



- I am a survivor of ■ years of family violence perpetrated by my then husband. I had ■ children, whom I protected as best I could, at great cost to my health and well being.
- At the community consultation, I explained that the violence I experience was on almost every level as defined in the 2008 Vic State Legislation: financial, emotional, psychological, mental. I was not hit, but I was threatened, intimidated and berated every day of my life.
- Firearms were present in numbers (7 at any one time, various in size and caliber, some altered so as to increase caliber and be concealable)
- Firearms were loaded and cleaned in front of myself and my children in a manner that was designed to intimidate.
- My animals were injured, abused and destroyed in demonstration of what would happen to myself and my children if I did not comply with my husbands demands. various items of my property was destroyed, disposed of, or appropriated.
- My children were witness to violence as described above, on a daily basis. In addition, one child was forced to live outside in a shed, walk home in the dark along a dark country road 2km, locked outside at night in pyjamas in winter, all of which was an angry response to the child making noise or not performing a task as instructed. (often unreasonable and confusing demands beyond the child's ability to perform)
- When I left, the perpetrator's threats and intimidation accelerated to stalking, publicly berating me, unlawful visitation (in violation of Intervention Order) attempts to remove child from school, threatening letters.

Experience of Legal System

- the Legal System re traumatised me. I was not believed, strenuously cross examined and bullied
- I had a lot of trouble obtaining an Intervention Order as the Magistrate did not believe me
- Police did not believe me or take me seriously when I reported abuse

- Breaches to IO when presented at court, were not treated seriously or punished
- Attempt to extend IO due to my IO expiring, were met with strenuous resistance by the Magistrate, who said I 'was not sufficiently threatened' because i had not bleeding wounds nor broken bones.
- I was not eligible for Legal Aid because it was granted to the perpetrator (even though I had no income besides Single Mother's Pension) I ran out of funds to defend myself
- At Family Court Mediation I was expected to appear in the same room as the perpetrator, even though I had explained that I was not safe in his presence
- Perpetrator did not appear at Mediation on one occassion, with no prior notice and I was expected by the mediator to explain why he was not present, where he was and to contact the perpetrator and speak to him.
- During an arranged visitation, Perpertrator took children away to a secluded location for longer than agreed, returning them traumatised after ten hours of being questioned and berated. This was confirmed by the children who were frightened, disturbed and traumatised.
- No Maintenance was been organised for the upkeep of my children

Financial Impacts

- no maintenance paid by father, he claimed Newstart and never declared the cash received for work as a trademan
- have not been able to work full time since due to onset of severe debilitating Panic Attacks without notice
- limited income has meant limited opportunities for myself and my children
- limited education and training opportunities for my children due to sustained low income
- having to regularly ask for charity, special consideration to obtain uniforms, shoes, text books, afford excursions, fees, medical treatment etc.
- inability to afford up to date personal computers and their operating systems to assist children to avail themselves fo educational and employment opportunities.
- struggle to afford appropriate clothing, shoes for going to interviews for jobs
- struggle to afford psychological help and medical assistance for children (asthma, croupe, psoriasis, school ground injuries, PTSD)
- all this leads to being stuck in a perpetual low income situation due to increased financial demands of one income with no 'Maintenance' paid by father.
- myself and many survivors I know cannot work full time, nor in the areas of expertise that they prefer and are trained for, because they cannot take the stress, because they cannot give the long hours required (sole care of dependent children), because they cannot travel for their job as before (sole care of dependent children)...this leads to ingrained poverty and or perpetual low income
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Health Impacts

- Panic Attacks have impacted my ability to socialise, work, function day to day
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and chronic Depression have impacted my ability to socialise, work and function day to day
- Children in trauma, manifesting as: behavioural issues, skin conditions, worsened asthma
- many women I know, including my sister, have ongoing medical conditions brought about by family violence and cannot work full time nor in their preferred area of expertise, because of their health conditions

I could give more information, but I am using a public area computer and have run out of time.

regards

