

**Submission**  
**Royal Commission – Family Violence**

Thank you for the opportunity to send you this submission.

I have chosen to send it as an individual, because I am a survivor who has had little contact with government agencies, not for profit agencies, peak bodies, etc except for solicitors and the Family Court. (neither of which I had trouble with)

**Extremely brief background**

I left a physically violent relationship [REDACTED] years ago. I was married. My husband was at the time not employed, we had a mortgage, so I was the fulltime worker.

I chose not to call police, or apply for intervention orders when this was going on, firmly believing that it would probably exacerbate the situation.

At the time my children were [REDACTED] years old, and [REDACTED] weeks old respectively.

I was assisted by a trusted friend to relocate to my home town (for safety, and family support)

I was financially able to make use of a good solicitor to ensure family court arrangements, dissolution of property and finally the marriage were all done correctly.

I have raised the children myself – they are now young adults.

I ensured that they regularly saw their dad when they were youngsters, both when he was living with his parents, and also with his new family. They continue to do this often. I haven't remarried.

Now for the submission.

### “Women only” assistance agencies and shelters

I actually think this might inflame the minds of some fellas. Perpetuating an “us and them” mentality and/or “all women are ..... (insert volatile language here)

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was a posse of trained strong but gentle MEN to work in these services, alongside the women.

If you have come out of a violent relationship, I think it would be helpful to have a strong caring man to look after you through the process, i.e. to be able to see that “not all men are dreadful”.

It may be even more pertinent for children to see this, if they have only ever known violence.

Similarly in shelters – surely some decent men could be found to be at the shelter, especially overnight.

Wouldn't that be safer?????

### Advertising campaigns

Unfortunately, I do not think that advertising campaigns actually highlighting the violence are very useful.

I know I used to be really fearful when they came onto the telly – they seemed only to fuel the fires shall I say.

The public probably becomes de sensitized, in the same way as the TAC ads lose their value after a while.

I think a campaign highlighting what it is to be a real man! would be effective.

E.g. – images of decent men (especially young family men) doing ordinary stuff with their children, and for their wives.

TV ads, and strategically placed posters in many public places. Large ones like the mental health ones that were at Southern Cross Station.

A slogan such as MAN UP!

## Family Violence and football

Do not round up the usual suspects from the TV world -talking heads from football clubs and the AFL - saying "we support the cause", This is often hypocritical - when violence on the footy field is sometimes almost glorified (still) not to mention that some players with criminal convictions for violence are still on the field.

## Education

My profession is a teacher, so I often get rather peeved when "we must get a program into the schools" is bandied about as a panacea to whatever ails society.

However, in this case I think education could be worthwhile, Linked to the "man up" campaign.

Society doesn't seem to value the ability to be a good provider and family man. Narcissists and extroverts are far too much lauded in the media. Therefore many young lads need guidance.

Show them how they can be strong but not violent, how to take pride in what they can do, how to calm their emotions.

"Early intervention" could be the key - I am talking 10 - 14 year olds. All students would participate, but in the similar way that more intensive literacy skills classes are given to children who are at risk, this could be done subtly for children who are showing tendencies (by the way they act in class) .

Trained professionals - similar to how Danny Blay works with adults - could come into the schools.

Now for something you may think is controversial.

Many perpetrators have that “charm” and “wildboy” streak to them (no matter what socio-economic demographic they come from)

This style of lad appeals to many young ladies (again, from about aged ten upwards)

Perhaps young ladies who start showing too much of an affinity with these lads could be quietly counseled, i.e. to think carefully before progressing. This is not “blame the victim” just prevention.

Marches – not another one with chanting and flags about how bad it all is– no more “destroy the joint” or “slut walk” type.

Imagine this kind of march – mothers/wives/sisters who have decent, non-violent husbands/partners /sons, walking down the street, not bragging, but being grateful, and showing that there is hope.

I mean the MEN are there too, of course!!!!

That’s all. Thank you for reading this, and if any of it seems feasible, I would be more than happy to discuss further.