

CHANGE COULD COME

CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



A COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PACKAGE FOR ADULTS
ABOUT OVERCOMING THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

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PRODUCTION OF PUPPETS

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CHANGE COULD COME

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Jannawi Family Centre is a child protection service located in the inner south west of Sydney. The Centre works with abused and neglected young children and their families. At least seventy per cent of families referred to Jannawi with child protection concerns are also affected by domestic violence. This package was developed in response to the growing awareness of the effects of domestic violence on children and the close links between domestic violence and all forms of abuse and neglect of children.

AIMS

This package aims to:

- Raise awareness about the nature of domestic violence and its links with emotional abuse, physical abuse and neglect of children.
- Identify attitudes and behaviours associated with domestic violence which result in the emotional and physical abuse or neglect of children
- Change attitudes and behaviours and promote alternative parenting practices which nurture and support the emotional and physical well-being of children
- Help parents and extended family members develop new responses which prevent abuse and overcome the effects of domestic violence, abuse or neglect on children
- Educate the general and professional community about child abuse and domestic violence and the need for interpersonal and systemic interventions as important strategies in addressing domestic violence.

CONTENTS OF THE PACKAGE

Change Could Come includes:

- Two 20 minute videos (on one cassette)
- Resource Manual
- Laminated Poster

THE MANUAL

This manual accompanies the two videos and is divided into three parts:

1. Introduction
2. Sessions plans
3. Handouts

It assists presenters, group leaders and trainers to:

- understand the issues of domestic violence and child abuse
- prepare for different presentations styles and audiences
- know how to introduce each video section
- be clear and confident when facilitating discussions
- understand key concepts, content and points to be highlighted, and
- provide relevant handouts and information for participants.

THE VIDEOS

The videos can be used in community education, training or counselling with groups, individuals or couples. The choice to use video one or two will depend on the intended audience, level of knowledge and awareness of participants and the context in which the video is shown.

Video One, CHANGE COULD COME, is an introduction to issues concerning the physical and emotional abuse of children in the context of domestic violence. It is suitable for community education and awareness raising for both the general and professional community. It examines the dynamics and tactics of domestic violence and the ways in which these impact of children and shape their beliefs. It also invites adults to understand children's feelings and behaviours and demonstrates ways in which they can respond more sensitively to children and use the system to protect them. It is designed to be shown in one session of approximately one hour, which allows time for video viewing and discussion.

Video Two, CHANGE COULD COME Part Two, contains similar footage to Video One which has been edited and expanded to include more detail and additional scenes. This allows more in depth discussion and analysis of the impact of domestic violence with particular reference to children's development. Each vignette addresses domestic violence and child abuse and focuses on children of different ages in a range of family situations. These include babies, preschoolers, infants and primary school aged children, who are either living with, or separating from, domestic violence. The vignettes, each of 3 to 6 minutes duration, are designed to be used as discussion starters over a series of weekly sessions or during the course of a training workshop. It should not be shown in its entirety in one session. Each vignette may be used individually and separately, but this is advised only after participants have seen Video One.

THE POSTER

Participants are introduced to the characters and this facilitates audience discussion of each child's story and situation.



Baby Sam: Developmental stage: Infant (Age: 0-1) Sam's been born into a tense situation of arguments, fights and put-downs.



Melva: Melva is a wise old possum who lives in the children's neighbourhood and provides an understanding of children and their circumstances.



Sophie: Developmental stage: Pre-school (Age: 3-5). Sophie's mum and dad have recently separated as a result of her father's physical violence... memories of this are still having an effect. Sophie is on an overnight visit with her dad.



Billy: Developmental stage: Infants school (Age: 5-8) Billy lives with his mum and dad and has experienced violence for most of his life. This affects his relationships with others, especially his peers.



Tanika: Developmental stage: Primary school (Age: 9-12) Tanika's mother left her father about a year ago because of domestic violence. Tanika shares with Lena her knowledge and experience about living with, and separating from violence and the changes this has made to her life.



Lena: Developmental stage: Primary School (Age: 9-12). Lena and her mother live with her father who is violent. She talks about her worries and fears with her best friend, Tanika.

HOW TO USE THE PACKAGE

Q. What should I do to prepare to show the video?

It is recommended that you view the video and read the session plans before showing the video. You may wish to photocopy the session plans and highlight those questions which are relevant to the group. Become familiar with the characters and their stories by reading “Melva Possum’s Storybook” in Section Three. Photocopy this section as a handout for participants to be distributed at the end of the session.

Q. When do I use Video One?

Video One is an introduction to issues concerning the physical and emotional abuse of children in the context of domestic violence. It is suitable for community education and awareness raising for both the general and professional community.

Q. When do I use Video Two?

Video Two contains similar footage to Video One which has been edited and expanded to include more detail and additional scenes. This allows more in depth discussion and analysis of the impact of domestic violence with particular reference to children’s development. The vignettes can be viewed separately making the video appropriate for use in small group sessions over a number of weeks or at various points in a training program.

Q. What is included in each session plan?

- Key concepts:
- Introduction: What to say to participants
- Possible Questions, Information and Video References:

Q. How are the session plans linked to the video?

Both videos are divided into sections. Section markers appear in the bottom left hand corner of the video eg. 1A, 2C, to link the video section to the session plans in this manual. The top right hand corner of the manual identifies the relevant video section eg. Video One Section 1B.

Q. How do I use the discussion questions?

The discussion questions assist the presenter to guide discussion, particularly for those presenters beginning to use the package. It is not suggested that presenters should stick rigidly to using all the questions in the order they appear. It is suggested that the presenter before showing the video identify the questions that are most pertinent to the group.

Q. What is the purpose of the poster?

Presenters can place the poster in a prominent position before showing the video and use the poster to introduce the characters. Participants then have the poster to refer to whilst viewing the video and during group discussions.

Q. Who can use the video?

- Counsellors, health, welfare and educational workers working with children and families.
- Trainers providing workshops to workers who come into contact with children, families and/or the issue of domestic violence and child abuse.
- Team leaders or specialist workers providing professional development opportunities in workplace settings.

Q. Who would benefit from seeing the video?

- Parents, extended family members, neighbours within the community
- Workers in child protection, health or educational settings including District Officers, Family Support workers, refuge workers, Child and Family health workers, early childhood nurses, teachers and child care workers.

Q. In what other settings could the video be used?

The video can be used in a community education context to provide information about the effects of violence and abuse on children. This could include domestic violence seminars organised by local domestic violence committees or Parent and Citizen’s meetings.

Q. How do I use the Handouts?

Handouts have been included in Section Three. “Melva Possum’s Story Book” includes a summary of each character’s living situation. It can be photocopied and handed out.

Additional Information Sheets provide a reading list, information about legal and support options and where to obtain pamphlets, brochures and fact sheets concerning domestic violence and its impact on women and their children.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR PRESENTERS

Change Could Come has been developed with the intention of raising awareness amongst the professional and general community about the impact of physical and emotional abuse of children living in a context of domestic violence.

KEY ISSUES ADDRESSED

The perpetrator is given a clear and strong message that he, and he alone is responsible for his actions and the resultant consequences for himself, the woman and the children.

Women who are victims of violence are supported in an empathic and empowering way to reduce their guilt and self blame and to facilitate a new understanding of domestic violence and its impact on themselves and their children.

This video raises issues about inviting men to take responsibility, raising adults' awareness about the effects of violence and abuse on children and further challenges women to change their behaviour if they have been abusive to their children. The primary focus is about the protection of children and it invites adults to reflect on and change their behaviours.

KEY CONCEPTS

The following is a summary of the key concepts underpinning each section within Change Could Come:

Video 1 - Change Could Come

Section 1A

- Structural power.
- The dynamics and tactics of domestic violence.
- Community beliefs that misplace responsibility and blame.
- Children's beliefs are influenced by what they see and hear around them.

Section 1B

- Adults' actions which constitute domestic violence, and emotional and physical abuse of children.
- The effects of domestic violence and child abuse on children's thoughts, feelings, behaviours and beliefs.

Section 1C

- Adults can understand the effects of violence and abuse by understanding children’s feelings and behaviours.
- Even though adults may have behaved in ways that are abusive or violent, they can do something to change the situation.
- Positive parenting practices are important to help nurture children and to overcome the effects of violence and abuse.
- Systemic interventions are available to assist women and children who experience violence, eg. legal remedies.

Video 2 - Change Could Come - Part 2

Section 2A

- The effects of domestic violence on children’s development, especially infants.
- Assessment of babies should take into consideration the context in which the baby is living and not overlook the possibility of domestic violence and abuse and neglect.
- Appropriate interventions should address both individual and contextual issues.

Section 2B

- Children continue to experience difficulties after their parents have separated, especially when having contact visits with the violent parent.
- The quality of the relationship between children and their parents has enormous consequences for children’s emotional well-being.
- Positive parenting practices can make a difference.

Section 2C

- Children’s feelings, behaviours and beliefs are shaped by the context in which they live.
- Children’s relationships are strongly shaped by gender role expectations from an early age.

Section 2D

- The impact of fear, guilt, self-blame and powerlessness on women’s perceived choices and options.
- The context in which girls are raised strongly influences their beliefs about gender and role expectations.
- Safety can be obtained through access to family, friends, services, and knowledge about the wider support system such as police and courts.
- NESB and Aboriginal women may face additional difficulties when dealing with domestic violence and accessing the system.

Section 2E

- Community beliefs often misplace blame and responsibility for the violence onto women and children.
- Children’s beliefs are greatly influenced by what they see and hear around them.
- The use of violence is a conscious choice, used to dominate and control others.

Section 2F

- Relationships based on closeness, love and trust are important for both adults and children.
- People who have been violent or abusive need to take responsibility for their actions, and how these impact on others.
- Empathy, respect of others, positive parenting practices provide role models for children about the way to conduct themselves in relationships with others.
- Women and children need knowledge and support in accessing effective systemic interventions against domestic violence.

PARTICIPANTS PRIOR EXPERIENCES

Discussion surrounding the issues of domestic violence and child abuse can raise personal issues for participants. In community education or in the training context personal disclosures can best be dealt with on a one to one basis after the session is over. If the video is being used in the counselling context, personal disclosures can be highly appropriate. For any situation in which the video is shown, the presenter needs to encourage participants to take care of themselves in a way which allows them to continue their learning. The scenarios have been carefully written to incorporate the use of humour and to highlight positive interventions which leaves participants feeling positive about the issues raised in the video.

GUIDING GROUP DISCUSSION

It is best to give participants time to reflect on what they have just seen in the video by asking a general question to open up discussion. Discussion will automatically focus on group interests or the most recent vignette. Use the discussion questions to explore other issues that have not arisen. Using dialogue from the video can also jog participants memories about the things they observed in the video.

HOW TO DEAL WITH ISSUES

Discussing domestic violence and child abuse often raises contentious issues for participants about keeping a family together or feeling sorry for the men. The video seeks to challenge adult behaviours and believes change is possible if adults are committed to the prevention of further physical and emotional abuse of children. Responses to this could include:

- The video does not focus on whether mum and her children should leave a relationship involving violence. It focuses on the complexities involved in making such a decision and the information required to make an informed decision about future safety.
- Men who use violence are being challenged to change their attitudes and behaviour towards their partner and children to enhance their emotional well being and development. Women are also invited to alter their parenting practices if they have been abusive to their children.

The use of statistics are useful in responding to any resistance that may occur within a group.

- In the overwhelming majority of cases (95%), it is men who are violent to their partner.
- Children are three times more likely to be physically abused by their fathers. (*Bowker et al 1988*)
- Child abuse is 15 times more likely to occur in families where domestic violence is present. (*Stacey and Shupe 1983*)
- Women experiencing domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their dependant children than non-abused women. (*Cahn 1991*)

SECTION 2

CONTENT OVERVIEW

VIDEO ONE: CHANGE COULD COME

Running time: 20 minutes

Section 1A: Noni's Introduction & Robert Invites His Friends Over

5 minutes

Noni identifies the dynamics and tactics of domestic violence and explains how these are used to dominate and control others in intimate relationships. The impact of these behaviours on children's beliefs is also explored.

Section 1B: Melva Possum's Story Book

9 minutes

Melva introduces four scenarios which illustrate domestic violence, child abuse and how each child is affected.

Baby Sam
Not Sophie's Choice
Billy's Blues
Lena and Tanika Get Talking

Section 1C: Future Possibilities

6 minutes

Sophie and her dad... a few minutes later
Billy and his mum... sometime later
Lena and Tanika... sometime much later
Change Could Come Our Way

Noni and Melva contemplate the importance of change and what a difference it would make for children. Ideas are shown which model positive parenting practices and interventions which can make a difference for each child and their family situation.

VIDEO TWO: CHANGE COULD COME PART TWO

Each child's situation is presented in a separate vignette which outlines the following:-

- the context in which violence and abuse occurs.
- the effect on children's thoughts, feelings and behaviours,
- the importance of empathic responses to children
- sensitive parenting practices and positive interventions to overcome the effects of violence and abuse on children.

Section 2A: Baby Sam

Approx. 3 minutes

This section portrays the link between domestic violence and the physical and emotional abuse of children. It highlights the impact of domestic violence and child abuse on the development of babies.

Section 2B: Not Sophie's Choice

Sophie and her dad...a few minutes later

Approx. 3 minutes

This section highlights the emotional difficulties and issues for parents and children during contact visits, after separation because of domestic violence.

Section 2C: Billy's Blues

**Playing in the Cubby House
Billy in the School Playground
Billy and his mum sometime later**

Approx. 6 minutes

This section portrays how children's beliefs about violence, power, responsibility, gender roles and ways of relating to others are shaped by what children see and hear around them. Billy's behaviour and interactions are understood as the effect of domestic violence and clearly illustrates the role of domestic violence in the socialisation of boys.

Section 2D: Lena and Tanika Get Talking

Lena and Tanika... sometime much later

Approx. 5 minutes

This vignette illustrates the socialisation of girls and the societal and family expectations placed on women. It emphasises that:-

- women's choices to stay or leave are complex decisions
- they rely on supports from external systems
- women who have separated from violent partners can be a great resource and important support to women living in domestic violence situations.

Particular issues for Aboriginal women and women from a non-English speaking background are addressed.

Section 2E: Robert Invites His Friends Over

Approx. 3 minutes

This vignette emphasises children's beliefs about what causes violence and abuse and who is responsible. Issues pertaining to role expectations of mothers and fathers are explored.

Section 2F: Change Could Come Our Way

Approx. 3 minutes

Each verse of the song presents solutions for overcoming the effects of domestic violence on children.

SECTION 1A: NONI'S INTRODUCTION & ROBERT INVITES HIS FRIENDS OVER

KEY CONCEPTS

- 1. structural power
- 2. the dynamics and tactics of domestic violence
- 3. community beliefs that misplace responsibility and blame
- 4. children's beliefs are influenced by what they see and hear around them

INTRODUCTION (WHAT TO SAY TO PARTICIPANTS)

Presenter, Noni Hazlehurst talks about domestic violence and how our thoughts and feelings strongly influence what we choose to do about abuse.

You will also see a group of children playing a game and talking with each other.

Notice what Noni says about power, responsibility and the tactics of domestic violence.

Listen to the children's conversation and notice what they say, how they feel and their beliefs about domestic violence, who's responsible and why it happens.



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

How did Noni distinguish between arguments and domestic violence?

What other situations of structural power are there where people may misuse their power?

Noni identified a number of domestic violence tactics. What were they?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

She defined domestic violence - "Where someone in a family chooses to misuse their power in order to dominate or control others." The diagram clearly depicts the power imbalance that exists.

"Different situations in our lives can give some people more power than others.

For example, being a police officer, a politician, being rich, the boss, the head of the house or being the parent of young children."

"Using threats, put downs, name calling, controlling the money, using physical violence or even controlling who comes to the house."

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

What were identified as some commonly held beliefs, which act as excuses for domestic violence?

"He can't control his temper; he only does it when he's drunk; she asked for it; can't be that bad, otherwise she'd leave."

What did Billy believe about what causes his father's violence and who is responsible?

"He can't help it, he's always had a bad temper. He just loses it sometimes, but only when I'm naughty or when mum nags him." These excuses misplace responsibility.

Who or what has helped shaped these beliefs?

Violent and abusive behaviours are justified by:-

Dad blaming others.

Gran saying that he's always had a bad temper even when he was a little boy.

Children believing what adults say, thinking it was something they caused.

Often, people with structural power can construct the situation that shapes children's beliefs about who is responsible and why violence occurs. This is demonstrated by Lena who says "But dad said... she (mum) should know what upsets him by now".

Lena takes on her father's words and believes her mother is responsible for his actions.

What did the children believe about when and where Billy's dad would choose to use violence?

Billy was confident his dad would not hit his friend Sophie and that he did have control in situations where there would be a serious consequence like work. For example: Sophie- "Would he hit me? NO - don't be silly."

Tanika- "But what if he got angry at work? Bet he wouldn't hit his boss?"
" NO way - he'd lose his job."

How did the domestic violence affect Billy's relationships with his friends?

Billy was ridiculed by his friends and he feels embarrassed. He has to defend his dad, pretend that it doesn't effect him in order to say "my family's okay."

How is Billy reacting to the physical and emotional abuse he is experiencing?

He has been given strong messages that being a "boy" means - be tough, don't cry or show any weakness; he takes on this tough, bravado role- "It doesn't hurt me - cos I'm tough".

Billy is experiencing physical abuse from his father but this has been minimised and Billy blames himself.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

The children's comments let us know how they think and feel about their fathers. What were some of these comments?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

Lena says "I don't like it when my dad yells and throws things at my mum."

Tanika says "We don't live with him no more and I'm so glad."

Robert says "My mum's the boss at our house because our dad's hardly ever home!"

Sophie's not sure about her dad. He doesn't live with them. Sophie says

"He's down at the pub" and it seems like he's been there "about five years!"

Children are caught between loving their father but not liking the violence and abuse inflicted on their mother and themselves. Children often don't understand why their dad is so abusive, and therefore they blame themselves, their siblings or their mother.

Children can feel very alone in these experiences as other families can appear to be loving, caring and respectful in the ways they relate to each other.

What do you observe about Billy's relationship with his mother?

Billy disrespects his mother for being weak and crying. His view of his mother is strongly shaped by his father's beliefs and actions. He aligns himself with his father who is the most powerful member of the family.

Billy says "My mum won't leave my dad, cos kids need a dad... and anyway, we love our dad!"

Society often frowns on single parent families, blaming them for many social problems.

What does society believe about the importance of fathers?

To be a 'good' family, families should stick together no matter what. Marriage vows also perpetuate these beliefs. It is better for the children to have a father around, despite his violence and regardless of whether or not he contributes to nurturing and caring for the children.

What effect might these societal beliefs have on

Billy's mum is taking care of Billy's need for a dad, Billy says "We love our dad" -

Billy's mum's attitude to separating from violence?

Women are encouraged to prioritise the needs of their children and therefore stay together. They may feel a sense of failure if a marriage ends and try harder to make it work for their children's sake.

SECTION 1B: MELVA POSSUM'S STORY BOOK

INTRODUCTION

The next section is called Melva Possum's Story Book. Through a possum's eye view of the neighbourhood, we are going to share Melva's wisdom and knowledge about what goes on in the houses in the street. We are going to see four different situations.

Tune into:

- What the adults do which constitutes domestic violence and emotional and physical abuse of the children, and
- What the children say or do, that lets us know that they are affected by what they see and hear around them.



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

KEY CONCEPTS

- Adults' actions which constitute domestic violence, and emotional and physical abuse of children
- The effects of domestic violence and child abuse on children's thoughts, feelings, behaviours and beliefs.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

BABY SAM:

What did Baby Sam's father do or say which constituted domestic violence?

What about Baby Sam- How did living in this situation of domestic violence impact on him?

How did the father's actions impact on the mother's beliefs about herself?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

Slams the door, yells - "shut that baby up", put-downs "you're hopeless. You must be doing something wrong!", intimidation and blaming the mother for everything - "The Doctor was right... about him being underweight. I told you, you should have breast fed".

Difficulty feeding, underweight, agitated, crying, mother resorting to the firm pats on the bottom. Baby Sam's thoughts: "How do they expect me to eat at a time like this?"

She may feel fearful, confused, unsure and lack confidence about her mothering.

She may feel that she is failing, blame herself for the difficulties with the baby or even blame Baby Sam. The father used the doctor's "authority" to further undermine her.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

How might these beliefs impact on her relationship with Sam and others?

Beliefs about failure and incompetence may affect the way she is able to care for Sam, and her confidence in dealing with the adjustment to having a new baby. She may resent Baby Sam for the present tension and arguments. She may become isolated and withdrawn from others.

What are the risk factors for Baby Sam and his family?

As the mother attempts to placate her partner and *"shut that baby up"*, this may increase the risks that the mother may emotionally or physically abuse or neglect the baby. Mum appears to be socially isolated and continues to be victimised by her partner. New babies are extremely demanding and Baby Sam's mother is not getting support from the father in sharing the responsibilities of looking after a new baby.

NOT SOPHIE'S CHOICE:

Sophie is on a weekend overnight visit with her dad. What might Sophie be remembering?

Because of past violence, Sophie is aware of what comes next, ie. tension, yelling, hitting. Sophie is fearful of her dad and may be remembering past experiences of emotional abuse as well as domestic violence.

What did Sophie's dad do which constituted abuse?

He emotionally abuses Sophie by name calling, yelling and by what is said about her and her mother. *"I don't like you either... You're a spoilt little brat,"* standing over her and slamming a plate of food down in front of her. Blaming her mother *"her damn mother's turned her against me"*, blaming Sophie *"she's acting like a little bitch... She's just as bad as her mother."*

What does Sophie's dad react to?

He reacts to Sophie wanting her mother. We notice that Sophie's dad turns on her when Sophie says *"I want my mummy!"* Dad takes out his own unresolved issues and feelings about her mother on Sophie.

What was Sophie feeling and needing?

She was feeling misunderstood, anxious, scared, upset, alone, worried. She needed her father to understand her feelings, her anxiety and to give reassurance and affection.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

How does this affect her thoughts and feelings about her dad and his behaviour?

BILLY'S BLUES:

What is Billy's family situation?

Billy father has been physically violent towards his mother for most of Billy's life. Billy is also being physically abused by his father and his difficult behaviours have increased the risk of his mother also emotionally and physically abusing him.

What did you notice about Billy's behaviour?

He was verbally and physically abusive towards his friend Robert. "Get away - get stuffed you jerk!," and then also hit him.

What does this suggest to us about Billy's beliefs about mum, himself?

His father's behaviour has shown Billy that verbal and physical violence is an effective way to dominate and control others, and to also get what you want. Billy admires his father as someone who is powerful and strong. He believes that his mother is weak, she nags and therefore deserves the abuse from his father. Billy believes that he too can be tough and powerful just like his dad, and its okay to treat friends this way.

What are Billy's thoughts about being hit?

He believes it happens because he's naughty and therefore he deserves it. You cope with it by developing a 'bravado' to cover up the hurt and also, it's okay to hit others if they annoy you.

How does Billy respond when the teacher intervenes?

He denies and lies about his actions eg. "I didn't do anything. It's not true." Then he justifies this with "My dad hits my mum all the time." This is followed by, "I didn't really mean to hurt him... I'm sorry... I won't do it again. I promise." This pattern suggests similarities in the patterns and responses by men who have been violent.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

LENA AND TANIKA GET TALKING:

What was it like for Tanika when she and her mother were living with her dad?

Tanika experienced ongoing domestic violence, was aware of the murder of her mother's best friend and also lived with the knowledge that her mother could have also been killed. This fear and anxiety greatly impacted on Tanika and as a result her performance at school dramatically declined.

Tanika and her mum have separated from her dad.

Tanika is no longer subjected to violence and says *"Its heaps better... I don't feel scared no more."* She feels more safe and secure and this is reflected in her school report. She is aware that there is an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) in place and she even knows the terms and conditions, and the consequences if her father were to approach them. She says *"He'd be breaking the law and the cops would come and get him and that would make him stop!"*

How is this affecting Tanika?

What helps Tanika feel safe now?

Her best friend was murdered and she realised that this could also happen to her. Knowledge about the system and choices available to women enabled her to protect herself and her daughter, to take out an AVO and to know what to do if he ever came near them.

What sparked Tanika's mum to leave?

Lena is scared and worried about the safety of her mother and whether her *"dad might end up killing mum one night."* She says *"I worry all the time... especially at night."* These worries and fears might show themselves through nightmares and other behaviours such as difficulty concentrating, depression and withdrawal etc. Lena says *"I try thinking of happy things, to take my mind off everything, but it doesn't always work!"*

How is living with domestic violence impacting on Lena?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
What beliefs about domestic violence might Lena's family situation encourage.

.....
Children or women are responsible for trying to make it stop - *"I wish I knew what would make him stop."* Embarrassment and secrecy, as Lena explains about her mother: *"...and she even covers up for him!"* Lena is given the message that you don't talk about domestic violence to other family members and this secrecy can encourage confusion, isolation, guilt, shame and self-blame.

.....
What does Lena understand about why her mother stays?

.....
Her mother loves her father and is also extremely scared of his threats. Lena says *"I heard dad say one night... that if she ever left him... he'd find her... no matter where she was and he'd kill her."*

.....
What else might prevent Lena's mum from leaving?

.....
Fear: Homicide statistics confirm that the most dangerous time for women with violent partners is the time of leaving.

Emotional attachment: It is difficult for women to separate from a partner they love and are emotionally connected to.

Family/Cultural expectations: There is an added expectation that in marriage you stay together for better or for worse. Women feel that they have failed if they leave their partner. Women of a non-English speaking background may experience added cultural barriers including a loss of supports, language difficulties, lack of access to appropriate services and information in community languages.

Financial pressures: Most women are concerned about how they will survive on one income.

.....
What do the choices and actions of Lena and Tanika's mothers tell them about the role expectations of women?

.....
Lena - Women are responsible for the emotional well-being of a family, and therefore they should stay and try harder to resolve the problems, please their partners and put his needs before her own.
Tanika - Women do not have to put up with abuse and violence; they can be strong, take action and separate their lives from violence; also they deserve to be treated with respect.

SECTION 1C: FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

KEY CONCEPTS

- Adults can understand the effects of violence and abuse by understanding children’s feelings and behaviours.
- Even though adults may have behaved in ways that are abusive or violent, they can do something to change the situation.
- Positive parenting practices are important to help nurture children and to overcome the effects of violence and abuse.
- Systemic interventions are available to assist women and children who experience violence, eg. legal remedies.

INTRODUCTION

This final part, Future Possibilities, will identify how things can be different. You will see adults making conscious, positive choices about their actions towards their children.

Notice what the adults do or say which makes a difference for each child. Also pay attention to each child’s words in the song. These give us ideas about possible solutions and strategies for change.



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

-
BABY SAM:
- What did we imagine would make the difference for Baby Sam?**
- What effect might this have on Baby Sam?**
-

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

-
- Loving kindness and encouragement, instead of fights and putdowns, blaming the mother and undermining her confidence.
- Easier to settle, will ease distress, be easier to feed, put on weight, achieve developmental tasks at appropriate developmental stage.
-

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

SOPHIE AND HER DAD... A FEW MINUTES LATER:

What did Sophie's dad do that showed that he took responsibility and demonstrated empathy?

- He stopped emotionally abusing her.
- He rang someone he trusted for support and advice.
- He chose to put this into practice:-
- Acknowledged Sophie's feelings;
- Apologised, explained his own feelings and said he shouldn't yell at her;
- He offered her a choice about having a cuddle and checked out how she was now feeling: *"Are you O.K. now?"*

What are some of the messages conveyed to Sophie by her father?

- He showed love and concern for her, that his abuse was not her fault, that he wanted things to be different.

BILLY AND HIS MUM... SOMETIME LATER:

What does Billy's mother now understand about the effects of violence on Billy?

- She used to get angry at Billy, thinking that he was just like his father because of his aggressive behaviours. She now understands that the violence and abuse was scary for him, that he was also being hurt, and that his behaviours were a result of the violence he was subjected to, not the cause.

How did this new understanding change her ways of relating to Billy?

- She empathised with him: *"I know now that it must have been scary for you when daddy would hurt me... and hurt you too!"*
- Apologised for what had happened to him, *"I'm sorry that happened."*
- Emphasised safety- *"he can't hurt us anymore"*.
- Fostered positive beliefs about himself - *"You're such a beautiful boy."*
- Not inevitable that he will be like his father.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

LENA AND TANIKA...SOMETIME MUCH LATER:

What made the difference for Lena and Tanika?

The girls talking together about their experiences helped to overcome shame and secrecy and also encouraged their mothers to get together as well. Tanika's mother shared her knowledge and experience with Lena's mother. This helped to reduce isolation and offered vital support, information about AVO's and a strong role model. Tanika's mother empathised and understood Lena's mother's struggle and dilemmas. *"I know what you're going through... It's really hard, eh?"*

What solutions and strategies for change were identified in the song?

Develop relationships based on closeness, respect and trust rather than fear, intimidation and abuse.

Take responsibility for your actions and how these impact on others.

Empathise with children, understand their feelings and respond sensitively to their behavioural reactions to violence and abuse.

Take steps to change your behaviour and to overcome the effects of your behaviour on others.

Identify and implement positive alternative strategies which nurture and protect children.

Acknowledge the imbalance of power and responsibility in relationships between men and women and adults and children;

Understand the system that is there to prevent violence, and to protect those who are victimised.

SECTION 2A - BABY SAM

KEY CONCEPTS

- The effects of domestic violence on children's development, especially infants.
- Assessment of babies should take into consideration the context in which the baby is living and not overlook the possibility of domestic violence and abuse and neglect.
- Appropriate interventions should address both individual and contextual issues.

INTRODUCTION

Baby Sam's mother is a victim of domestic violence.

You will see tactics used by the father and the effects these have on a woman caring for a young baby, and ultimately for the baby as well.

Observe how the tactics of violence are impacting on Baby Sam, his mother and their relationship.

Begin to think about strategies that might make a difference for Baby Sam?



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

.....
What was happening at Sam's house which constituted domestic violence?

.....
How did Baby Sam let us know he was being affected?

.....
How does domestic violence affect the way mum interacts with Baby Sam?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
Physical violence, verbal abuse, threats, put-downs, blaming the mother for everything.

.....
Difficulty feeding, crying, agitated, difficult to settle, overweight. Delay in his development.

.....
Mum is agitated with Baby Sam, feeling frustrated with his difficulty in feeding and possibly feeling very negative about her role as a mother, doubting her ability to deal with Baby Sam. Mum may see Baby Sam as "difficult" rather than seeing his behaviour as a consequence of domestic violence.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
How does the father's behaviour affect the mother's beliefs about herself?

.....
"The Doctor was right... about him being underweight... you must be doing something wrong... I told you, you should have breastfed... you're hopeless. What sort of a mother are you!"

How does this frustrate her ability to care for the baby?

The father uses her vulnerability as a new mother to abuse and undermine her confidence in herself. He uses the authority of the Doctor and implies she doesn't know how to care for the baby. Women who experience domestic violence begin to believe what their partner says about them as an effect of the "brainwashing" tactics. She also has to protect the baby from the anger, threats and violence of her partner by placating him and attempting to "shut that baby up!"

.....
Notice how firmly mum pats Baby Sam.

.....
She is at risk of physically abusing the baby. Women who experience domestic violence are more likely to abuse their dependant children than non-abused women. Children may also suffer from emotional abuse or deprivation as women who are abused have to put their energy into surviving and this gets in the way of them responding to their children's emotional and physical needs.

.....
What might happen if intervention only focused on settling techniques for Baby Sam?

.....
The problem will be misunderstood and solutions to the problem may not necessarily be effective. Naming the problem as domestic violence will ensure that the broader context is taken into consideration, and that mum will not be blamed for the problem and expected to be responsible for all the solutions.

.....
Who would be most likely to have contact with Baby Sam and his family?

.....
Early Childhood Nurses, GP's and extended family members or friends, may be most likely to have contact with Baby Sam at this point. An understanding of the context of domestic violence and its effects on women and children would be most effective and helpful.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
What would be important and most helpful in assisting the family?

.....
Friends, family members and workers would need to:-
recognise the effects of domestic violence on Baby Sam, his mother and their relationship;
provide support to counter the negative effects;
place responsibility with the father for the effects of his abuse and violence and invite him to change his actions which will assist the mother in re-gaining her confidence in caring for the baby.

.....
**What could be an effective case plan to:-
provide support for this family, respond to the child protection concerns, and also address the domestic violence issues?**

.....
Elements of the case plan could include:
Early childhood nurses (family member or friend) contacts the Department of Community Services due to dad's direct violence, mum intervening to protect the baby and mum's behaviour toward Baby Sam.
Responsibility for violence placed with dad, encouragement of parenting practices which overcome the effects of past violence and prevent future physical and emotional abuse of Baby Sam.

.....
Recognition that babies are particularly vulnerable to the environment they live in.

.....
How might the Department of Community Services effectively intervene to assist this family?

.....
The Department of Community Services could:-
Speak with both parents, particularly when domestic violence is identified;
Be very clear about their expectations of each parent;
Hold the father accountable for his violence and request undertakings that the violence cease or action will be taken to secure an AVO;
Support Sam's mother if the violence and abuse continues;
Discuss ways in which this family can receive appropriate support.

.....
How might the Police assist?

.....
Initiate an AVO on behalf of a child;
Support the mother in initiating an AVO for herself and her child.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
FRAMEWORK FOR WORKER TRAINING:

What are the risks for this child?

What are the strengths?

What are your case plan goals?

What needs to happen to achieve these goals?

What could maximise the chances for change for this family?

Practice tells us that stopping the violence and empowering women is the most effective way to protect children.

Women need information about domestic violence and its effects, and to know that they are not responsible for the actions of their partner.

They need support in understanding the impact of violence and abuse on children, and ideas and knowledge about positive parenting practices which counter these effects.

Women benefit from interventions which acknowledge imbalances in power and responsibility between men and women living in domestic violence contexts. They also feel validated and supported when their partners are invited to reflect on and change their abusive and violent practices.

SECTION 2B: NOT SOPHIE'S CHOICE

KEY CONCEPTS

- children continue to experience difficulties after their parents have separated, especially when having contact visits with the violent parent.
- the quality of the relationship between children and their parents has enormous consequences for children's emotional well-being.
- positive parenting practices can make a difference.

INTRODUCTION

Sophie is on an overnight contact visit with her dad. This is after her parents' separation due to her father's physical violence towards her mother.

Notice what Sophie says to her doll and observe the interaction between Sophie and her dad.

What are Sophie's needs and feelings and how does her dad choose to respond to these?



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Sophie speaks anxiously to her doll. What did she say?

Sophie's replaying her mother's preparation for visiting with her father. "Let mummy brush your hair... you be a good girl for daddy... mummy will be home when you get back... it's only one big sleep." Sophie reassures herself that everything will be okay and it won't be long before she is home with mummy.

What might contribute to the anxiety?

Memories of past violence; seeing her mother physically hurt and crying;
Her mother's feelings about the father and sending her daughter for access;
Uncertainty about how her father will be towards her; feeling scared about his anger if she is not 'a good girl'; not feeling safe being alone with him without her mother; sleeping over in a new and strange house.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
What did Sophie's dad do which constituted abuse?

Unpredictable reaction - at first friendly and nice and then suddenly starts to yell, name calling, angry and threatening response, slamming food in front of her: *"I don't like you either... You're a spoilt little brat."* Verbal abuse, blaming both Sophie and her mother for what happened: *"her damn mother's turned her against me... she's acting like a little bitch.... She's just as bad as her mother."*

It is very confusing for young children to understand their parents' separation. Sophie may blame herself for her father's behaviour, or feel angry towards her mother for making her go to visit. The father's comments may undermine the relationship between Sophie and her mother.

.....
What does dad react to?

He reacts to Sophie saying: "I want my mummy!". He reacts with anger and sarcasm, and then orders her to "now come to the table." The father's thoughts and feelings and possible unresolved issues about his ex-partner impact on how he responds to his daughter.

.....
What risks exist for Sophie on contact visits? Is she safe?

Sophie continues to be at risk if her father's emotional abuse and violence persist. The fact that Sophie has her grandmother as an external support is a positive factor to be taken into consideration. Extended family members can have an influence and act in ways to protect Sophie.

.....
What might mum be feeling about contact visits?

Due to the history of violence mum may feel very anxious for Sophie as she cannot be there to protect her. She would have to obey Family Court Orders despite her concerns, unless there is a variation to the orders.

.....
What might Sophie's dad need to consider about Sophie's needs?

He needs to consider how vulnerable Sophie feels; that she is looking for affection, consistency and reassurance. He must acknowledge the effects of his violence on Sophie and implement positive parenting practices which address her need for safety, love and security. Dad needs to find ways to deal with his feelings about mum separately and not take them out on Sophie.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
How might dad's understanding of Sophie's needs be important for their relationship?

.....
If dad really wants a positive relationship with his daughter, then dad needs to change his behaviour and focus on relating to Sophie in a caring and respectful way. He needs to also accept the significance and importance of her relationship with her mother. Children need adults to take responsibility for addressing and preventing violence. They need consistent reinforcement that they are not to blame for violence; that they are loved and cared for, and that they will be protected from abuse and violence.

.....
What might Sophie's grandmother have said on the phone which caused dad to think about his actions towards Sophie?

.....
Sophie's grandmother may have said similar things to those we hear from Melva the possum, "*Children need adults who understand them and help them make sense of the world.*" Sophie needs her dad to listen and understand her, rather than act in a way which makes her feel scared and frightened.

.....
What did Sophie's dad do which made a difference?

.....
He empathised with Sophie and acknowledged her feelings. In stating "*I know you're missing mummy and you feel upset,*" dad was also acknowledging Sophie's relationship with her mother. He explained his own feelings and said he was wrong to behave the way he did towards her. Importantly, he told her that it was not her fault. He reassured Sophie and then gave her a choice about a hug. In addition, he also clarified how she felt eg. "*Are you okay now?*"

FRAMEWORK FOR WORKER TRAINING:

What are the risks for this child?

What are the strengths?

What are your case plan goals?

What needs to happen to achieve these goals?

What could maximise the chances for change for this family?

SECTION 2C - BILLY'S BLUES

KEY CONCEPTS

- Children's feelings, behaviours and beliefs are shaped by the context in which they live.
- Children's relationships are strongly shaped by gender role expectations from an early age.

You will see Billy in a number of different situations - In the cubby house with Sophie, in the school playground and then with his mother.

Observe Billy's play and how this reflects the domestic violence context in which he lives, and how this also shapes his beliefs and relationships with others.

Notice what his mum says and does that indicates her new understanding of the impact of domestic violence.



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

CUBBY HOUSE SCENE:

Billy and Sophie's play in the Cubby House demonstrates their beliefs about:

- the roles of men and women as parents
- ways of communicating within these roles.

Men and women have different roles;

Those who work outside the home have control of the money;

Women should look after children and ensure that their needs are met;

Women should nurture men and prioritise their needs "*How was your day?*"

Men have a greater entitlement and power because of their gender.

Where do these beliefs and attitudes come from?

Children's language reflects what they have seen and heard from the adults in their lives.

These beliefs are often reinforced by the media, extended family members, peers and other social institutions.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

How have these beliefs and attitudes affected the way Billy relates to Sophie as his 'partner' and to the baby?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

He disrespects and verbally abuses her; he also discounts and minimises her needs or requests; he dominates and controls the situation through using access and ownership of money.

He is insensitive and aggressive, hitting the baby and shouting- "*And you shut up too, ya screaming little brat.*"

How might these early experiences influence their expectations about roles and relationships?

Children will believe that domination, control and violence are normal ways of relating. Also, that imbalances in power and responsibility and inequality between men and women should be accepted; that is, women should be submissive and placating, and men should be aggressive and dominating. In addition, children will be less likely to develop relationships which are respectful and equal, and appropriate skills for positive communication and effective problem solving.

What can parents do to influence their expectations?

Parents take responsibility for their violent or abusive behaviours; Develop positive alternative ways of relating which depict respectful and caring ways of communicating. Encourage and demonstrate positive role models which convey messages about relationships which are based on love and trust.

Billy says "it's not my kid...!" and Sophie responds "Oh, don't start that again."

What issues or concerns are reflected by this dialogue?

Additional issues arise when a child is not the natural child of the male partner. These might include: unresolved issues about the former partner such as jealousy, competition, financial responsibilities. This is often compounded when the couple also have a child together. Doubt about the child's paternity - especially if there have been separations in the relationship.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

BILLY IN THE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND:

The female character says “I’ll kill ya” as she triumphs against the male character. What might this suggest about Billy wishes?

The dialogue reflects some of what Billy may have heard at home. Billy wishes that his mother would “triumph” over his father, that she could be stronger than him, stop the violence and be able to control the situation so that they are safe.

What did you notice about Billy and his behaviours, which reflects what we know about domestic violence and perpetrators?

Verbal and physical aggression, well developed denial and lies about responsibility for what he did. eg. “I didn’t... it’s not true... I didn’t do anything.” Minimises intentions “I didn’t really mean to hurt him” ... and promises to change, “I won’t do it again. I promise”.
He expresses beliefs about power and entitlement “I’m the boss here”, denigrates women “Go and cook my dinner, you fat cow”.

What was different for Billy in the way the teacher related to him?

The teacher recognised Billy’s feelings and experiences but did not accept excuses “It’s not O.K. for anyone to hit someone else... not even dads.” The teacher modelled and encouraged positive ways of relating to others and talking about feelings.

BILLY AND HIS MUM.....SOMETIME LATER:

What did Billy’s mum say that indicated her thoughts and feelings about the violence and abuse?

She misunderstood before, but now understands how he feels. She empathised with his feelings, “I’m sorry that happened.”
Emphasised safety- “he can’t hurt us anymore.”
Positive beliefs about himself - “You’re such a beautiful boy.”
Not inevitable that he will behave violently like his father.

What steps had she already taken to overcome the effects of domestic violence and abuse on Billy?

Billy’s mother recognised the effects of violence on Billy and took steps to separate. She understands the importance of safety “He can’t hurt us anymore.” She has begun reconnecting with Billy and establishing closeness and openness in talking about his and her feelings about the past. She is nurturing and affectionate and reassuring of Billy about his strengths and special qualities. “You’re such a beautiful boy... so loving and gentle.”

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

Why might Billy's mother have misinterpreted his behaviour?

Society encourages beliefs about bad and naughty children rather than looking for or understanding what these behaviours might be a reaction to. His mother may think that Billy's behaviour is 'genetically pre-determined', rather than influenced by his father's violent and abusive behaviour.

Mum said "I used to get angry with you..." , suggesting possible emotional and physical abuse by the mother.

Children's reaction to domestic violence can create behaviours that become difficult to manage. Also, the mother's parenting is taking place within a 'culture' of violence and abuse of power. This is coupled with the gendered expectation that child rearing is the mother's 'job', and if the child misbehaves it is her fault. Therefore, women are encouraged to revert to physical measures or to over discipline their children within this context. It may also be an expectation of the father to 'toughen him up and not treat him like a sissy'. Sometimes women act to intervene first with their children, as a means to protect them from a greater abuse from the father.

Why might she have also been abusive?

How does knowing about the family context of domestic violence help us in responding to Billy?

It helps us to understand Billy's experiences and how these have shaped his relationships. This invites greater empathy for the child and his need to talk about his fears and confusion. It would also suggest more effective ideas and strategies in assisting Billy. These would include systemic interventions to address the violence and abuse, as well as interpersonal strategies to assist Billy to develop more socially appropriate behaviours.

Workers/family members/friends speaking with the father may assist change, particularly in recognising the effects of his violence and abuse on Billy. Also, assisting the mother to not blame herself, but to act to make the necessary changes for the safety of herself and Billy.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

FRAMEWORK FOR WORKER TRAINING:

- What are the risks for this child?**
- What are the strengths?**
- What are your case plan goals?**
- What needs to happen to achieve these goals?**
- What could maximise the chances for change for this family?**
- What do we need to be aware of as workers to avoid our interventions reinforcing the dynamics of domestic violence?**

Tactics of domestic violence result from an imbalance in power and responsibility between men and women. Intervention must seek to redress this power and responsibility imbalance rather than replicate it. Often the person with greatest power (violent partner) can undermine the change process, while the person with the least power (woman subjected to domestic violence) is seen as most responsible for solving the problem. Appropriate intervention requires inviting the violent partner to be accountable and asking him what he will do to ensure the future safety and well-being of his family. Intervention must also focus on providing support to the women and making visible the real intentions and effects of domestic violence. This facilitates a new understanding of what she is responsible for and enables her to recognise what is within her power to change.

SECTION 2D: LENA AND TANIKA GET TALKING

KEY CONCEPTS

- The impact of fear, guilt, self-blame and powerlessness on women's perceived choices and options.
- The context in which girls are raised strongly influences their beliefs about gender and role expectations.
- Safety can be obtained through access to family, friends, services, and knowledge about the wider support system such as police and courts.
- NESB and Aboriginal women may face additional difficulties when dealing with domestic violence and accessing the system.

INTRODUCTION

Tanika and her mother separated from domestic violence about a year ago. Tanika shares her knowledge and experiences with her friend Lena, who is still living in a situation in which her father is violent towards her mother.

Notice the thoughts and feelings expressed by the two girls about domestic violence and the experiences of their mothers.



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

.....
How has living with domestic violence impacted on Lena's beliefs and understanding about power and responsibility?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

.....
Lena believes her father's comment about her mother: "Dad said, she should know what upsets him by know!" Therefore, she believes that women upset their partners and are responsible for causing the violence. She accepts males have power over females, and therefore have greater status and privilege.

.....
How might Lena's understanding of the situation affect her relationship with her mother; and her relationship with her father?
.....
Lena may blame her mother and become angry and disrespectful towards her. She would be fearful of her father, and as a female believe that she should do everything to please and placate him and to avoid his violence.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

How has separating from domestic violence impacted on Tanika, and her relationship with her mother?

Tanika is no longer scared or worried and feels secure in the knowledge of the AVO and the role of the police to protect her mother and herself. The reduction in her fears is reflected in her improved school performance.

What was the catalyst for Tanika's mother to leave and what assisted her in doing so safely?

The domestic murder of her best friend. Information and knowledge about AVO's assisted her to access the system.

What would influence Lena's mother in her decision about whether to leave or to stay?

Cultural and family expectations and support. Understanding the effects of domestic violence on herself and her children. Access to information about the legal system, safe housing, women's refuges, income support, and women's support groups etc. The time of leaving can be the most dangerous time of all.

What would be the safety considerations?

As a woman from an NESB background, what difficulties might Lena's mother experience?

Cultural and language barriers; the need for translated information and access to interpreters; social isolation and lack of family support; expectations of extended family members about the role of women etc.

As an Aboriginal woman, what particular issues might Tanika's mother have had to deal with in accessing the system?

Distrust of the system and police because of factors such as colonisation and black deaths in custody. Lack of culturally appropriate services and information.

Tanika asks Lena "How come your mum stays with your dad?"

Lena's mother believes the threats of her husband and is fearful about what he may do if she left. She does not know about the legal options for providing safety for herself and Lena. Statistics indicate that the time of leaving is the most dangerous time for women who have experienced domestic violence.

What might prevent Lena's mum from leaving?

Statistics indicate that the time of leaving is the most dangerous time for women who have experienced domestic violence.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

Lena's mother says that Tanika and her mother have helped them so much. What can women in violent relationships learn from women who have left?

Tanika's mother understands what Lena's mother is facing and acknowledges how hard it is. She also shares information with Lena's mother about the options available to her. Despite the obstacles, Tanika's mother was able to leave her violent partner. This offers hope to Lena's mother that this is possible.

What are the issues for women who can see the effects on their children but who have not left the violent relationship?

Women who recognise the effects of domestic violence on their children feel trapped in the violent relationship by limited choices. Often women are caught between the need for safety and the fear of harm if they left. Women may also be trapped by the notion that children should have a father and that families should stay together no matter what.

What do the choices and actions of Lena and Tanika's mothers tell them about the role expectations of women?

Lena- Women are responsible for the emotional well-being of a family, and therefore they should stay and try harder to resolve the problems, please their partners and put their needs before their own.

What do we need to be aware of as workers to avoid our interventions reinforcing the dynamics of domestic violence?

Tanika- Women do not have to put up with abuse and violence; they can be strong, take action and separate their lives from violence; also they deserve to be treated with respect.
Tactics of domestic violence result from an imbalance in power and responsibility between men and women. Intervention must seek to redress this power and responsibility imbalance rather than replicate it. Often the person with greatest power (violent partner) can undermine the change process, while the person with the least power (woman subjected to domestic violence) is seen as most responsible for solving the problem. Appropriate intervention requires inviting the violent partner to be accountable and asking him what he will do to ensure the future safety and well-being of his family. Intervention must also focus on providing support to the women and making visible the real intentions and effects of domestic violence. This facilitates a new understanding of what she is responsible for and enables her to recognise what is within her power to change.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

FRAMEWORK FOR WORKER TRAINING:

- What are the risks for this child?
- What are the strengths?
- What are your case plan goals?
- What needs to happen to achieve these goals?
- What could maximise the chances for change for this family?

SECTION 2E: ROBERT INVITES HIS FRIENDS OVER

KEY CONCEPTS

- Community beliefs often misplace blame and responsibility for violence onto women and children
- Children's beliefs are greatly influenced by what they see and hear around them
- The use of violence is a conscious choice, used to dominate and control others.

INTRODUCTION

Robert and his friends, all of whom have experienced domestic violence, are playing a game and talking together.

What do the conversations reflect about the children's beliefs about why violence happens and who is responsible?



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

What do the children believe about why domestic violence occurs and who is responsible?

What do the children admire and accept about the super hero character?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

Domestic violence happens because of naughty children, 'nagging' women or their dad's bad temper. eg. *"He can't help it, even Gran says he's always had a bad temper even when he was little, he just loses it sometimes, but only when I'm naughty or when mum nags him."* These imply the father has no control, is provoked by others and therefore his actions are excused.

Violence and aggression are positive personal attributes. It is okay to use violence to get what you want. To be in a position of power over others is something to aspire to. eg. *"Is he tough, does he have a gun, does he beat people up?"*

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Billy said 'it didn't hurt when his dad hit him.'

What does this reflect about Billy's thoughts and feelings?

Billy believes that boys should be tough and not let on if they feel hurt or upset by physical abuse.

How have Billy's beliefs about his mother been affected by his dad's behaviour?

He believes that women are weak and should therefore be disrespected.

"It doesn't hurt me cos I'm tough... but mum... huh, she cries when he hits her!"

What do we learn from Billy's family about how violence is excused?

Often there is nothing in place which provides a sanction to men's violent behaviour; no alternate messages which convey that violence is not okay; a continued belief that violence is not bad and is an effective means of having control.

Does dad take responsibility for his actions in other settings outside the home?

The children are caught between excusing violent behaviour and acknowledging that men who use violence do have control in some situations.

For example: Sophie - *"Would he hit me? NO"*

Tanika - *"But what if he got angry at work? I bet he wouldn't hit his boss? NO"*

There would be consequences if he hit his boss, he'd lose his job. It is clear that dad can control his 'temper' but chooses not to at home.

What accounts for this difference in attitude by Billy's dad about violence to Billy and his mother and violence to others?

Domestic violence mostly occurs beyond the view of others. Shame and secrecy are factors which inhibit a woman's opportunity to do anything about it. There are tough sanctions in place for violence to non-family members. Dad also reinforces and shapes others beliefs about his violence.

What are some of the comments the children make about their dad?

Billy: *"We love our dad."*

Lena: *"I don't like it when my dad yells and throws things at my mum."*

Tanika: *"I'm so glad that dad doesn't live with us anymore."*

Robert: *"My mum reckons she's the boss at our house because our dad's hardly ever home!"* Children are caught between the feelings of love they have for their dad and feelings of confusion and anger regarding his violence towards their mother and themselves; they often blame themselves, their siblings or their mother.

What do these comments reflect about the children's thoughts and feelings about their dad?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Billy says "Kids need a dad and anyway, we love our dad!" What message does this convey about families?

Families should stay together even though someone is being hurt by someone they love; that is a part of relationships and normal family life. If you love someone you should put up with violence.

How might this influence Billy's mum's thoughts about whether to stay or leave?

Children's love for their dad places a great deal of pressure on women to stay in violent relationships. Research has shown that the most common reason why women stay is for the sake of the children. This belief, that children should have a dad and the reality that two parent families can better provide for their children strongly impacts on women's choices and decisions. Many women are also emotionally attached to their partner and their love for him invites them to hang on and to try harder to make the relationship work.

If we reviewed the qualities that children need in a dad and asked "Kids need a dad who...", what might be some of these qualities?

A dad who:-
is available to spend quality time with them;
provides them with the love and support they need;
is respectful in the way he relates to others;
is nurturing towards his partner and his children.
takes responsibility for his actions and for the emotional well-being of the family.

What do the beliefs expressed by the children suggest in terms of their future adult relationships?

Unless the children receive positive messages about the nature of equal relationships based on respect and trust, the children will enter relationships that are unhealthy and unfulfilling. Aspects of violence, control and victimisation may also be a feature of future relationships.

SECTION 2F - CHANGE IS GONNA COME OUR WAY

KEY CONCEPTS

- Relationships based on closeness, love and trust are important for both adults and children.
- People who have been violent or abusive need to take responsibility for their actions, and how they impact on others.
- Empathy, respect for others, and positive parenting practices provide role models for children about the way to conduct themselves in relationships with others.
- Women and children need knowledge and support in accessing effective systemic interventions against domestic violence.

INTRODUCTION

Each verse of the song presents possible solutions to each of the children's situations.

Tune in to the range of suggestions which may make a difference for each of the characters. Notice how these reflect important solutions for all children who have experienced domestic violence and abuse.



(Play Video)



(Pause Video)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

What are the solutions presented in the song for each child?

..... Baby Sam - Life without fear; closeness based on love and trust.

Sophie - Sophie is not to blame. Her father needs to understand her and give her a helping hand.

Billy - It's not okay to hurt other people in any way, Billy and his dad need to talk about feelings instead.

Lena and Tanika - support from others who understand, positive role model of those who have left, information about legal options.

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

What else might be important in solving and overcoming the problems experienced by these children?

INFORMATION AND VIDEO REFERENCES

The effects of domestic violence on children must be acknowledged.

Women need support to recognise how the violence is affecting them, their children and their relationships. They need information and support in making choices to protect themselves and their children. Male partners who are violent need to take responsibility for their violence and the effect it is having on their family. They need to make choices and take action to change their behaviour and to help overcome the effects of their behaviours on their family. These choices may involve remaining part of the family but changing their behaviour; or providing safety to their family by separating and agreeing to an AVO.

What can be done to aid the change process?

Workers, family members or friends must be clear about who is responsible for the violence and not shift the blame onto women and children by condoning excuses. Women experiencing domestic violence do not cause the violence. However, they are responsible for their own abusive action if they have abused the children. Both parents need to be held accountable for the safety of the children.

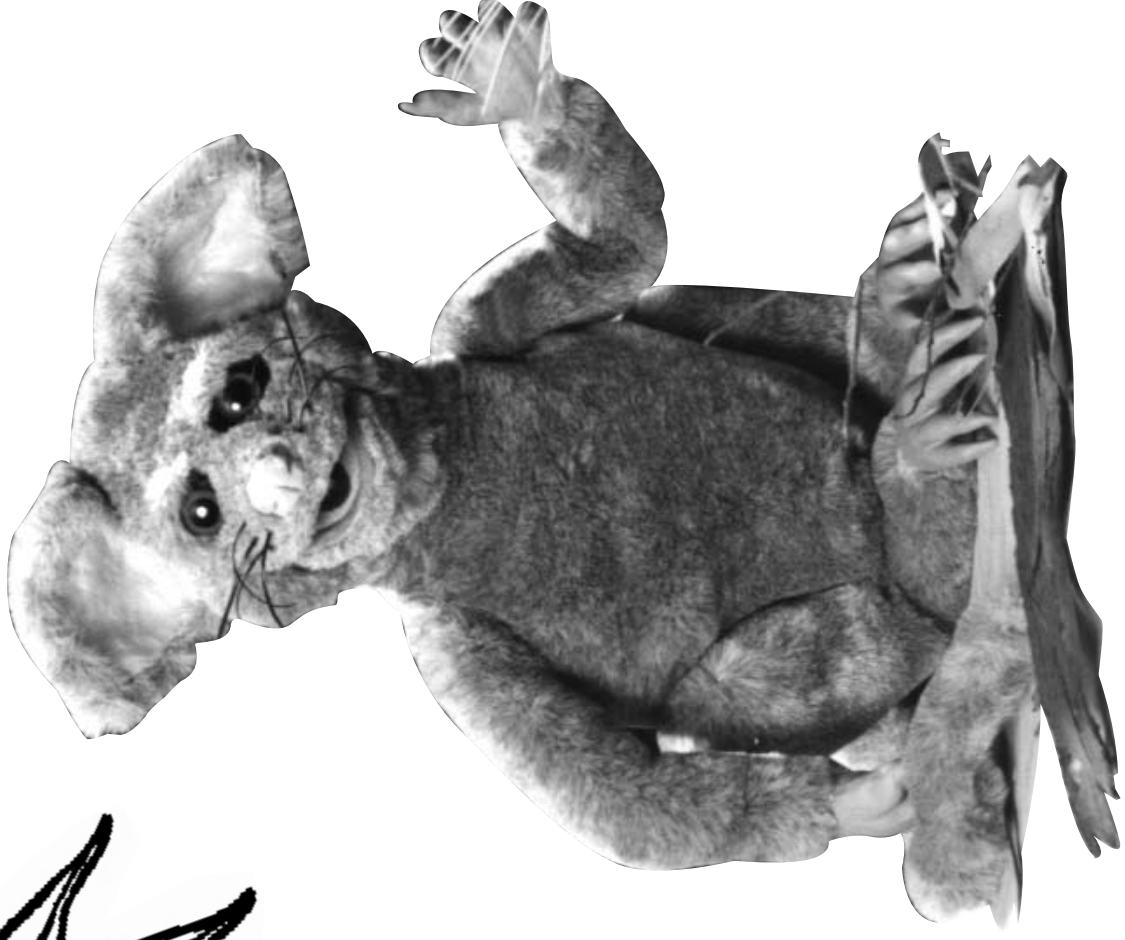
What do we need to be aware of as workers to avoid our interventions reinforcing the dynamics of domestic violence?

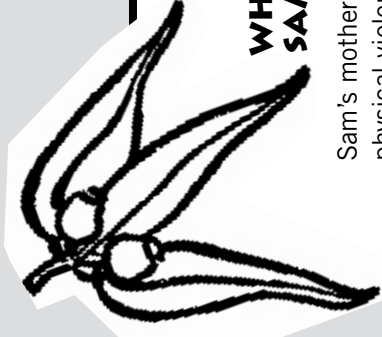
Tactics of domestic violence result from an imbalance in power and responsibility between men and women. Intervention must seek to redress this power and responsibility imbalance rather than replicate it. Often the person with greatest power (violent partner) can undermine the change process, while the person with the least power (woman subjected to domestic violence) is seen as most responsible for solving the problem. Appropriate intervention requires inviting the violent partner to be accountable and asking him what he will do to ensure the future safety and well-being of his family. Intervention must also focus on providing support to the women and making visible the real intentions and effects of domestic violence. This facilitates a new understanding of what she is responsible for and enables her to recognise what is within her power to change.

SECTION 3

CHANGE COULD COME

MELVA POSSUM'S STORY BOOK





BABY SAM'S STORY

WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN WHICH BABY SAM IS LIVING?

Sam's mother is a victim of domestic violence. Her partner uses tactics of physical violence and verbal abuse to control and dominate her. We also see him being insensitive to the needs of the baby and using her vulnerability as a new mother to criticise her and undermine her confidence. Sam is a victim of emotional abuse, and is at risk of physical abuse.

HOW IS THIS SITUATION IMPACTING ON SAM?

The father's behaviour creates an environment of tension, fear and uncertainty to which Sam is reacting with distress: he is unsettled, cries incessantly, is hypersensitive to loud noises around him, and stiffens when being fed. This creates a vicious cycle which undermines the mother's attempts to care for him: the more Sam reacts to the tension, the more difficult he is to care for, and the more his mother believes her partner's view that she is a hopeless and incompetent parent. As she attempts to prioritise the needs of her husband ("Shut that baby up!!"), there is increased risk of her physically abusing the baby.

MELVA'S WISDOM

"Young minds are like sponges. Soaking up things we don't even realise. Often the way we find out is... noticing their behaviours."

Many people think that babies are too young to know what is going on around them, and therefore that they are not affected by the verbal abuse and physical violence around them. When there are problems such as constant crying, feeding difficulties or post natal depression, the possibility of domestic violence should be considered.

CHANGE COULD COME

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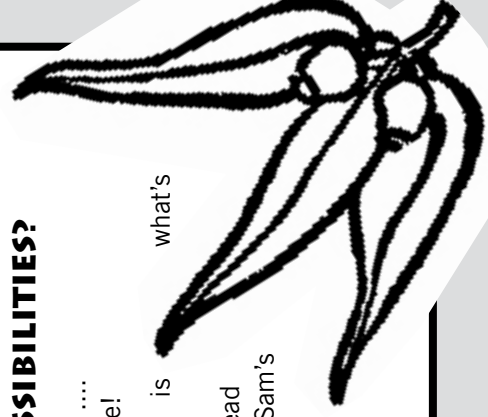


"From where I am it seems so clear that what we need is a life without fear, closeness based on love and trust. For raising kids... it's a must."

CHANGE COULD COME... FUTURE POSSIBILITIES?

MELVA: If only a change could come for our little ones ... what a difference it would make for their future!

NONI: You're absolutely right Melva, change is what's needed... and it is possible you know... Imagine, if instead of all the fights and the putdowns, imagine if Sam's dad could show some loving kindness and encouragement.



CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



NOT SOPHIE'S CHOICE

WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN WHICH SOPHIE IS LIVING?

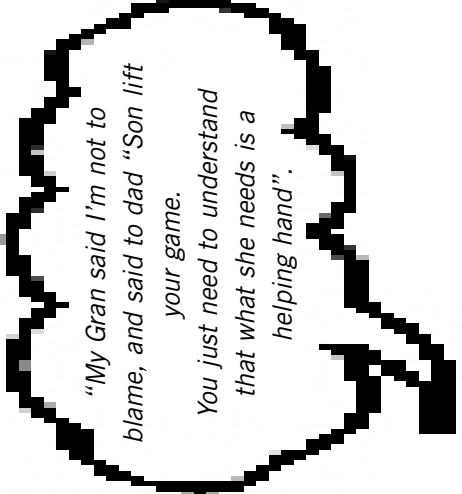
Sophie is living with her mother following the separation of her parents due to her father's domestic violence. Sophie has gone on her first visit and overnight stay with her father since the separation. This is a big step for Sophie because she remembers her father's violence and this shapes her thoughts and feelings about him. Her father's unresolved issues about the separation, and his reaction to Sophie's insecurity and missing her mother results in emotional abuse of Sophie. He becomes angry, impatient, yells, and calls her "a spoilt little brat", "a little bitch", and says "she's just as bad as her mother".

HOW IS THIS SITUATION IMPACTING ON SOPHIE?

Sophie is afraid and uncertain of what her father may do next, being aware of his capacity for violence. She becomes distressed when her father raises his voice, begins to cry and is unable to eat her dinner. She is scared and alone, wanting her mother to be there to comfort her.

CHANGE COULD COME... FUTURE POSSIBILITIES?

Sophie's dad stops what he is doing, rings his own mother who supports him to change the situation for Sophie and himself. He is then able to show empathy for Sophie and acknowledge her feelings of insecurity and missing her mum. "I know you're missing mummy and you feel upset. I was upset too but I shouldn't yell at you. It's not your fault. Would you like daddy to give you a hug?" He apologises and explains his behaviour and says that it's not her fault. In doing this he takes responsibility for his actions and makes a conscious choice to act in ways which addresses Sophie's needs for safety, love and security.

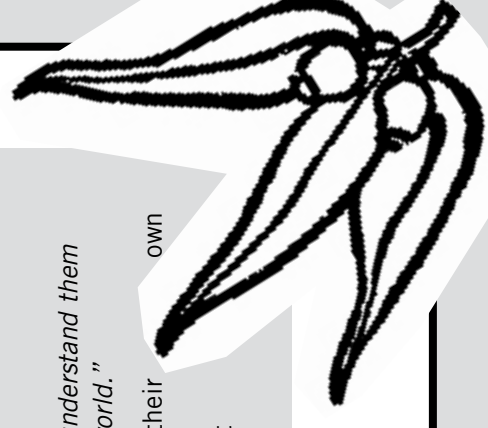


"My Gran said I'm not to blame, and said to dad "Son lift your game. You just need to understand that what she needs is a helping hand".

MELVA'S WISDOM

"Children need grown-ups around them who understand them and help them make sense of the world."

Often, adults find it difficult to see past their own experiences and problems and to understand the situation through children's eyes, and what it is that children need.





BILLY'S BLUES

WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN WHICH BILLY IS LIVING?

Billy lives with his mum and dad. His mother is a victim of domestic violence and Billy is being physically and emotionally abused; mostly by his father, but sometimes by his mother. Billy believes that his father's violence is caused by his mother's 'nagging' or by Billy's 'naughtiness'. Other family members condone and excuse domestic violence with comments such as: "He's always had a bad temper... even when he was little. He just loses it sometimes..." Billy is ridiculed and teased by the other neighborhood children. Also, Billy has started school and is expected to relate in more appropriate, caring and non-aggressive ways towards others, especially his peers.

HOW IS THIS SITUATION IMPACTING ON BILLY?

Billy feels confused, embarrassed and rejected; at other times he is defensive and verbally and physically aggressive. He has learnt from watching his father that the way to get what you want is to dominate and control others. He copies his father's disrespect and abuse towards his mother and ridicules her for being weak. Billy develops a tough 'bravado' to cover up his own hurt from abuse and violence. His aggressive actions result in Billy becoming isolated, and experiencing difficulties in getting on with other children, especially at school.

MELVA'S WISDOM

"When we stop and listen to our little ones we get a good idea of what they see and hear around them. Young minds are like sponges. Soaking up things we don't even realise. Often the way we find out is by tuning into their thoughts and feelings and noticing their behaviour."

Children's behaviours are often misinterpreted as the children being bad or 'difficult'. The family and social context in which children live must be addressed in order to understand and effectively intervene to assist children and their families.

CHANGE COULD COME



"My teacher said it's not okay to hurt other people in any way. Just talk about your feelings instead... So Dad just get that in your head!"

CHANGE COULD COME... FUTURE POSSIBILITIES?

Billy's mum came to understand that his aggressive behaviours were the result of the abuse and violence he had experienced. She understood that "it must have been scary for you when daddy would hurt me... and hurt you too". She took steps to ensure that she and Billy were safe and couldn't be hurt anymore. She recognised and appreciated Billy's special qualities as being "loving and gentle", and encouraged Billy to value these ways of relating to others. Billy's teacher was also someone who understood Billy's situation. He role modelled for Billy respectful ways of relating to others and emphasised the importance of talking about feelings.

CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



LENA AND TANIKA GET TALKING

WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN WHICH LENA AND TANIKA ARE LIVING?

Lena lives with her mother and father. Her mother is a victim of ongoing domestic violence whose husband has threatened to kill her if she ever leaves. Tanika is living with her mother. They have separated from her father due to his domestic violence and there is an AVO (Apprehended Violence Order) in place. The separation, which took place about 12 months ago, followed the domestic murder of Tanika's mother's best friend.

HOW IS THIS SITUATION IMPACTING ON LENA AND TANIKA?

The separation enabled Tanika to overcome fears and worries. She knows about the AVO and what the police would do if her father tried to "approach, harass or threaten" her mother or herself. Tanika is more relaxed and focussed on her schoolwork, resulting in an impressive improvement in her school report. She is able to share her knowledge and experience to support Lena, who is still living with the many worries and fears about her father's violence. Lena is concerned about her mother's safety and pre-occupied with what would stop her father's violence. She is aware of how his threats and ongoing abuse effects her mother and she feels fearful, confused and uncertain about the future.

MELVA'S WISDOM

"Young minds are like sponges. Soaking up things we don't even realise."

Children's awareness about domestic violence is often far greater than adults expect. This can result in children carrying the burden of fear, guilt and responsibility; they may believe that they are the cause of the violence or that they are responsible for making it stop. These beliefs can greatly impact on children and their relationships with others.

CHANGE COULD COME

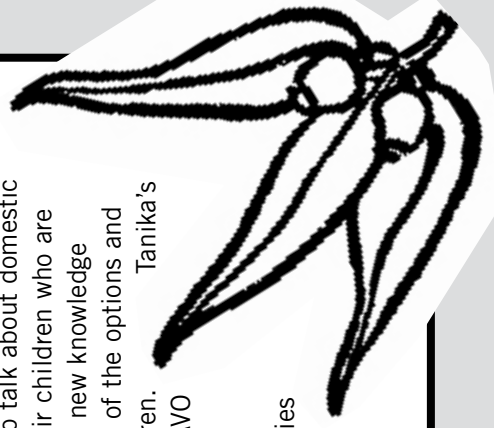
© 1997 Jannawi Family Centre

"My mum talked to my best friend's mum, seems to me that a change could come. Now mum knows about an AVO. Will we stay or will we go? Will he stay or will he go?"

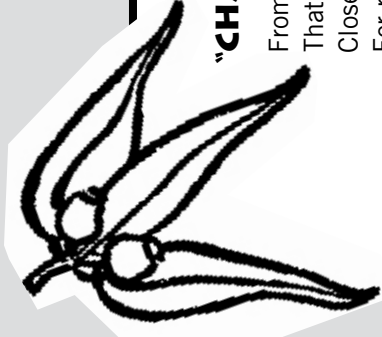


CHANGE COULD COME... FUTURE POSSIBILITIES?

Lena talked with Tanika who understood what she was going through and how she felt. The girls also encouraged their mothers to talk about domestic violence and what is available to assist women and their children who are living in such situations. This support, information and new knowledge greatly empowered Lena's mother in her understanding of the options and choices available to protect herself and her children. Tanika's mother was a strong role model for how to initiate an AVO and use the system to effectively intervene to stop domestic violence. Also, Tanika and her mother were positive examples of how life can be different for families when they are not subjected to violence and abuse.



CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



"CHANGE COULD COME"

From where I am it seems so clear
That what we need is a life without fear
Closeness based on love and trust
For raising kids... it's a must
For raising kids... it's a must!

My Gran said I'm not to blame
And said to Dad - "Son lift your game,
You just need to understand that what she
needs is a helping hand!"
What she needs is a helping hand!

Change is gonna come my way...
Change is gonna come our way...

My teacher said it's not Okay
To hurt other people in any way
Just talk about your feelings instead...
So Dad... Just get that in your head!
Dad just get that in your head!

My mum talked to my best friend's mum
Seems to me that a change could come
Now mum knows about an AVO
Will we stay or will we go?
Will he stay or will he go?

Change is gonna come my way
Change is gonna come our way
Change is gonna come our way!

Change Could Come written by Chris Burke
© 1997 Jannawi Family Centre

CHANGE GONNA COME

Black woman, black life
Domestic violence, what a life
A change gonna come my way
Black woman, black life
Domestic violence, what a life
A change gonna come my way
A change gonna come my way
He'd come home most every night
Then he'd start, we'd have a fight
Baby crying in the room
I'd start swinging the kitchen broom

Black woman, black life
Domestic violence, what a life
A change gonna come my way

Neighbours frightened call the cops
If they come we would stop
Policeman walk through the door
Don't want to argue anymore

A change gonna come my way
A change gonna come my way
My way
My way
My way

Change Gonna Come written by Ruby Hunter
(Mushroom Music)
Performed by Ruby Hunter courtesy Aurora Records.
From - *THOUGHTS WITHIN* - Ruby Hunter

WALKING INTO DOORS

You say you're a man, you understand,
but you don't
You should lend her a helping hand,
but you won't
Cos I'm a man, I don't understand, but I try
She always does what I command, while she
cries
And why should we do what we do and sleep at
night?

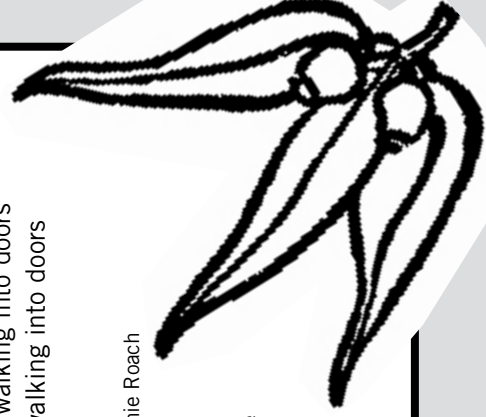
The crazy things we put her through, it isn't
right, it isn't right
So my bother don't hurt anymore, she's got her
lore, you've got yours

And she's sick and tired of walking into doors
Her gentle spirit, her sacred way and her smile
May not be here, she may disappear in a little
while

Sister moon, sister girl and giving birth
Mother nature, mother of pearl and mother earth,
sweet mother earth

So my brother, don't hurt her anymore, she's got
her lore and you've got yours
And she's sick and tired of walking into doors
Yes, she sick and tired of walking into doors

Walking Into Doors written by Archie Roach
(Mushroom Music).
Performed by Archie Roach
courtesy Aurora Records.
From - *JAMU DREAMING* - Archie
Roach



USEFUL RESOURCES

Fact sheets and pamphlets are widely available from various organisations for free or at a minimal cost. A selection is listed below:

NSW CHILD PROTECTION COUNCIL

Children and Domestic Violence: A child protection perspective.

This booklet provides an overview of the issues, identifies the impact on children and discusses appropriate intervention strategies.

Cost: Free

Seminar Series 7 - Children who experience domestic violence

This booklet summarises papers presented at a seminar held in 1994 to highlight the impact on children who experience domestic violence and child protection issues.

Cost: \$2.50

Fact Sheets concerning the physical abuse and neglect of children, child sexual assault and the reporting of suspected abuse are also available at no cost.

Contact: (02) 9286 7276 Fax: (02) 9286 7267

QUEENSLAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTRE (DVRC)

A range of Factsheets and brochures are produced by the DVRC which provide basic facts and information about domestic violence.

Fact Sheet No. 6 The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Excellent review of the effects on children and the beliefs and feelings that result from experiencing domestic violence.

Domestic Violence is an abuse of power

This clearly outlines what is domestic violence, the types of abuse, its impact on women and discusses what should be done to support women who are experiencing domestic violence.

Cost: Less than 10 copies - free, over 10 copies 25 cents/copy.

Contact: (07) 3217 2544 Fax: (07) 3217 2679

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY SERVICE

Community Workers Kit.

Includes information about the dynamics of domestic violence and outlines the legal process.

Cost: \$6

Contact: (02) 9637 3741, 1800 810 784 or Fax: (02) 9682 3844

NAPCAN

(National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) Family Violence Hurts Children Too

This pamphlet discusses the effects on children living in the context of domestic violence. It identifies such effects according to developmental age and emphasises how to help children in this situation.

Cost: Free

Contact: (02) 9223 3565 Fax: (02) 9221 5936

DEPARTMENT FOR WOMEN (INFORMATION SERVICES)

We Can Do Something About It

This pamphlet defines domestic violence and the support and legal options available to women. It is translated into several community languages.

Cost: Free

Contact: (02) 9334 1160 or 1800 817 227 Fax: (02) 9334 1023

GETTING HELP - WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

LEGAL

Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (DVAS)

(02) 9637 3741 or 1800 810 784

The DVAS is a state-wide service providing a telephone advice line, legal representation and referral to experienced legal and support services.

Women's Legal Resources Centre (WLRC)

(02) 9637 4597 or 1800 801 501

The service provides a telephone advice line and outreach services on an individual basis. WLRC give advice regarding family law issues, property settlement entitlements, child support scheme and victim's compensation.

Community Legal Centres

There are specialist and local community legal centres which can provide legal advice to women experiencing domestic violence. In particular, the Immigration Advice and Rights Service will provide advice to women who have been sponsored and do not have permanent residency. Ring CLC Secretariat (02) 9318 2355 for details of nearest centre.

Aboriginal Women's Legal Service

The service provides legal advice to women and their children as well as access to appropriate legal representation. Ring (02) 9569 3847 for advice and referral.

Legal Aid Commission of NSW

Legal aid is available to victims who apply for an Apprehended Violence Order (subject to a means test). Women may be represented by solicitors in a local legal aid office or in some circumstances by private practitioners acting on legal aid.

Court Assistance Schemes

Many local courts have court assistance schemes operating on the list day for Apprehended Violence Order matters. Some of these schemes have been funded by the Legal Aid Commission. Ring DVAS for further information about where these are operating.

POLICE

Each Patrol has a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) who is responsible for monitoring the police response in relation to domestic violence. Police have the power to initiate an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) to protect women and are the only ones who can initiate an order on behalf of a child under 16 years of age. Women can apply for an AVO on their own behalf by seeing the chamber magistrate at the local court and can include dependant children on their order.

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

Women's Refuges

Provide emergency accommodation and support to women and their children. Workers will often assist women to access long-term accommodation such as the Department of Housing. In some circumstances the Department of Housing or the Department of Community Services will provide funds for emergency overnight accommodation where a woman and her children are unable to access refuge accommodation and where they are in need of protection. For further information contact the NSW Women's Refuge Resource and Referral Service on (02) 9560 1605 or the Dept. of Community Services 24 hour DV Line on 1800 656463.

Homeless Person's Information Centre
(02) 9265 9081

This service can provide current information about vacancies in women's refuges.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Domestic Violence Line

The Department of Community Services provides a state-wide 24 hour advice line. They have a comprehensive database which can identify the nearest support services and experienced workers operating the line are able to provide referrals and discuss support options. 1800 656463.

Child Protection and Family Crisis Service

A 24 hour crisis service is available where children are at immediate risk. Experienced workers can be called out to assess the situation and provide emergency accommodation to ensure the safety of the children. The local community service office will then provide follow-up and discuss on-going supports. 1800 066 777

Local centres are situated throughout New South Wales and are available during normal office hours. They are listed under Community Services Centres in the white pages.

INCOME SUPPORT

Information is available at any local Department of Social Security office about pensions and benefits. Social workers are available to discuss this information and explore appropriate support services and safety options.

COUNSELLING

Family Support Services

Family Support Services provide a variety of services for families experiencing domestic violence. These may include individual counselling, groups for women and children, court support and advocacy. Ring Family Support Services Association on (02) 9743 6565 for information about your nearest service.

Community Health Centres

Community Health Centres are situated throughout New South Wales. Referrals for counselling should be discussed with the intake worker on duty at the time. They will discuss whether the centre will accept the referral or may refer to more appropriate services such as Women's Health Centres which may exist in the local area. Community Health Centres are listed under C in the white pages telephone directory.

Relationships Australia

Relationships Australia provides a variety of services to families experiencing domestic violence. Their primary focus is the provision of couple counselling in circumstances where violence has ceased. Groups for men who are violent to their partners are offered on an ongoing basis. Support groups for women are also offered periodically. Ring (02) 9418 8800 for further details.

LOCAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEES (LDVC)

There are over 85 local domestic violence committees across the state which can provide accurate information about the available services in your area. Contact the Violence Against Women Unit in the Department for Women on (02) 9334 1160 to find your local LDVC. The Department for Women also produces a range of domestic violence pamphlets which will be of great assistance in providing information to women who are subjected to domestic violence.

AREA CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES

These are co-ordinated through the NSW Child Protection Council. They are also an appropriate group which can provide information, develop resources and conduct campaigns about child protection issues concerning domestic violence. Ring the NSW Child Protection Council on (02) 9286 7276 for further details.

FURTHER READING

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- McKay, M. M. (1994). "The link between domestic violence and child abuse: Assessment and treatment considerations." **Child Welfare**, 73 1, 29-39.
- Menzies, T. (1993). **Nurturing Non-Violence: A handbook to help children who witness domestic violence**. Lower North Shore Domestic Violence Committee. Lane Cove NSW.
- Mertin, P. & Mathias, J. (1991). **Children of domestic violence: Effects on behavioural, emotional and psychological functioning**. South Australian Department of Community Services. p.1-20.
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- Report of the Queensland Domestic Violence Task Force (1988). **Beyond these Walls**. Brisbane, Queensland Government Printer.
- Stacey, W. & Shupe, A. (1983). **The Family Secret**. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Ward, L. (1993). "Relationship between adult victims of assault and children at risk of abuse." **British Medical Journal**. Vol.306 No. 42 p.1101-1102.

FEEDBACK FORM

Jannawi Family Centre is committed to ongoing consultation and feedback. Your comments will greatly assist in improving the package and will inform the development of new resources.

What is the context of your organisation? eg. Training, counselling, etc.

Who have you used the package with?

How did the group/individuals respond to the material?

What did you find most useful concerning the video and materials contained within this package?

What suggestions do you have which may improve this package?

Please comment on any ideas or suggestions you have which may assist in the development of further companion packages?



Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.
Please return to Jannawi Family Centre, 22 Samuel Street, Lakemba NSW 2195.