

Fact Sheet 1: Overview of local projects required to address family violence



Advocacy Priority – Family Violence

Project Summary

Council is seeking \$945,330 (per annum) to improve access to specialist family violence services and programs to the City of Whittlesea community.

Key Messages

- The number of family violence services in the municipality is inadequate, despite having one of the highest rates of family violence in Greater Melbourne. Within municipal boundaries there is one service that provides specialist family violence services.
- Women and children can access the major specialist family violence services only by outreach and outposting which is limited. Regional services are under pressure to provide to a large geographical area.
- The majority of family violence services are not located in the municipality and many nearby services have poor public transport access.
- Services are encountering increasing numbers of clients from the municipality experiencing family violence.
- Services require more resources to improve their capacity for outreach to the municipality or to co-locate with other non-specialist services.
- Current funding levels place considerable constraints on services to maintain levels of support in an environment where reports of family violence continues to increase.

What is happening right now?

Incidences of family violence increased last financial year to 2,359. The number of incidents of family violence is one of the highest in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne (NMR) and the rate per 100,000 has increased 35% in two years.

- *The rate per 100,000 population of children present in family violence increased 15% on the previous year, it is higher than the rate for the state, and one of the highest in the NMR.*
- *60% of all assaults recorded arose from family violence.*
- *Family violence was the context for 31% of all rapes, and 34% of all other sex offences.*

Over the past 14 years, there has been an increase of 268% for the rate per 100,000 population of family violence in City compared to 172% for Victoria¹.

Local evidence reveals only one specialist family violence service located in the municipalityⁱⁱ.

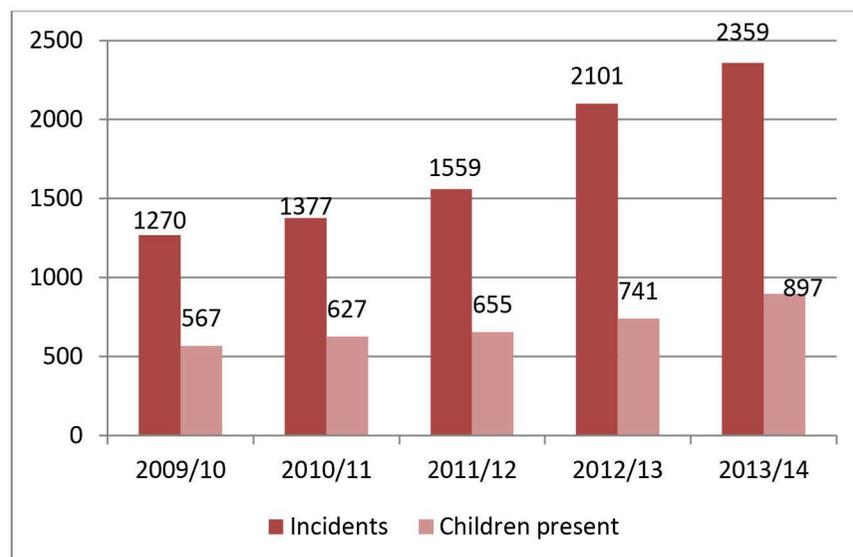
For more information contact: Mary Agostino, Executive Manager Advocacy, City of Whittlesea on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Updated: April 2015

- *Outposting of case workers from other specialist family violence services does occur, however this is very limitedⁱⁱⁱ.*

The majority of agencies (family violence and others) which provide services for the City of Whittlesea residents are struggling to keep up with demand and some residents are going without access to the services they need^{iv}.

Chart 1. Number of incidents of family violence reported to Victoria Police in the City of Whittlesea 2009-2014^v



How can we build a better future?

The City of Whittlesea is seeking State Government funding for specialist family violence services and programs to the City of Whittlesea community.

This will improve access to specialist family violence services and result in improved support for women and children experiencing family violence.

How does the community benefit?

Immediate benefits to the community include:

- Improved response to women and children experiencing family violence
- Improved accountability for perpetrators of violence against women and children
- Schools that value and support non-violent norms and respectful and equitable gender relations

How much will the project cost?

Project	Cost (per annum)
Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project (fact sheet 2)	\$413,330
Arabic-language Men's Behaviour Change Program (fact sheet 3)	\$140,000
Specialist family violence services for women and children (fact sheet 4)	\$300,000
NCASA Respect Project (fact sheet 5)	\$92,000
TOTAL (per annum)	\$945,330

What objectives does this help us achieve?

Federal Government

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their children 2010-2022

State Government

- Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children: Everyone has a responsibility to act 2012-2015
- Our Watch Five Year Strategic Plan

City of Whittlesea

- Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Safe in our homes, Safe in our communities: Family Violence Strategy 2014-2018
- Gender Equity Strategy 2014

References

- ⁱ Victoria Police, Family Incident Reports - 2009/10 to 2013/14, http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311, accessed 08.04.2015
- ⁱⁱ City of Whittlesea, Family Violence Service Pathways: Mapping and Consultation Project, 2014
- ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.
- ^{iv} City of Whittlesea, Human Services Needs Analysis, 2013, <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/your-council/advocacy#human>
- ^v Victoria Police, Family Incident Reports - 2009/10 to 2013/14, http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311, accessed 08.04.2015

Fact Sheet 2: Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project

Advocacy Priority – Family Violence



Project Summary

Council is seeking State Government funding of \$413,330 to support an integrated early intervention and prevention service model to respond to family violence in CALD communities.

Key Messages

- Local evidence reveals a high demand for CALD-specific family violence services.
- An average of one new person each working day for a year sought family violence help from a local non-specialist service.
- The experience of family violence within CALD communities is complex and requires an appropriate mix of tailored strategies.
- This project aims to build an effective and culturally-responsive service system to reduce the incidence and impact of family violence in CALD communities.

What is happening right now?

Incidences of family violence increased last financial year to 2,359. The number of incidents of family violence is one of the highest in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne (NMR) and the rate per 100,000 has increased 35% in two years.

- *The rate per 100,000 population of children present in family violence increased 15% on the previous year, it is higher than the rate for the state, and one of the highest in the NMR.*
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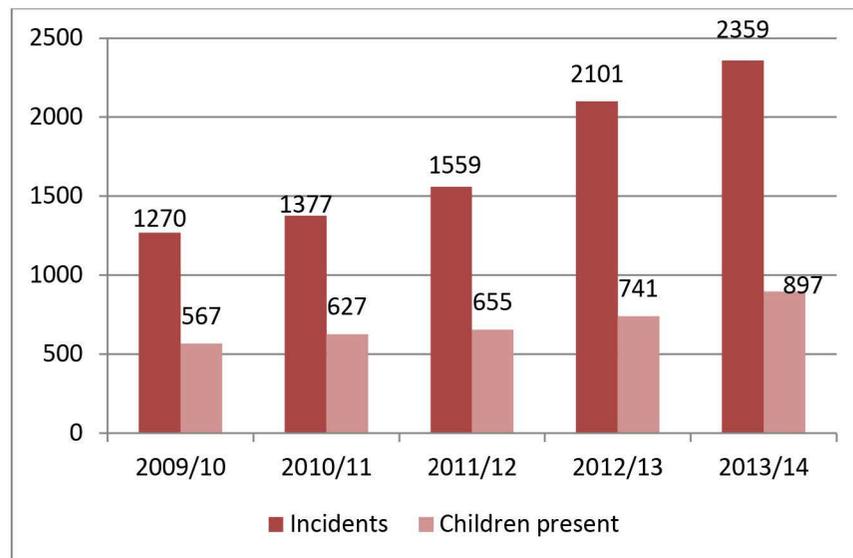
Over the past 14 years, there has been an increase of 268% for the rate per 100,000 population of family violence in City compared to 172% for Victoria¹.

Local evidence captures the experiences of CALD communities presenting at the local settlement service for family violence. In 2013-14ⁱⁱ:

- 297 people presented at Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) for support and legal advice about family violence.
- 40% of those attending WCC were born outside of Australia and 35% spoke a language other than English at home.
- An average of one new person per working day disclosed family violence.
- 53% reported this was the first time they had disclosed family violence to a service.
- For CALD women, 70% reported this was the first time they had disclosed family violence to a service.

- The majority (239) were women presenting as victims of violence from their current or ex-partner.
- 22 male perpetrators of family violence presented.

Chart 1. Number of incidents of family violence reported to Victoria Police in the City of Whittlesea 2009-2014ⁱⁱⁱ



The City of Whittlesea is diverse, with a large proportion of residents born overseas (34%) and a larger proportion born in non-English speaking countries (32%) than the Melbourne statistical average^{iv}.

Over 40% of residents speak a language other than English at home, compared to the Melbourne average of 29%. The municipality also has a large proportion (22.4%) of people who speak a language other than English and speak English *not well or not at all*^v.

Local evidence and experience reveals existing service responses in the municipality are not meeting the complex needs of CALD women experiencing family violence. A research and scoping exercise was undertaken by the Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership in 2012 and has informed the development of a new approach that focuses on the additional barriers to accessing support and services experienced by CALD women – the *Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project*^{vi}.

How can we build a better future?

The Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project (WCFVP) is delivering an integrated service model to local CALD communities. The aim of the model is to support CALD communities, newly arrived migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, to break the cycle of family violence and empower these communities to respond to the challenge of preventing violence against women.

Family violence occurs in all communities; it is critical to provide specialist family violence services with a CALD focus in the City of Whittlesea given the high CALD population, the current and projected growth rate as well as the geographic isolation of some areas due to the urban/rural interface. The experience of family violence within CALD communities is complex and requires an appropriate mix of tailored prevention and early intervention strategies be adopted.

Several elements of the WCFVP are currently funded and underway including:

- A grants scheme for women's groups to increase social connectivity and women's knowledge of and confidence to access supports and services
 - Six groups received funding in round one
 - 16 group leaders received training in identifying family violence and managing disclosures
 - Family violence legal education sessions delivered to all the groups; 20% of participants accessed family violence support following completion of the sessions and in addition to this, two people not in these groups accessed support after receiving information from friends/family who attended these sessions.

- Partnering with community and religious leaders to prevent family violence
 - Consultations held with six religious leaders representing four faith institutions
 - A 'Families Free from Violence' forum held with 110 members of the Chaldean christian community, with further community education sessions and leadership training to follow
 - Exploring roll-out of this forum to other groups.

- Partnership with inTouch Inc, Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence to deliver Arabic-language Men's Behaviour Change program in the Whittlesea municipality
 - Supporting two Arabic-speaking facilitators to complete course in Men's Behaviour Change at Swinburne University in 2014.
 - Funding to implement a pilot group in early 2015 to trial the program and capture learning (*see Family Violence Fact Sheet 3*).

- Adaptation of Victoria Legal Aid's 'Settled & Safe' training model to suit the municipality's CALD community's needs.

- Partnership with Monash University's Gender, Leadership and Social Sustainability Unit to develop and implement a robust evaluation of the project.

How does the community benefit?

The project aims to reduce violence against women and community acceptance of family violence through improved attitudes to gender equity and respectful relationships. CALD women will benefit from increased connectedness with the community and reduced barriers to accessing support services.

The project will:

- Build an effective and culturally-responsive multi-level service system to reduce the incidence and impact of family violence in CALD communities.
- Increase knowledge amongst CALD communities of what constitutes family violence.
- Improve early-identification of CALD women at risk of violence.
- Increase community safety and awareness of support services.
- Assist to reduce recidivist violent offending for CALD men.

Family violence imposes a huge financial cost on the Australian economy. Access Economics estimates that family violence cost Australia \$8.1 billion in 2002-03^{vii}. VicHealth report that eliminating violence against women would save the health sector \$207 million per year^{viii}.

How much will the project cost?

Project elements requiring urgent funding

Project element	Resources	TOTAL (per annum)
Model coordination – steering group integration mechanism	Project Worker (incl. oncosts)	\$67,650
	Meeting costs	\$3,000
	Administration	\$5,000
	Evaluation	\$1,500
Women's Advisory Group	Meeting costs (incl. stipend for women)	\$7,680
	Training	\$2,000
	Evaluation	\$1,000
Early intervention in the settlement process	Project Worker	\$42,000
	Administration	\$2,000
	Evaluation	\$2,000
Empowering CALD Women	Women's Group Grants brokerage funds	\$20,000
	Training & consultation	\$3,000
	Materials, administration	\$4,000
	Evaluation	\$1,500
Whole-of-school gender equity and respectful relationship program	Project Worker	\$56,000
	School expenses	\$30,000
	Evaluation	\$15,000
	Materials & administration	\$10,000
Arabic-speaking men's behaviour change program	3x 15 weeks Arabic-language programs	\$120,000
	Evaluation	\$15,000
	Resource translations	\$5,000
TOTAL (per annum)		\$413,330

Project elements with funding committed (up to June 2015)

Project element	Resources		TOTAL (per annum)
Model coordination – steering group integration mechanism	Project Worker	\$58,205	\$87,150 <i>(Victoria Legal Aid 2013-14, Scanlon Foundation)</i>
	Administration costs	\$9,448	
	Meeting costs	\$3,000	
	Evaluation	\$1,500	
	Lead agency costs	\$15,000	
Empowering CALD Women	Women's Group Grants brokerage funds	\$40,000	\$72,000 <i>(Scanlon Foundation and Victoria Women's Benevolent Trust)</i>
	Training & consultation	\$7,500	
	Materials, administration	\$8,000	
	Evaluation	\$1,500	
	Administration costs	\$15,000	
Building the capacity of community and religious leaders	Networking, training & support	\$10,000	\$26,500 <i>(Scanlon Foundation)</i>
	Evaluation	\$1,500	
	Administration costs	\$15,000	
Pilot Arabic-speaking men's family violence group	Course development, delivery, facilitator costs & administrative support	\$25,835	\$25,835 <i>(Scanlon Foundation, Victoria Legal Aid, inTouch & project partners)</i>
Women's Advisory Group	Meeting costs, training and evaluation	\$10,495	\$10,495 <i>(Victoria Women's Benevolent Trust, City of Whittlesea)</i>
TOTAL FUNDING RECEIVED (as at Dec 2014)			\$221,980

What objectives does this help us achieve?

Federal Government

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their children 2010-2022

State Government

- Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children: Everyone has a responsibility to act 2012-2015
- Our Watch Five Year Strategic Plan

City of Whittlesea

- Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Safe in our homes, Safe in our communities: Family Violence Strategy 2014-2018
- Gender Equity Strategy 2014

References

ⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱ Whittlesea Community Connections, Family Violence Monitor editions 5-8, 2013-2014

ⁱⁱⁱ Victoria Police, Family Incident Reports - 2009/10 to 2013/14,

http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311, accessed 08.04.2015

^{iv} Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census of Population and Housing

^v Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census of Population and Housing

^{vi} Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Scoping Exercise Report 2012

<http://www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au/content/research-reports/>

^{vii} Access Economics 2004, The cost of domestic violence to the Australian economy: part 1, Office of the Status of Women, Canberra

^{viii} Cadilhac DA, Magnus A, Cumming T, Sheppard L, Pearce D & Carter R 2009, The health and economic benefits of reducing disease risk factors, VicHealth , Melbourne

Fact Sheet 3: Arabic-language Men's Behaviour Change Program



Advocacy Priority – Family Violence

Project Summary

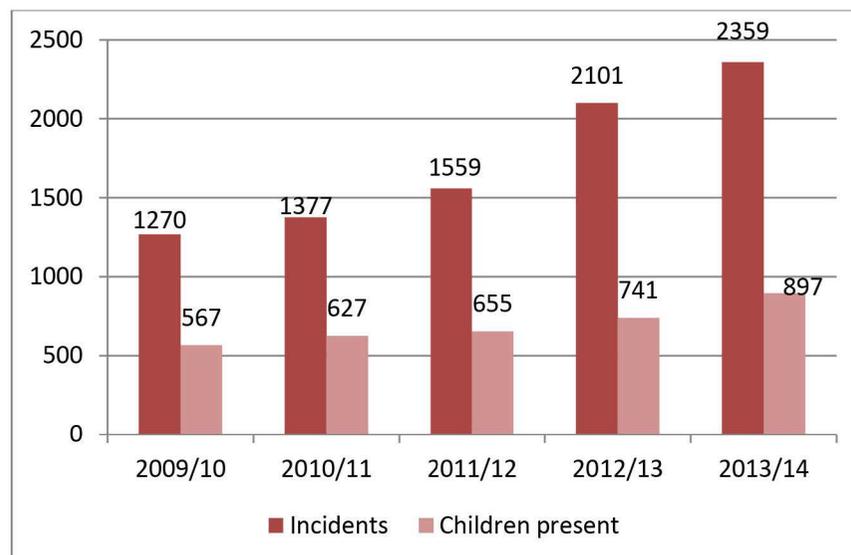
Council is seeking is seeking funding of \$140,000 to deliver an Arabic-language Men's Behaviour Change Program.

Key Messages

- Provides a unique opportunity for the State Government to pilot a completely new and ground-breaking men's behaviour change program.
- Victoria Police statistics reveals males comprise 100% of alleged offenders of sexual assault and rape offences in the municipality and females comprise 85% of victims.
- Local evidence indicates perpetrators of family violence are increasingly seeking advice on their violent behaviour from Whittlesea Community Connections (project lead), indicating the supportive environment for disclosure and the potential within this setting to engage offending men.

What is happening right now?

Chart 1. Number of incidents of family violence reported to Victoria Police in the City of Whittlesea 2009-2014ⁱ



Incidences of family violence increased last financial year to 2,359. The number of incidents of family violence is one of the highest in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne (NMR) and the rate per 100,000 has increased 35% in two years.

For more information contact: Mary Agostino, Executive Manager Advocacy, City of Whittlesea on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Updated: Feb 2015

- The rate of children present in family violence increased 15% on the previous year, it is higher than the rate for the state, and one of the highest in the NMR.
- 60% of all assaults recorded by police arose from family violence.
- Four out of every five incidents of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) the perpetrator is male and the victim femaleⁱⁱ.
- 85% of perpetrators of IPV were male and 85% of victims of IPV were femaleⁱⁱⁱ.
- Family violence was the context for 31% of all rapes, and 34% of all other sex offences; men accounted for 100% of the alleged offenders.

Chart 1. Victims of sexual assault offences by gender 2013-14^{iv}

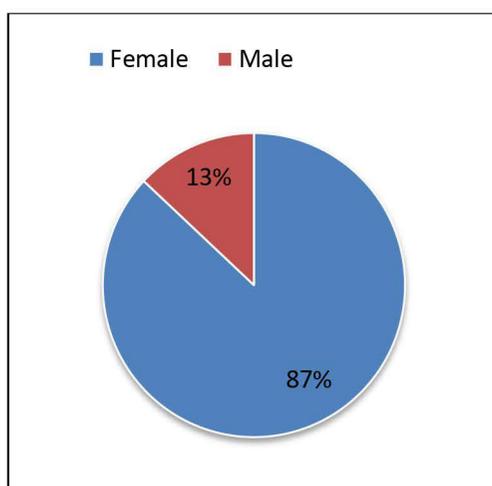
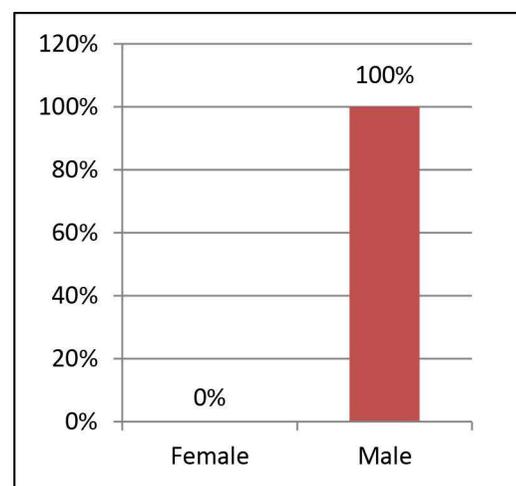


Chart 2. Perpetrators of sexual assault offences by gender 2013-14^v



Local evidence captures the experiences of CALD communities presenting at the local settlement service for family violence. In 2013-14^{vi}:

- 297 people presented at Whittlesea Community Connections for support and legal advice about family violence.
- 40% of those attending WCC were born outside of Australia and 35% spoke a language other than English at home.
- 53% reported this was the first time they had disclosed family violence to a service.
- For CALD women, 70% reported this was the first time they had disclosed family violence to a service.
- An average of one new person per working day disclosed family violence.
- The majority (239) were women presenting as victims of violence from their current or ex-partner.
- 22 male perpetrators of family violence presented.

How can we build a better future?

The City of Whittlesea is seeking State Government funding for \$140,000 for a pilot to deliver an Arabic-language men's behaviour change program for perpetrators of family violence. To our knowledge this is the only pilot of its kind in Victoria, if not Australia.

This pilot will improve Arabic-speaking men's access to family violence intervention programs and result in increased evidence base for men's behaviour change programs focusing on CALD communities' needs.

For more information contact: Mary Agostino, Executive Manager Advocacy, City of Whittlesea on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Updated: Feb 2015

The Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project (WCFVP), in partnership with inTouch Inc, Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence, supported two Arabic-speaking workers to complete the accredited training at Swinburne University required to deliver Men's Behaviour Change Programs to the best practice No To Violence standards. **This provides a unique opportunity for the State Government to support a completely new and ground-breaking men's program in the City of Whittlesea.**

How much will the project cost?

Arabic-language men's behaviour change program pilot	Cost (per annum)
3 x 15 weeks (minimum 25 hours) Arabic-language programs	\$120,000
Evaluation – Monash University Gender, Leadership and Social Sustainability Unit <i>Including evidence-sharing forum, publishing of findings and printing of report</i>	\$15,000
Translation of program materials, administration costs	\$5,000
TOTAL (per annum)	\$140,000

How does the community benefit?

Family violence occurs in all communities; it is critical to provide specialist family violence services with a CALD focus in the City of Whittlesea given the high CALD population, the current and projected growth rate as well as the geographic isolation of some areas due to the urban/rural interface. The high rates of family violence incidents also require a comprehensive approach to not only address the critical issues arising currently but to position the City of Whittlesea into the future. More equitable access to behaviour change programs for all perpetrators of family violence has the potential to reduce the high rates of recidivism in this municipality. Family violence is an issue for all communities however behaviour change programs for CALD men will have a profound impact on the number of local men being held accountable for their violence in a culturally sensitive way, and who are currently unable to benefit from existing mainstream services. Research into similar programs trialed with Vietnamese and South Asian men in other locations found a majority of men would not have participated in mainstream programs^{vii}.

- Inclusive and equitable access to men's behaviour change programs for CALD men.
- Reduced recidivism by offenders (and costs associated such as policing and courts).
- Improved supports for women and children through partner-contacts for CALD communities.
- Safety for women and children.
- Reduced violence against women and children.

What objectives does this help us achieve?

Federal Government

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their children 2010-2022

State Government

- Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children: Everyone has a responsibility to act 2012-2015

For more information contact: Mary Agostino, Executive Manager Advocacy, City of Whittlesea on [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Updated: Feb 2015

- Our Watch Five Year Strategic Plan

City of Whittlesea

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References

ⁱ Victoria Police, Family Incident Reports - 2009/10 to 2013/14,

http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311, accessed 08.04.2015

ⁱⁱ Women's Health In the North, Violence against women in Whittlesea: Information and Facts, 2013-2014, <http://www.whin.org.au/resources/preventing-violence-against-women.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ ibid

^{iv} ibid

^v ibid

^{vi} Whittlesea Community Connections, Family Violence Monitor editions 5-8, 2013-2014

^{vii} inTouch Inc Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence

Fact Sheet 4: Specialist family violence services for women and children

Advocacy Priority – Family Violence



Project Summary

Family violence services are not adequately meeting the needs of Whittlesea residents. Currently, services provide outreach from local non-specialist agencies. Due to funding limitations these programs are only available for a limited period each week (approximately 3 hours).

The City of Whittlesea is requesting State Government funding of \$300,000 per annum to co-locate specialist family violence services with a local mainstream agency to provide specialist family violence support to women and children.

Key Messages

- Family violence incidents in the City of Whittlesea continue to increase year upon year.
- The rate of family violence incidents per 100,000 population has increased 35% in two years.
- The rate per 100,000 population of children present in family violence increased 15% on the previous year, it is higher than the rate for the State, and one of the highest in the Northern Metropolitan Region.
- 60% of all assaults recorded arose from family violence.
- Family violence was the context for 31% of all rapes, and 34% of all other sex offences.
- The level of specialist family violence services available to residents in the City of Whittlesea is not sufficient to meet the current demand.

What is happening right now?

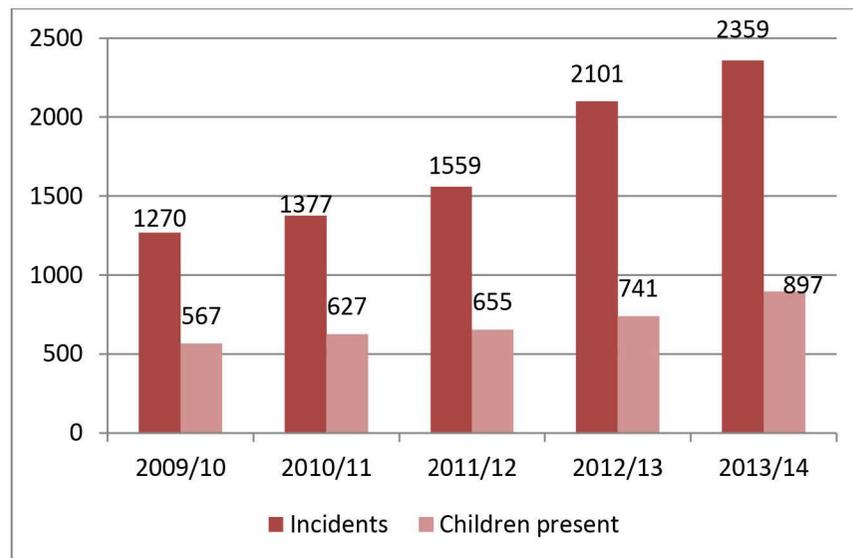
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Over the past 14 years, there has been an increase of 268% for the rate per 100,000 population of family violence in City compared to 172% for Victoria¹.

The majority of agencies (family violence and others) which provide services for the City of Whittlesea residents are struggling to keep up with demand and some residents are going without access to the services they needⁱⁱ.

Chart 1. Number of incidents of family violence reported to Victoria Police in the City of Whittlesea 2009-2014ⁱⁱⁱ



How can we build a better future?

Council requests the State government to provide additional funding for local family violence specialist services which will:

- Increase immediate response from agencies to police referrals
- Provide services to women and children
- Provide secondary consultations to other local services
- Undertake case-work and therapeutic response for women and children.

How does the community benefit?

Despite the increasing demand for services there has not been a proportionate increase to the workforce, program funding or additional resources in the family violence sector. The already stretched services supporting women and children and holding men accountable for their violence are under severe amounts of pressure.

Family violence occurs in all communities; it is critical to provide specialist family violence services with a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) focus in the City of Whittlesea given the high CALD population, the current and projected growth rate as well as the geographic isolation of some areas due to the urban/rural interface. The high rate of family violence incidents requires a comprehensive approach to not only address the critical issues arising currently but to meet future needs.

Project	Immediate impacts	Longer term benefits
Additional specialist funding and brokerage support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved response to police referrals and high-risk cases - Immediate response to women in crisis - Improved response to CALD women and children due to co-location with the settlement services - Provide secondary consultations to other services - Provide case work & therapeutic response to women and children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved response to police referrals and high-risk cases - Improved capacity of non-family violence services to identify family violence in clients - Safety for women and children - Reduced violence against women and children

How much will the project cost?

Item	Cost (per annum)
Co-located specialist services and outreach to LGA	\$250,000
Brokerage	\$50,000
Total (per annum)	\$300,000

What objectives does this help us achieve?

Federal Government

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their children 2010-2022

State Government

- Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children: Everyone has a responsibility to act 2012-2015
- Our Watch Five Year Strategic Plan

City of Whittlesea

- Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
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References

ⁱ Victoria Police, Family Incident Reports - 2009/10 to 2013/14, http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311, accessed 08.04.2015

ⁱⁱ City of Whittlesea, Human Services Needs Analysis, 2013, <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/your-council/advocacy#human>

ⁱⁱⁱ Victoria Police, Family Incident Reports - 2009/10 to 2013/14, http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311, accessed 08.04.2015

^{iv} City of Whittlesea Draft Human Services Needs Analysis 2013

Fact Sheet 5: NCASA Respect program for schools



Advocacy Priority – Family Violence

Project Summary

Council is seeking \$92,000 of funding to implement an additional respectful relationships and sexual assault prevention program in local schools.

Key Messages

- Northern CASA have developed a locally-tailored gender equality and respectful relationships education program based on the whole-of-school best practice program 'Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS)' model
- High rates of gender-based violence against women between the ages of 18-49 years in the municipality requires earlier intervention in the life stage to embed positive and healthy attitudes and behaviours to relationships

What is happening right now?

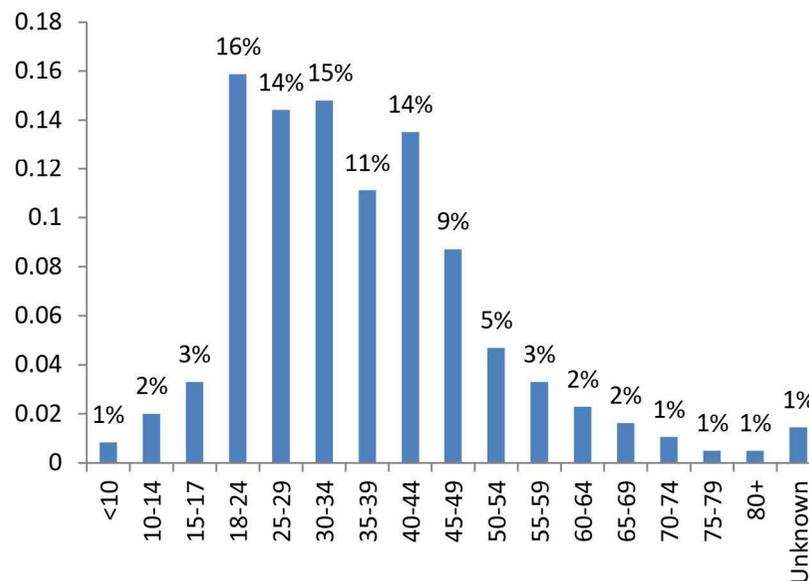
In the City of Whittlesea in 2013-14, family violence incidents increased from 2,110 in 2012-13 to 2,359 (an increase of 12%) and the rate increased from 1,248.8 per 100,000 to 1,316 per 100,000ⁱ. In comparison, in Victoria, family violence incidents increased by 7.4% from 60,550 in 2012-13 to 65,393 in 2013-14, and the rate increased from 1,071.1 per 100,000 to 1,129.2 per 100,000ⁱⁱ:

Table 1. Offences arising from family violence reported incidents in Whittlesea 2013-14ⁱⁱⁱ

	Number	Percent of all offences
Assault	858	60%
Rape	15	31%
Sex (other)	46	34%

- VicHealth, in a survey on Year 10 and 12 students, found that 38% of sexually active young women experienced unwanted sex at least once^{iv}.
- In Australia, 12% of women aged 18-24 years had experienced at least one incident of physical and/or sexual violence^v.
- In Whittlesea, 87% of female victims of sexual assault and rape in 2013-14 were aged less than 35 years^{vi}.
- In Whittlesea, family violence was the context for 31% of all rapes, and 34% of all other sex offences^{vii}.

Chart 1. Age distribution female victims of intimate partner violence in Whittlesea LGA (2013–14)



Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) deliver the best-practice, whole-of-school program Sexual Assault Prevention in Secondary Schools Program (SAPSS) in 8 secondary schools across the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne (NMR) and in 3 secondary schools in the City of Whittlesea.

SAPPSS is recognised as a best-practice model recommended by VicHealth in their report commissioned by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2009)^{viii}. The report demonstrates a powerful rationale for embedding education about gender equity and respectful relationships in schools to prevent violence against women and children. Early interventions with children and young people can have lasting effects on their relationships in the future.

There are five reasons to focus efforts on young people:

1. Adolescence is a crucial period in terms of [the] formation of respectful, non-violent relationships.
2. Many children and young people experience violence in their homes.
3. Young people are already being subjected to, and perpetrating, violence themselves.
4. There is already a degree of tolerance for violence against girls and women.
5. Violence prevention among children and youth has been shown to work.^{ix}

NCASA have a well-developed relationship with many schools and provide outreach. The high rate of sexual assault within a family context is cause for concern and warrants immediate investment family violence was the context for 31% of all rapes, and 34% of all other sex offences^x.

Building on the SAPPSS model, NCASA have developed a tailored model specific to the Whittlesea context and relevant to the cultural diversity of the residents. The *NCASA Respect* program has been implemented in a local secondary school and further funding is expand to additional schools.

How can we build a better future?

The City of Whittlesea is seeking State Government funding for Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault to implement *NCASA Respect* in one additional school to pilot improved resources and evaluate their relevance, usefulness and impacts for young people from culturally diverse

backgrounds. The City of Whittlesea will provide in-kind resourcing of two youth workers to support implementation of the project.

This will add to the evidence base for preventing violence against women resources and will help to achieve local project outcomes within the Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project (refer fact sheet 2).

How does the community benefit?

Children and young people spend much of their time at school. They are captive audience for teachers and professionals to deliver programs to improve understanding of gender equity, sexual assault and family violence.

By intervening early in life in a universal setting, violence-supportive attitudes and gender stereotypes are challenged and de-normalised. Schools become environments that value and support non-violent norms by building and modelling respectful and equitable gender relations. The entire school community is supported to develop greater connection to formal and informal support and is encouraged to take action to address violence. In the long-term the community benefits from improved safety and reduced incidences of family violence and sexual assault that comes from valuing gender equality.

How much will the project cost?

	Resources	Cost (18 months)
NCASA Respect	Project worker	\$27,000
	Project materials and resources	\$20,000
	School expenses (teacher backfill and training)	\$30,000
	Evaluation	\$15,000
TOTAL (18 months)		\$92,000

What objectives does this help us achieve?

Federal Government

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their children 2010-2022

State Government

- Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children: Everyone has a responsibility to act 2012-2015
- Our Watch Five Year Strategic Plan

City of Whittlesea

- Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Safe in our homes, Safe in our communities: Family Violence Strategy 2014-2018
- Gender Equity Strategy 2014

References

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