CREATING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM OUR PROJECT

Comprehensive and integrated violence prevention at the local level requires effective partnerships between local government and community organizations. There are effective partnerships taking place across Victoria, but they could use further funding and policy framework support from State government.

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Effective partnerships can be imagined as four legs of a table. If the four legs are stable and strong, it can provide a great basis for effective work. The four legs are:

1. Political leaders and champions:
   These are the people who make sure that ideas are accepted by decision-makers and by communities. They are often local councilors or mayors; other leaders such as school principals or business leaders; or celebrities such as sport heroes or media figures.
   - The City of Bendigo’s White Ribbon Campaign and Violence is Out of Bounds’ Project benefited from strong leadership from the Mayor and local sport figures

2. Administrative leaders:
   These are people who know what services are available and can help policies and programs become successful. Administrative leaders include managers of local government health or community safety services, local police, and heads of local agencies.
   - The City of Maribyrnong has had exemplary leadership from staff in the Community Health and Safety Department, as well as ongoing support from two successive Chief Executive Officers of Women’s Health West.

3. Community leaders:
   These are the people who initiate ideas and advocate for progress, usually as part of community organizations.
   - The Shire of Nillumbik’s work on family violence prevention began when the twin sister of a local woman was murdered by her husband. She became an effective local advocate for violence prevention at both the local and state government levels.

4. Research support:
   Researchers can provide information on best practice, assist in community surveys, and provide evaluation support.
   - Bendigo, Maribyrnong, and Nillumbik’s violence prevention initiatives were assisted by research projects, the GLOVE project in the case of the first two, and an unsuccessful NHMRC bid from Latrobe and Melbourne Universities in the case of Nillumbik
POSSIBLE PARTNERS

Possible partners for violence prevention coalitions at the local level include:

- **Politicians:** local councilors and State/ Commonwealth local representatives
- **Education:** individual schools, tertiary education, local representatives of ministries of education, adult education and vocational services
- **Social Services and Agencies:** childcare centres and other services for children like kindergartens and afterhours school care, family services, women’s services, men’s services, youth services, welfare and emergency income support, services for people with disabilities, services for low income communities, services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, services for new migrants, services for LGBTI community, emergency and non-profit housing providers, advocacy groups, services for drug users, prostitutes and alcoholics, local representatives of ministries of human services or community development
- **Sports and recreation organizations:** recreation centres, professional and amateur sporting clubs
- **Neighbourhood Groups:** neighbourhood centres, local residents groups, service organizations such as Rotary, Zonta, Scouts and Guides
- **Religious Organizations:** religious leaders, particular houses of worship, religious charities such as the Salvation Army
- **Health:** hospitals, health centres and clinics, health advocacy organizations, primary care partnerships, maternal and child health nurses, local representatives of State public health ministries
- **Policing:** police-community relations officers or domestic violence liaison officers
- **Justice:** neighbourhood justice or conflict resolution centres (if they exist), local family violence court workers, legal aid clinics, representatives of State ministries of justice
- **Public Information and Communications:** libraries, community information centres, local newspapers and radio stations, including ethnospecific media
- **Planning and Public Space Management:** social and health service planners, land use and transport planners, economic planners, including those working in business development, urban designers, parks designers and managers, public works officers, and health and building inspectors
- **Researchers:** universities or research centres, local government research officers
- **Private Sector:** individual business leaders or businesses, local business associations
- **Trade Unions and Professional Associations
- **Private Charities and Individual Donors**

HOW TO DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS

Local government-community violence prevention partnerships often have regular committees (e.g., ‘Preventing Family Violence Working Group, Safer City Forum’) with monthly meetings to share information, develop policies and programs, and provide training and evaluation activities.

It is a good idea when developing policies and programs (see next fact sheet) to hold a day-long Community Forum. These forums can include speakers with information about State-level programs, along with opportunities to brainstorm about new partnerships, programs, and policies.