



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Alice Springs Consultation Summary

*Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce
Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*

Summary of Consultation - 5 September 2018

*The Department of Social Services acknowledges
the traditional owners of country throughout
Australia, and their continuing connection to
land, water and community.*

*We pay our respects to them and their cultures,
and to Elders past, present and
emerging.*

About this document

This material was commissioned by the Commonwealth of Australia to assist in the collection of information from consultation sessions workshops around Australia. The purpose of this material is to summarise consultations held by the Department of Social Services as part of the development of the Fourth Action Plan in Alice Springs, Northern Territory. This session was facilitated by Ms Barbara Shaw and Mr Desmond Campbell.

The Department of Social Services thanks all participants of this discussion for their contributions as part of the development of the Fourth Action Plan. The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect those of the Commonwealth, or indicate a particular course of action.

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Participants of Alice Springs workshop

Alice Springs Town Council	Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group (BRADAAG)
Alice Springs Women's Shelter (ASWS)	Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia - Northern Territory
Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation, Piliyintinji-ki Stronger Families Tennant Creek	Australian National University
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation (CAAC)	Tangentyere's Men's Four Corners
Central Australian Women's Legal Service (CAWLS)	Ingkintja Male Health Service
Anglicare	Department of Social Services
Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit	Northern Territory Police
Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council	Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Social & Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB)
Northern Territory Legal Aid	Northern Territory Families
Northern Territory Shelter	Department of Education, Northern Territory Government
Tangentyere Council	Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC), Department of Health, Northern Territory Government
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Targeted Family Support Service (TFSS)	

Key themes

The importance of primary prevention and community education around positive relationships

- All community responses to domestic, family and sexual violence need to be treated as opportunities for prevention
- Discussions around gender equality across the community are needed to address the drivers of violence against women, including key community segments that have not necessarily shifted their views around violence (e.g. religious organisations) These discussions need to be prominent in the Northern Territory (NT) media environment - more visibility is needed
- Work needs occur with family groups with the community to prevent and respond to early signs of violence
- Respectful relationships education needs to be better integrated into schools

Addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in Indigenous communities

- It is critical to do more around recruitment, retainment, capacity building for Indigenous people and staff that work in domestic and family violence
- Racial equality and intersectionality need to be at the centre of responses to violence
- The voices of Aboriginal women and communities need to be heard when designing policy and responses. A one size all approach should not be used
- More resources are required to aid behaviour change in Indigenous men, including Indigenous male family support workers, after-hours support and safe spaces

Working with men

- Men should be listened in a safe environment, in order to fully engage with them. A safe space will enable men that use violence to unpack and reflect on their behaviour, and find strategies to how they may deal with behaviour
- There should be programs that enable men to learn from other men around healthy relationships
- Responses should be working with men with the aim of creating stronger families. Approaches need to consider intergenerational trauma, and response to male victims of violence.

Key themes

Sexual violence

- The Fourth Action Plan needs to actively respond to sexual violence
- Sexual violence is a silent issue with considerable stigma attached. Many young people are experiencing sexual violence and we are lagging behind in our responses
- It is also important to consider sexual violence in the context of domestic and family violence, given the significant overlap

Building the capability of workforces that intersect with domestic, family and sexual violence

- There is a need for more staff to support victims of domestic, family and sexual violence
- Professional development and training is needed, and needs to include trauma-informed practices and healing programs that address intergenerational trauma.
- The workforce need to be developed to better support women and children from all backgrounds (e.g. ATSI, CALD) to heal
- It is important to invest in local community capacity in order to respond to the transience of workforces

Governments and the community sector better working together

- Greater information sharing is required across the sector and governments
- The three levels of government (federal, territory and local) need to be better coordinated
- There is a challenge for governments to challenge what families and children see as ordinary in many NT communities (e.g. young children growing up with violence everywhere)

Key themes

Local strategies that work across the whole sector and community

- Women and children should be listened to and central to the design and development of programs and strategies to reduce violence
- Programs also need to be designed using a local evidence base and delivered in a local context
- The first point of contact needs to be safe, appropriate and respectful. Individuals need to feel safe and comfortable to engage with services.
- The capacity of the community to prevent violence needs to be built, and this needs to be based on localised community-based strategies taking account of different community contexts
- The lack of housing available in Alice Springs and regional and remote NT is a major barrier to effective domestic and family violence responses. Safe spaces are needed to support women, regardless of whether sober or intoxicated
- All sectors and organisations need to be involved in developing solutions, and it needs to be based on regular and ongoing contact with community members
- The impact of alcohol on rates of domestic violence is profound
- Culturally and linguistically diverse individuals are arriving in Alice Springs without the support of their extended family. This presents a significant challenge to responding to the violence

Greater funding certainty

- Long-term funding is required to provide certainty around the response to domestic, family and sexual violence
- It is important that funding is invested in local communities, as this is where the expertise in responding to violence in the local community lies
- There is a need for greater funding for staff, particularly in remote areas due to the increased costs associated with delivery in these areas



Priority actions

Priority actions

Primary prevention and community education

- There is a need for programs focused on healthy relationships (including sexual relationships) that is targeted at children and young people. This should include education around consent
- Prevention and community education materials need to acknowledge the impacts of colonisation and intergeneration trauma on Indigenous people
- Safe-sex and respectful relationship programs needs funding for implementation
- Locally developed tools & resources, conversations with communities to inform tools and resources.

Workforces and services that better respond to violence

- There is a need for services to be available for victims who do not want to leave relationships that have included violence.
- Resources for risk assessment need to be developed and the capacity of the workforce to undertake assessments of risk
- The workforce needs a greater ability to respond to children who have experienced family violence

Services to respond to impacts of violence

- There needs to be more places to refer people who have experienced violence.
- There also needs to be mapping of existing referral pathways, and duplication needs to be addressed
- Service black spots across the NT need to be better serviced. Some areas do not have access to legal services, education, etc.
- Mental health services are needed to respond to the experiences of victims of violence
- There is a need to increase in emergency accomodation, including for men who are experiencing violence

Sexual violence

- Campaigns need to reduce the stigma around sexual violence, and should do more to address the rates of sexual violence.
- There needs to be greater support for frontline staff, families and friends to support people who have experienced sexual violence

Working with men

- More work is needed to listen to men's experiences of violence, including stories to assist other men understand their journey to reducing their violence

Access to justice

- Court responses need to inclusive and not work separately
- There should be consideration of Koori Court models in the NT
- Greater information and data is required from Police to enable identification of perpetrator at higher risk
- Greater training around domestic, family and sexual violence is required for police recruits, especially those stationed in remote communities

Addressing Indigenous family violence

- More work is required to develop Indigenous staff that work in the domestic, family and sexual violence sector
- Intergenerational trauma needs to be responded to in Indigenous communities

Addressing the harms of alcohol

- There needs to be a reduction in the supply of alcohol and alcohol outlets. It is unclear which level of government has the mandate to address this issue
- It was noted that the focus on alcohol derails the conversation around the causes of the violence. However, it is also a contributive factor that needs to be addressed
- Black market alcohol sales frequently contradict the restrictions of alcohol sales