

SMCFA & SMFVRIC
Child and Family Working Group (0-10)

Morning Series Summary:

WHISE Women's Health in the Southeast- Promoting Respect & Equity Together

Wednesday 27th August

Guest Speaker: Danielle McCaffrey

Our Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country: We acknowledge the people of the Boonwurrung, Bunurong and Wurundjeri tribes of the Kulin Nation who are the traditional owners and custodians of the Aboriginal land of our region. We recognise their continued connection to the land and waters and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. It always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

We embrace diversity in all its forms, and respect everyone's strengths and contributions irrespective of gender, ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and political views.

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W: <https://whise.org.au/>

For additional information:

About WHISE

Women's Health in the Southeast is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1992. WHISE provides promotion, advocacy, support and education services for women's health in the Southern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. They work with governments, organisations, education providers, health practitioners and community groups.

WHISE is part of a network of women's health service across Victoria. The Women's Health Services Network (WHSN) focuses on empowering women, working to improve health and wellbeing of women within the community.

- **How they can help**
- WHISE provide high-quality consultancy services to help businesses achieve gender equality. This includes audits, evaluations, setting targets or quotas and more.
- Workshops around topics such as Sexual & Reproductive Health, Gender & Mental Wellbeing, Preventing Gendered Violence and Gender Equality
 - **Campaigns & Projects**
 - Some of the projects and campaigns WHISE is and has been involved with include Let's Talk Respect, which encourages conversations about respect and equality with children, 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.
 - Training for Respect which is seeking to improve the capacity, capability and confidence of Victoria's adult education sector to prevent and respond to work-related gender-violence.
 - Nice Work If You Can Get It, a project funded by the Victorian government to identify and address the systemic and practical barriers to gender equal apprenticeship pathways and employment by working with the key conduit for the manufacturing workforce in the region- Chisholm TAFE.

"Above information taken from WHISE website"

Presentation Notes:

- WHISE is the leading primary prevention for health and wellbeing for Southern Metro area.
- This presentation discussed Primary Prevention of Gender Based & Family Violence
- Danielle discussed the "river" analogy relating to primary prevention of gender based and family violence. This analogy explains needing to go upstream to address the root causes of a problem before people fall in and need to be rescued rather than just treating the symptoms downstream.
- Remembering that people do not work in linear ways, people can be both experiencing and using FV and have mental health and more, so the system does need to be adaptive.
- The three stages of primary prevention are described as **Primary prevention**- Describes work done across communities, organisations and society in settings where people live, work, learn, socialise and play to stop violence from happening in the first place. Some examples of this are developing campaigns that aim to break down gender stereotypes or supporting sport clubs to develop policies and procedures that ensure women have equal access to resources and appropriate facilities to support their participation. **Secondary or Early**

- **Prevention-** Describes initiatives designed to stop early signs of abuse from escalating and targeted interventions to shift attitudes and behaviours in ways that minimise immediate and long-term risk. Examples of this are working with groups or individuals who are at higher risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence, focusing efforts on where there are signs that violence may occur and working with the wider community to improve approaches to recognising and responding to signs of violence. Lastly **Tertiary Prevention-** Often also referred to as response and recovery. This type of prevention is described as initiatives that involve supporting victim survivors during and after their experiences of violence and intervening to stop violence from re-occurring. Examples of this are supporting victims to safety plan to leave a violent situation or referrals to counselling.
- Primary prevention is about understanding cycles and root causes and trying to break those cycles.
- Royal commission brought about policies and guides and ways to work towards prevention using evidence both local and global. Bringing in CALD, LGBTQ, Aboriginal. Some of the frameworks that guide WHISE's work are Change the Story, Changing the picture, Changing the landscape, Pride in prevention and Intersectionality matters.
- Often the framework needs adapted in practice to meet specific circumstance such as sporting club, church etc and may look different each time.
- **Drivers of violence-** The main one driving is gender inequality. We have come long way with notable progress in education, workforce participation and political representation but does still set the backdrop for other drivers. There is still work to be done particularly around power and resources.
- Other drivers include **Condoning violence against women-** This looks like excusing the perpetrator and blaming the woman, why was she drunk, he was stressed, why was she out that late and protecting high place people like footballers but minimising their acts of violence.

Men's control of decision making and limits to women's independence in public and private places This looks like the idea that men are better leaders, better head of households and should be in charge, more rational, logical etc, women are too emotional, also sets up men to fail and the outcomes of them feeling like they are failing.

Rigid gender roles stereotypes and dominant forms of masculinity This looks like outdated ideas of ways we behave dependant of your gender, what your role is. This is being challenged but there has been recent conservative backlash like the rise of the trad wife, alpha male and even the expectation the men pay for women still.

Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control This looks like locker room talk, men getting together and adhering to ways of being with each other even if they don't believe it to avoid being ridiculed. This happens from a young age i.e. boys in pink or playing with dolls and being told not to, it's for girls. We can all play a part by fostering cultures where men and everyone are held to standard of respect and dignity and inclusion.
- Men should be able to come together and have camaraderie and not punch down by making remarks that are sexist, homophobic or racist.
- Danielle used the example recently of the AFL player who has been banned for 4 games for making a homophobic slur. There has been widespread outrage from the public for this male player being punished for this and the severity of the punishment.
- Violence is preventable and we do have the power to change.
- **Reinforcing factors-** These increase likelihood and may worsen violence when these occur.
- **Condoning violence in general-** Society's acceptance of violence as means of solving conflict (movies, media etc),
- **Experience of and exposure to violence-** Higher risk of repeating cycles (if they see violence, act it out later),

Anything that weakens pro social behaviour- War, disaster, emergencies, alcohol, drugs, mental health (anything that disrupts usual rules, looting etc. After Hurricane Katrina FV went up significantly)

Resistance and backlash to prevention and gender equality- The manosphere, men's rights, activists, anti-woke (Andrew Tate etc.)
- Danielle noted how quick the King Hit laws primarily affecting men were implemented.
- With any progress there will be push back, you are challenging the access to power and control and beliefs and a way of living.
- **Model for preventing family and gender-based violence**

