedure*, released in August 2004. The Report contains over 201 recommendations to the Victorian Attorney-General, aimed at ensuring the criminal justice system is more responsive to the needs of victim-complainants.

ACSSA Aware 4: September 2004 Feature: Making Rights a Reality: The Human Rights Approach to Stopping Violence Against Women

The feature article in *Aware 4* examines how such conceptual changes to human rights may mark the beginning of a new era of human rights activism of greatly increased relevance to women, and looks at what Amnesty International's *Stop Violence Against Women* campaign means in terms of raising awareness and promoting better responses to sexual assault in Australia.

ACSSA Aware 3: February 2004 Feature: HIV/AIDS and Violence Against Women

Aware 3 honours the global campaign that marks the thirteenth year of *16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women* where individuals and groups around the world unite in positioning violence against women, in all its forms, as a violation of human rights. The main feature examines the links between violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

ACSSA Aware 2: November 2003 Features: Our Chance to Tackle Indigenous Family Violence and Differing Perspectives on 'Preventing' Adult Sexual Assault

Aware 2 has two main features. The first is a keynote address that was delivered by Aboriginal activist and co-chair of Reconciliation Australia, Jackie Huggins at a conference in Queensland. The second article is a discussion piece that looks at notions of prevention in responding to adult sexual assault.

ACSSA Aware 1: September 2003 Feature: Sexual Offences Interim Report

Aware 1 introduces the aims, operations and services and services of ACSSA. The feature article outlines some of the key recommendations for legislative change contained in the Victorian Law Reform Commission's *Sexual Offences Interim Report*.

We welcome your feedback

Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault

Help to shape the work of the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault. We are interested in hearing your views on the best way to meet the needs of our stakeholders. If you have any comments on services that could be offered, possible topics for publications or areas of research, please fill in the section below and return it to the Institute. Comments can also be provided on-line via the ACSSA website, or email us at: acssa@aifs.gov.au

What other services would you find useful for your work?

What topics would you liked covered in ACSSA's publications, or considered for research projects?

Membership form overleaf ►

ACSSA services

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault is funded by the Office for Women, Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services, through the *National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault*. ACSSA provides stakeholders with a variety of services (see below). ACSSA is located at the Australian Institute of Family Studies in Melbourne.

Resources

ACSSA is building a collection of publications and best practice literature, reports, and training resources to inform initiatives and programs directed at improving the understanding of, and response to, sexual assault. These materials are available for browsing at the Australian Institute of Family Studies Information Centre, or may be borrowed through the interlibrary loan system. Bibliographic information on these resources may be searched online via the Institute's catalogue.

Advisory service

ACSSA's research staff can provide specialist advice and information on current issues that impact on the response to sexual assault. Email research queries to acssa@aifs.gov.au

Policy advice

Policy advice ACSSA offers policy advice to the Australian Government and other government agencies on matters relating to sexual assault, intervention and pathways to prevention.

Publications

ACSSA produces Issues Papers, Briefing Papers and Newsletters which are mailed free of charge to members of the mailing list. Publications can also be received electronically.

Good Practice database

ACSSA is developing a *Good Practice* database, to document and publicise best practice projects and activities being undertaken in relation to sexual assault.

Research

ACSSA staff undertake primary and secondary research projects, commissioned by Government and non-government agencies.

Email alert and discussion lists

ACSSA-Alert and *ACSSA-Discuss* keep members posted on what's new at the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault and in the sexual assault field generally, and allow networking and communication among those working on issues related to sexual violence against women.

Membership form

Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault

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