Part 1: Executive summary

Statement, recommendations and action plans.

In May 2010 Ingkintja facilitated Aboriginal Male elders and leaders from across the region to Stop The Violence in Central Australia, Alice Springs and town camps by developing a series of major recommendations, an action plan, a communication strategy and a leadership networks that will support, inform, persuade and motivate a wide range of logistical and behavioural changes, resulting in an evaluated reduction in the incidence of family violence in the region.
We the Aboriginal males from Central Australia gathered at Inteyerrkwe in May 2010 to **Stop the Violence**, a journey of family violence prevention that began here in 2008 when we released the historic Inteyerrkwe statement that read in part:

“We acknowledged and said sorry for the hurt, pain and suffering caused by Aboriginal males to our wives, to our children, to our mothers, to our grandmothers, to our granddaughters, to our aunties, to our nieces and to our sisters”

As individuals and communities we are committed to zero tolerance of all forms of violence including, physical, sexual, social, verbal, emotional, economic, spiritual, cultural, child elder and lateral violence.

We once again acknowledge that we need the love and support of our Aboriginal women to help us move forward to **Stop the Violence**.
Inteyerrkwe – Stop the Violence Workshop

Part 1

Our new Stop the Violence logo

**World Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja logo**

For us to achieve our vision we want all levels of government to empower our communities and to work in partnership with our traditional and cultural decision making structures and processes.

**Explanation of symbols**

1. **Elders** – The keepers of the law.

2. **Leaders** – The messengers.

3. **Parents** – The givers of life.

4. **Children** – Our future.

Our logo shows boys (4) in black and girls (4) in red at the base being cared for by the parents sitting in their home (represented by the circles).

The communication paths go up and down and is represented by three lines.

When needed, parents (3) look to the leaders (2) for guidance.

The leaders are the aunties and uncles who have experience and knowledge about life. When they require guidance they go to the next step and ask the elders.

The elders (1) look to the leaders to keep them informed.

There are four women elders (red) who are the four corners of the land—North, South, East and West. There are four male elders (black) who have responsibility to speak for either culture—leadership, harmony or happiness.

Each level has responsibility to be role models for those below.

This logo will be the guide to the steering committees decision making process.
Part 1.1: Executive Summary: The Stop The Violence project

- Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja Statement and new logo
- About this workshop report
- Welcome: Overview of workshops by John Liddle
- Top ten recommendations from the workshops
- Summary of workshops

Part 1.2: Defining the context of family violence in communities

- Context– Family violence in Indigenous communities and current statistics
- Research-The challenges, best practise and learning from past mistakes

Part 1.3: An ongoing implementation action plan to Stop The Violence

1. Stop The Violence action plan
2. Stop the Violence communications strategy
3. Stop The Violence Steering Committee to drive the plan

Part 2: Reports and solutions from the Stop The Violence workshops.

Day 1. Better understanding violence; issues and solutions

1. Physical violence
2. Sexual violence
3. Social violence
4. Verbal violence
5. Emotional violence
6. Economic violence
7. Spiritual or cultural violence
8. Child violence
9. Elder violence
10. Lateral Violence

Day 2. Find out what services are available: hypothetical and reality

1. Safety, security and the laws hypothetical panel discussion
2. Health, conflict resolution, alcohol and other drugs hypothetical panel discussion
3. Review current service delivery and future needs

Day 3. Stop the violence: Identifying solutions and recommendations

1. How can we Stop The Violence
2. How can we get the skills and knowledge
3. How can we create and support a Stop The Violence network
4. How can we support male health and well being
5. How can we change attitudes and communicate the key message
6. How can we engage all stakeholders in our action plan

Attachments

1. List of delegates, facilitators and stakeholders
2. Research references
3. Acknowledgments Minister Jenny Macklin, Warren Snowdon and Karl Hampton
Inteyerrkwe –Stop the Violence-workshop

Part 1.1  

This Stop the Violence report has been prepared by the Ingkintja Congress Aboriginal Male Health team with the support of a team of summit facilitators, delegates and stakeholders

It is essentially a recording of the information exchanged, the issues raised and the major recommendations generated from the Stop The Violence workshops.

But most importantly it is all about developing an action plan to monitor in the short and long term the government’s and communities responses and commitments to our recommendations and solutions to address the underlying social and environmental factors contributing to family violence in Central Australia.

Part 1.1 : Executive Summary- Overview, context and major recommendations

Part 1.2 : Defining the context of family violence in communities

Part 1.3 : An ongoing implementation action plan

Part 2.1 : Reports and solutions from the Stop The Violence workshops.

At the conclusion of the workshop a steering committee was nominated to drive the action and in a joint press release on the last day Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin and Indigenous Health Minister Warren Snowdon announced $130,000 in Australian Government funding for the steering committee to help combat violence in Central Australian Indigenous communities.

Our strategies and recommendations to Stop The Violence from this gathering will not sit on a shelf gathering dust but will be driven, actioned, pursued and achieved over the coming weeks and months by a committed group of positive Aboriginal males who have a vision of a violent free family and community environment. We would welcome you to share our vision.

Part 1.1  

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Production: Colin Cowell

Explanation use words Male–Men--Man

At the workshop and in its subsequent reports it was agreed that the preferred descriptor was “male” rather than “men” or “man” so as to avoid confusion about “men” as initiated males (wati).

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www.caac.org.au/stoptheviolence
The key objectives of this Stop the Violence workshop was to bring together a mixture of elders, leaders and young males from Central Australian communities, Alice Springs and town camps to address the issue of family violence and to learn about cultural brokerage and conflict resolution.

This gathering follows from the meeting in 2008 where over 400 males acknowledged and said sorry for the ‘hurt, pain, and suffering caused by Aboriginal males to Aboriginal women and families.

The delegates were also joined by over 20 stakeholders who currently provided services to Aboriginal communities so that delegates could review current service delivery and future needs.

As the delegates discovered in the workshops the reasons for the violence are many, whether it is alcohol-related, result of living in high stress environments or the constant disempowerment of Aboriginal males by government policies. These reasons were identified, expanded on and solution developed as you will see in part 2 of this workshop report.

The delegates were united in the decision that we take a zero tolerance approach to stop the violence because it not only affects the individuals that are doing the violent acts or the ones receiving the violence, but it affects the whole community, whether Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, and affects whole families. Children growing up in this violence environment would most likely experience communication problems, feel isolation, experience anxiety, where they are edgy, can’t relax, and have difficulty learning.

As I stated at our last Inteyerrkwe summit in 2008 there has been over a decade of work by Aboriginal males to establish male health and violence reduction in the policy debates, but as I will outline later I feel we now need to move beyond the policy struggle to implementing our vision. That is what this workshop has been about, Aboriginal males taking control, not being given it, not having it forced upon them, but willingly taking up the difficult challenges that confront us all in this current crisis.

Our struggles have aspects that are at times unique to us as Aboriginal people in this country but also sometimes have things in common with other males in the Australian society. Patrick Dodson has been quoted that: “There has been a process of undermining the role and status of Aboriginal males within our society since the early days of Australia’s colonisation and continuing in recent commentary around the Northern Territory Intervention”.

When you add to this the rapid changes in the role of males within that colonising society and the consequent dislocation of non-Aboriginal males and their struggle to define new self-images, it is no wonder that Aboriginal males may struggle to make sense of the contemporary world.

And if those critical views of us as Aboriginal males are expressed with no effort to understand our cultural values, or the pressures caused by the colonial relationships and contemporary social transformations, then we become alienated from this society.
The ten key challenges that our delegates considered over 3 days

The over riding challenge of the workshop was to try to get participants to be conduits for their respective communities. We are hoping that the elders and leaders of communities become disciples of anti-violence, reinforcing the role of good men in our societies, and letting the world know that Indigenous men can be responsible and useful in their own communities.

In developing this workshop we simplified a range of complex issues by concentrating on the 10 specific key challenges identified by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Report 2006 that related to family violence and abuse in Indigenous communities.

- How do we turn government commitments into real action?
- How do we engage Indigenous participation to Stop the Violence?
- How should we support Indigenous community initiatives and networks?
- How do we communicate Human rights education into Indigenous communities?
- How do we stop the broader population stereotyping all males as abusers?
- How do we look for the positives and celebrate the victories?
- How do we re-assert our cultural norms and regain respect in our communities?
- How do we develop robust accountability and monitoring mechanisms?
- How do we develop a proactive system of service delivery?
- How can we target programs to address need and overcome disadvantage?

On page 19 of this report we have detailed these challenges and our workshop solutions.

To facilitate a discussion about this wide range of issues a three day program was developed.

DAY 1. Better understand violence,

Delegates discussed what causes violence, and about the ways they might Stop the violence. They also looked at the various forms of violence as it became quite obvious there still exists misunderstanding and confusion about what constitutes violence. A lot of people were under the perception that violence is only physical, but it also includes forms such as verbal, sexual, and economic violence in the form of ‘humbugging’. The delegates then listed examples of each of the 10 recognised classification of violence (See pages 23-31) and developed a range of solutions and recommendations.

Day 2: Services and support

We gathered together over 20 service provider firstly to explain to our participants what services are currently available, then after listening to a hypothetical discussion involving over 20 service stakeholders to find out what services are available that can give support to Stop the violence. The delegates then broke up into groups to discuss which communities do get services and which communities are missing out. It was rather challenging to attempt a united front from Aboriginal men to confront this issue head-on in a reasonable and rational manner.

Day 3. Recommendations and strategies to Stop the Violence:

On the last day delegates planned how in the future Aboriginal Males can work together to get the skills and knowledge to help Stop the violence in their communities. The meeting then developed a series of recommendations to present to local Government, the shires the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments.
Inteyerrkwe –Stop the Violence-workshop

These detailed recommendation listed on the following pages can be divided into three groups.

Prevention communication strategies and action

1. Networks of male support groups "brother supporting brothers
2. Stop the Violence communications a strategy
3. Stop the Violence community based action plans
4. Better relationships with the police
5. Develop a violence reduction, conflict resolution and cultural brokerage training programs.

Male specific resources and service support mechanisms

6. Establish male centres/safe house
7. Access to dedicated male health services
8. Development of Male sheds
9. Develop a “One Stop Shop” information network for all services

Empowerment

10. Empowerment of males through employment

At this workshop we looked at a range of strategies for better service delivery in education and health so that young people are living in harmony in a safe household. If they get that, then they are more likely to become doctors and lawyers.

It has been an uplifting experience getting all the delegates from communities across central Australia together, and it is a concern that a lot of them are performing extremely challenging roles almost single handed.

The workshops were designed to give them so much-needed support, and to facilitate the networking of men’s health programmes, so that the anti-violence message is reinforced.

We will seeking further resources after submitting this to help support the workers in the field who are under a great deal of pressure. Some Aboriginal men are relatively powerless on the communities, so supporting them to educate their communities on how violence influences our lives. Our children should be able to live in a nice place where they are safe, looked after and given the foundation of a decent education.

Another important issue discussed at the workshop was the fact there are over 500 Aboriginal men in Alice Springs correctional facility at any one time, which is a major drain on remote Aboriginal communities in Central Australia.

I don’t think Aboriginal males realise what it means to have 500 Aboriginal men, mostly young men, disconnected from their family and culture. It makes our communities so much weaker. We have young, energetic leaders locked up in jail, they are not participating in their communities, they are not providing emotional and cultural support to their families, which in turn makes the community weak. This is particularly relevant at times of ceremony, and, sorry business, and it not only affects the person in jail, but also their immediate and extended families. If a similar thing happened in a white town, you would soon notice the effects, and a major response by government would be guaranteed.
We are also looking at the possible behavioural changes of individuals to cope with, and hopefully, prevent violence occurring in the first place.

It is hoped that this workshop will have outcomes in a number of areas. We are hoping to restore the status of Aboriginal men in Central Australian communities, restoring their roles as providers for their families, and restoring their roles as leaders because a lot of senior people feel that they have been ‘chopped at the knees’ as a result of government policies such as the Northern Territory Emergency Response.

Another outcome would be the linking and networking of Aboriginal men-specific programmes in central Australia, so that we are working more as a collective.

We are hoping for a positive response from the Territory and Commonwealth governments to the recommendations, and linking with Aboriginal women’s groups and Aboriginal organisations to help foster harmony and encourage healthy lifestyles.

One of the recommendations is seeking further assistance for the establishment of Aboriginal male-specific services such as safe houses, especially in remote Aboriginal communities.

There is a need for these types of services for Aboriginal men to access so that they feel at ease, and don’t feel that they under scrutiny. These places are multi-functional as they can be a venue for training, for men to receive medical attention and health advice, and for even, a place for men to yarn with each other. There is a definite need for these services in remote communities as there are services for women, but not much for men.

We need to initiate actions and work with our women, to re-invigorate the health and wellbeing of our communities. There have been many proposals for concrete action on this at this Stop the Violence workshop.

We have defined roles and talked about the necessary support needed that will allow more males to participate as fathers, uncles, brothers and sons in providing a safe and supportive environment for our children (and other members of our communities) to live happier, healthier and longer lives.

There are currently a patchwork of programs (refer page 20 ) and approaches to addressing family violence in Indigenous communities among federal, state and territory governments, but there remains a lack of coordination and consistency in approaches to addressing these issues between governments and among different government agencies and stakeholders.

For us to achieve our vision we want all levels of government to empower our communities and to work in partnership with our traditional and cultural decision-making structures and processes

We hope that the ‘Stop the Violence’ message

*Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja*

gets out to all, so that we can make our communities and families safe.
Inteyerrkwe –Stop the Violence-workshop

Part 1.1               The top ten workshop recommendations

These are the top 10 recommendations that evolved from the workshops and directed to government for serious consideration and response.

We acknowledge that Minister Macklin and Minister Snowdon have announced their financial support ($130,000) to immediately action recommendations 1-3 and that our implementation plan is included in this report (refer page 36)

**Prevention communication strategies and community action**

1. **Networks of male support groups **“brother supporting brothers**

   Each Central Australian community and town camp needs a male body/committee that meets regularly to support each other in making behavioural changes. Community / town camp committees should have representation on a Central Australian Men’s Committee (**Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja**) with the body committee having representation on a NT AMSANT Men’s committee able to lobby for support and changes at a Territory and Federal level

2. **Stop the Violence communications and implementation strategy**

   There is a need for a Central Australia long term sustainable ,Innovative cost effective “grass roots” communication strategy that has clear objectives, engages all section of the community with targeted messages and meets the needs of all Stakeholders. A strategy that supports all elements of our Stop The Violence campaign to inform, motivate community support, behavioural changes resulting in an evaluated reduction in the incidence of violence in our region

3. **Stop the Violence community based grass roots action plans**

   There is a need to support males in each of the 39 Central Australian communities Alice Springs and town camps develop their own community action plan that identifies the resources and service support required to implement their own community action plan to Stop the Violence in their families and community

4. **Better relationships with the police**

   Males acknowledge that an increased police presence is crucial. However, too often calls to police results in escalating violence because the person reporting the incident is targeted by the perpetrators. We want to work closely with the police to improve reporting of inappropriate behaviour so that reports are quickly and discreetly responded to. Young violent offenders are not dealt with strongly enough, and police need to work with the community to ensure peace

5. **Develop a violence reduction ,conflict resolution and cultural brokerage training programs**

   There is a need for a Central Australia specific curriculum to be developed to provide training for males to equip them with the skills and knowledge to be able to implement violence reduction, conflict resolution and cultural brokerage strategies in their home communities, town camps, and jails.
Male specific resources and support mechanisms

*Please note: We have a separated each of these male specific resources recommendations (6-7) but obviously each community male resources could be developed and consolidated based on male population growth and needs, exiting infrastructure and long term community and government planning based on these specific recommendations.

6. Establish male centres/safe house

Each community needs a centre with a funded co-ordinator that is gender specific for ‘timeout’ to defuse a potentially violent situation and provides a safe place for males when there is a threat of violence. The centre would also incorporate courses for training in anger management.

7. Access to dedicated male health services

Males specific health services provided on site in each community. A setting where males feel comfortable; where males can access male health practitioners for check ups, undertake group and individual counselling sessions and regular health education sessions.

8. Development of Male sheds

Each community needs a male shed with a funded co-ordinator. A male only place where we can develop practical skills including car repair, woodwork, welding, exercise and music. The shed will operate as a gateway to employment and training.

9. Develop a “One Stop Shop” information network for all services

There is a need for males to have access to a simple face-to-face support and referral service. An organisation needs to be supported to provide a male specific resource and information centre to identify the most appropriate service.

Referrals may include: employment, relationship and anger counselling, primary health, mental health, legal, advocacy, housing, alcohol and drug treatment, jail visits and post-release programs, education and training, and any Territory or Federal Government program. Poor access to services contributes to an environment of violence.

Empowerment

10. Empowerment through employment

We need real jobs. When males are unemployed we are disempowered, bored, angry and frustrated. This leads to substance misuse and violence. As a result of the intervention, CDEP restructuring, downturns in tourism and shire restructuring there has been an increase in unemployment in the region. In a job we are happier, healthier and better members of our communities and leaders of our families. Put us to work so we can take personal responsibility for our lives.
Throughout the 3 days of workshops delegates were not only there to discuss the broad range of issues surrounding family violence, but at every step were encouraged to identify solutions.

Each workshop scribe then placed a big S next to that solution and by the end of the workshop over 126 solutions were identified. How often have you gone to a meeting or conference and when you later get the reports or minutes you cannot see your contribution?

In Part 2 of this report you will find delegates solutions in the language that they expressed those solutions. We have developed this format so that they can see that their “voices will be heard.” From these solutions 10 major priority recommendations as outlined earlier were identified and then all of the solutions have been considered in our action plan and strategy to;

STOP THE VIOLENCE WORKSHOP FACILITATOR LES SOILEN FROM NT SAFE HOUSES AND DELEGATE JACKIE VINCENT (CARDS)

OUR WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. **Better understand violence**, what causes violence, and talk about ways we might STOP THE VIOLENCE

2. **Find out what services are available** that can give support to STOP THE VIOLENCE and which communities do get those services and which communities are missing out.

3. **Plan how Aboriginal Males can work together** to get the skills and knowledge to help STOP THE VIOLENCE in their families and our communities here in Central Australia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Workshop facilitators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Baydon Williams/Bob Durnam/David De Vries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Charlie Hodgson/ Greg Smith/Max Yffer</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Les Solien/Martin Blackmore</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Brian Arley/ David Beckeridge</td>
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Inteyerrkwe – Stop the Violence-workshop

Part 2-day 3

Solutions:

Refer to the separate Part 2 of this report for a detailed listing all these solutions

Day 1-3. Stop the violence: Identifying solutions

1. How can we Stop The Violence? “Big picture” solutions
   1.1 Individual Males
   1.2 Families
   1.3 Communities
   1.4 Police
   1.5 Night Patrol
   1.6 Elders
   1.7 Strong culture
   1.8 Working with women
   1.9 Children
   1.10 Politics and government
   1.11 Economic and employment
   1.12 Prison system
   1.13 Legal System
   1.14 Housing

2. How can we get the skills and knowledge to Stop The Violence?
   2.1 Develop violence reduction, conflict resolution training courses
   2.2 Develop a one stop shop for information on services and support
   2.3 Improve access to support and service delivery

3. How can we a create and support a Stop The Violence network?
   3.1 Develop a Steering Committee
   3.2 Appoint Ingkintja Congress Male Health to facilitate
   3.3 Working with Women
   3.4 Working with communities and Aboriginal organisations
   3.5 Working with Service Providers
   3.6 Working with Alice Springs Town Council and shires
   3.6 Working with the NT government
   3.6 Working with the Federal Government
   3.6 Working with the media local and national

4. How can we support male health and well being?
   5.1 Access to dedicated Male Health services
   5.2 Develop male Sheds
   5.3 Develop Male Safe Houses
   5.4 Employment and Empowerment
   5.5 Education and training
   5.6 Prison System

5. How can we change attitudes and communicate our key message?
Our workshops definition of family violence

The workshop accepted that family violence is the physical, emotional, sexual, social, verbal, spiritual, cultural, emotional and economical abuse that occurs within families, intimate relationships, kinship networks and communities.

In Part 2 of this report is an extensive feedback on these definitions.

Our workshop identified many causes of family violence including

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Physical illness
- Lack of education
- Racism-induced stress
- Single-parent families and parenting at an early age
- Substance abuse (e.g. alcohol, sniffing)
- Poor or inadequate housing
- Social isolation
- Loss of identity and self esteem
- Abusive styles of conflict resolution
- Sexual jealousy
- Oppression, which turns them into oppressors
- Imbalance and inequity within male and female roles
- Lack of respect within families
- Marginalisation and dispossession
- Loss of land and traditional culture
- Breakdown of community kinship systems and Aboriginal law

In Part 2 of this report is an extensive feedback on the causes of violence and solutions.

Our workshop identified and understood the cycle of violence

1. **Tension Building Phase**: Characterized by poor communication and tension. The abuser becomes more temperamental and critical of the victim. During this stage the victims try to calm the abuser down to avoid any major violent confrontations.

2. **Violent Episode** Characterized by outbursts of violent and abusive incidents. During this stage the abuser attempts to dominate his/her partner (victim), with the use of domestic violence.

3. **Honeymoon Phase** Characterized by affection, apology, and apparent end of violence. During this stage the abuser feels overwhelming feelings of remorse and sadness. Some abusers walk away from the situation, while others shower their victims with love and affection.

In Part 2 of this report is an extensive feedback on solutions to these cycles of violence.
Key findings Ending Family Violence and Abuse in Aboriginal Communities

- Family violence is abhorrent and has no place in Aboriginal society. It is a scourge that is causing untold damage and trauma among our Indigenous communities, to our women and children, and to the fabric of Indigenous cultures.

- Indigenous, women, children and males are entitled to live their lives in safety and full human dignity. This means without fear of family violence or abuse. This is their cultural and their human right.

- Violence and abuse is a criminal matter. If an Indigenous person commits an offence they should be dealt with by the criminal justice system just as any other person would be. There should also be swift intervention from care and protection systems to ensure that the best interests of the child is the primary consideration.

- Government officials and community members should be fearless and bold in reporting suspected incidents of violence and abuse. This means addressing the code of silence that exists in many Indigenous communities about these issues. And it means government officers meeting their statutory obligations, meeting their duty of care and taking moral responsibility in the performance of their duties as public officials.

- Violence relates to almost every aspect of policy making and service delivery to Indigenous communities. The solutions to family violence and abuse in Indigenous communities are complex, multi-faceted and require long term focus and commitment to address. They require bi-partisan political will and leadership at the highest levels of government.

- Governments must work in partnership with Indigenous peoples and communities to identify and implement solutions to address family violence and abuse.

- We need to adopt a holistic approach to address the causes and the consequences of family violence in Indigenous communities.

- We can no longer accept the making of commitments to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inequality without putting into place processes and programs to match the stated commitments. Programs and service delivery must be adequately resourced and supported so that they are capable of achieving the stated goals of governments.
Key findings Ending Family Violence and Abuse in Aboriginal Communities

- We can also not accept the failure of governments to commit to an urgent plan of action. It is not acceptable to continually state that the situation is tragic and ought to be treated with urgency, and then fail to put into place bold targets to focus policy making over the short, medium and longer term or to fund programs so they are capable of meeting these targets.

- Indigenous concepts of violence are much broader than usual mainstream definitions of domestic violence. For Indigenous peoples, the term family violence better reflects their experiences. Family violence can be inflicted in a number of ways and involves a wide range of behaviours. Family violence is usually grouped into the following categories, may overlap:
  1. Physical violence
  2. Sexual violence
  3. Social violence
  4. Verbal violence
  5. Emotional or psychological violence
  6. Economic violence
  7. Spiritual or cultural violence/
  8. Child violence
  9. Elder violence
  10. Lateral Violence

In Part 2 of this report is an extensive feedback on these definitions.

- Family violence involves any use of force, be it physical or non-physical, which is aimed at controlling another family or community member and which undermines that person’s well-being. It can be directed towards an individual, family, community or particular group. Family violence is not limited to physical forms of abuse, and also includes cultural and spiritual abuse. There are interconnecting and trans-generational experiences of violence within Indigenous families and communities.

- There are significant deficiencies in the availability of statistics and research on the extent and nature of family violence in communities. What data exists suggests that Indigenous peoples suffer violence, including family violence, at significantly higher rates than other Australians do. This situation has existed for at least the past two decades with no identifiable improvement.

- Indigenous women’s experience of discrimination and violence is bound up in the colour of their skin as well as their gender. The identity of many Indigenous women is bound to their experience as Indigenous people. Rather than sharing a common experience of sexism binding them with non-Indigenous women, this may bind them more to their community, including the males of the community.

- Strategies for addressing family violence in Indigenous communities need to acknowledge that a consequence of this is that an Indigenous woman ‘may be unable or unwilling to fragment their identity by leaving the community, kin, family or partners’ as a solution to the violence.
As identified in 2010 by the Northern Territory Governments Department of Health and Families there is a need to strengthen and coordinate the collection, recording and analysis of domestic and family violence data in the NT in order to evaluate initiatives of such as mandatory reporting of violence and child abuse. Since the release of the Little Children Are Sacred Report and the implementation of the NT Intervention there have been many misleading statistics released many designed to justify disempowerment of Aboriginal Males and relinquishing of community control. Most of the current available Indigenous family violence statistics were created by the Australian Bureau of Statistics ATSI survey and the recent Productivity Commissions Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators 2009. Here is a snapshot of some of these statistics.

1. Indigenous children
   - An Indigenous baby is 1.8 more times likely to be neglected or abused.
   - Indigenous children make up 40% of all hospital admissions in the age group 0 to 4 who are admitted for assault.
   - Over 90% of perpetrators of child abuse are male.

2. Indigenous youth
   - An Aboriginal youth is 4 times more likely to be a victim of domestic violence than their white peers.
   - Indigenous males comprise 46% of the national male juvenile detention population and Indigenous females comprise 57% of the national female juvenile detention population.

3. Indigenous women
   - Aboriginal women were hospitalised for assault at 30 times the rate of the general population.
   - Percentage of women experiencing violence from a current partner and reporting the last incident to police is 5%.
   - An Aboriginal women living in rural and remote areas is 45 times more likely to experience domestic violence than her white peer.
   - Average number of women per day seeking treatment for domestic violence related injuries in Alice Spring (between 2000 and 2006) is 2.6.

4. Indigenous males
   - Aboriginal males were hospitalised for assault at 7 times the rate of the general population.
   - The Aboriginal Justice Council reported that in 53 per cent of criminal cases in a recent study, the offender was known to the victim, and in 69 per cent of these cases the offender was the spouse or partner of the victim.
   - Indigenous male committed suicide at 2.6 times the rate of non-Aboriginal males.

5. Alice springs and violence
   - Number of people admitted to Alice Springs hospital between 1998 and 2005 with stab wounds was 1500. In 2007 Alice Springs was said to have the highest number of stabbings in the world.
Our 10 key challenges and 10 key workshop solutions

1. How do we turn government commitments into real action?
   Governments have been making commitments to address family violence for many years. What we need now is concerted, long term action which meets these commitments. The bookshelves of state, territory and federal ministers are lined with hundreds of Aboriginal health and violence reports, strategies and promises going back 10, 20, 30 years.

   **Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and the steering committee must meet regularly to implement and monitor the progress of the actions plan and government responses to our recommendations and funding proposals. *Recommendation 1*

2. How do we engage Indigenous participation to Stop the Violence?
   This action must be based on genuine partnership with Indigenous peoples and with our full participation.

   **Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and the steering committee must engage all sections of the Indigenous community in this campaign. *Recommendation 2*

3. How should we support Indigenous community initiatives and networks?
   There are significant processes and networks already in place in Indigenous communities to progress these issues. We need to support them to lead efforts to stamp out violence, including by developing the educational tools to assist them to identify and respond to family violence.

   **Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must work closely with all stakeholders to develop appropriate mechanisms for action. *Recommendation 5*

4. How do we communicate human rights education into communities?
   There is a need for broad based education and awareness-raising among Indigenous communities. Working with communities to send strong messages that violence won’t be tolerated, that there are legal obligations and protections, and that individuals have rights, are critical if we are to stamp out family violence.

   **Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must develop, implement and evaluate an effective strategic communications strategy. *Recommendation 2*

5. How do we stop the broader population stereotyping all males as abusers?
   Family violence is fundamentally an issue of gender equality. We need strong leadership from males, but we also need the support of Indigenous women if we are to make progress in stamping out violence. Indigenous men need to model appropriate behaviour, challenge violence and stand up against it, and support our women and nurture our children.

   **Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must encourage and promote positive male action to Stop the Violence and as per our Workshop statement “that we need the love and support of our Aboriginal women to help us move forward to Stop the Violence.” *Refer workshop statement*
Our 10 key challenges and 10 key solutions

6. How do we look for the positives and celebrate the victories?
There are good things happening in Indigenous communities, even if the national media is not interested in reporting them. We need to confront family violence, but also do so by reinforcing the inherent worth and dignity of Indigenous peoples, not by vilifying and demonising all Indigenous peoples.

**Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must develop, implement and evaluate an effective national media strategy as a part of our strategic communications strategy. *Recommendation 2*

7. How do we re-assert our cultural norms and regain respect in our communities?
Family violence and abuse is about lack of respect for Indigenous culture. We need to work it as Indigenous peoples, and rebuild our proud traditions and community structures so that there is no place for fear and intimidation.

**Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must develop, implement and evaluate respect for Aboriginal cultural as a part of our strategic communications strategy. *Recommendation 2*

8. How do we develop robust accountability and monitoring mechanisms?
There must be accountability measurements put into place to hold governments to their commitments. This requires the development of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. These will also allow us to identify and celebrate successes.

**Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and the steering committee must meet regularly to monitor the progress of the actions plan and government responses to our recommendations and funding proposals. *Recommendation 1*

9. How do we develop a proactive system of service delivery?
We require a change in mindset of government from an approach which manages dysfunction to one that supports functional communities. It is a passive reactive system of feeding dysfunction, rather than taking positive steps to overcome it. We need a pro-active system of service delivery to Indigenous communities focused on building functional, healthy communities.

**Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must change the mindset of Government to support positive programs and be more proactive.

10. How can we target programs to address need and overcome disadvantage?
Let us be bold in ensuring that program interventions are targeted to address need and overcome disadvantage. As it stands, government programs and services are not targeted to a level that will overcome Indigenous disadvantage. Hence, they are not targeted in a way that will meet the solemn commitments that have been made. They are targeted to maintain the status quo.

**Solution:** Congress Ingkintja Male Health and steering committee must work with government to ensure that all violence prevention programs are targeted and effective.
How can we learn from our past mistakes?

Recently, and most comprehensively at the level of nation-wide statistical reporting, the subject of Indigenous community violence has been the subject of a major study by Paul Memmott.

Memmott and his team examined 130 remedial violence programs implemented in Indigenous communities in the 1990s, they could find only six programs that had received some reasonable evaluation that was in a documented form.

There was in fact, a total absence of discussion of program failure in the literature on the programs, although one of the original report’s authors was readily able to list from first hand experience ten reasons why these programs failed:

The reasons for failure were lack of suitable sectoral partnerships for program delivery

1. Lack of coordination at the local level
2. Lack of training and skills among program staff
3. Lack of funding or insufficient funding
4. Unethical community politics interfering with program execution
5. Programs not necessarily directly targeted at the worst forms of violence in a community which may appear too awesome to tackle
6. Programs being predominantly reactive and not balanced with proactive components to reduce incidents of violence
7. Lack of coordination or fragmentation between state and Commonwealth goals and programs.
8. Violence intervention staff themselves being threatened and/or assaulted by violence perpetrators;
9. And burn-out among program staff through regularly dealing with the constant stress-inducing occurrences of violence in the community.
10. The reasons for failure were lack of suitable sectoral partnerships for program delivery
Designing programs to address family violence best practice

There are currently a patchwork of programs and approaches to addressing family violence in Indigenous communities among federal, state and territory governments, but there remains a lack of coordination and consistency in approaches to addressing these issues between governments and among different government agencies. Significant gaps also exist.

There are three recurring strategic aspects that need to be present to address family violence in Indigenous communities, namely that:

• programs be community-driven (with leadership from men as well as women);
• community agencies establish partnerships with each other and with relevant government agencies; and
• composite violence programs are able to provide a more holistic approach to community violence.

An emphasis solely on criminal justice responses to family violence poses two main concerns for Indigenous women:

• The first is that the system is generally ineffective in addressing the behaviour of the perpetrator in the longer term. The effect of imprisonment is to remove them from the community and then, without any focus on rehabilitation or addressing the circumstances that led to the offending in the first place, to simply return them to the same environment.
• The second is that there are a range of barriers in the accessibility and cultural appropriateness of legal processes which discourage Indigenous women from using the criminal justice system in the first place.

Existing programs addressing Indigenous family violence programs can be categorised into the following broad areas of intervention:

• **Support programs** – Accessible and appropriate counselling is essential, not only for the victims and perpetrators of violence, but also for family and community members who not only deal with the issue of violence itself but to also provide post-violence counselling to family members.

• **Identity programs** – Identity programs are those that are aimed to develop within the individual, family or community, a secure sense of self-value or self-esteem. This can be achieved through diversionary programs and also through therapy based programs that focus on culturally specific psychological or spiritual healing. All these programs may be accessed prior to, and after involvement with violence, and offer a longer-term response through attempting to change the situational factors underlying violence.

**Behavioural change (men and women’s groups)** – as the majority of family violence is perpetrated by men, strong support for men’s behavioural reform programs is required. Complementary groups and support services for Indigenous women should be run parallel to men’s programs and
Inteyerrkwe – Stop the Violence-workshop

1.2 Context: Best practice designing programs

Designing programs to address family violence best practice

Night patrols – have the potential to build cooperation and mutual respect and support with local police. Night patrols, particularly in remote areas, use and strengthen Indigenous mechanisms for social control, thereby ensuring that traditional methods are afforded a key role in the control of anti-social behaviour, minor criminal infractions and potentially serious criminal incidents in the Indigenous community.

Refuges and Shelters – while an important part of any family violence intervention strategy, they are not a sufficient response to the difficulties produced by high levels of violence in Indigenous communities. They represent a reactive strategy in addressing the underlying causes, thereby creating no possibility of a change in the pattern of violent behaviour. Refuges and women’s shelters need to be coupled with other proactive strategies targeted at the perpetrators of violence and other situational factors.

Justice programs – the roles of justice programs, which are characteristically aimed at the perpetrators of violence, are to mediate between people in conflict, designate appropriately cultural punishments for victims, for example through circle sentencing and the prevention of recidivism.

Dispute resolution – Anecdotal evidence suggests that success has been achieved where impartial members of the Indigenous community are used as facilitators and traditional dispute-resolution techniques are incorporated into mediation processes.

Education and awareness raising – Education and training programs are vital to raise awareness about family violence prevention; as well as develop skills within communities to resolve conflicts and identify the need for interventions with perpetrators. There are (currently) no educational programs targeted at young children for use in Indigenous pre-schools and schools. With the knowledge we now have about the detrimental effects of violence on children, or witnessed by children and the generational cycles by which violence is transmitted, it is essential to provide violence prevention education programs within pre-schools and schools.

Holistic composite programs – Programs which are comprised of elements of the above categories. These operate to target different forms of violence in the community, target different categories of offenders or victims, or employ different methods of combating or preventing violence.

The implementation of composite programs, particularly in communities displaying multiple forms of increasing violence, is shown to be an emerging and preferred approach that reflects a more systematic way of combating violence, combining both proactive and reactive methods which target different age and gender groups.

An issue for governments introducing services is how to best trigger such programs in communities where they are obviously needed while at the same time creating a climate whereby the programs are community-originating, motivated and controlled.

Source: The Violence in Indigenous Communities report (by Memmott, Stacy, Chambers)
Part 1.3  Stop the Violence action plan

**Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja Action Plan**

**Live Together-Stop The Violence**

For us to achieve our vision we want all levels of government to empower our communities and to work in partnership with our traditional and cultural decision making structures and processes.

**Our action plan vision**

“Our challenge is to create, develop and achieve a leadership network of Aboriginal males in Central Australia who can implement a long term, fully funded and culturally appropriate action plan that will Stop the Violence, resulting in a violent free family environment and safer communities.”

How will this be achieved? In 3 stages.

Stage 1. **Stop** The Violence Steering Committee

Stage 2. **Stop** The Violence action plan

Stage 3. **Stop** the Violence communications strategy
Interim role of the Stop The Violence Steering Committee

- Provide direction on where the action plan and communication campaign is going.
- Monitor government responses to reports.
- Advise on priorities for expenditure of funding
- Advise on future funding needs and opportunities
- Advise on future improvements to stakeholders service delivery
- Advise on future media coverage
- Advise on appointment of a Stop The Violence coordinator
- Advise on cultural implication of a Stop The Violence action and communications plans
- Assist with organising road shows to communities.
- Review reports to stakeholders on workshop and committee planning
- Assist in running programs in the school around town camps and the gaol
- Arrange regular visits to the gaol to talk to family members
- Meet once a month to progress the Stop the Violence campaign
### Inteyerrkwe – Stop the Violence-workshop

#### Part 1.3 Stop the Violence action plan

**Stage 2 Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja Steering action plan**

This plan outlines our vision for the next three years and beyond for us to reach our and the actions we need to take. It will be a living document driven by the steering committee which will

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3+</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Establish a steering Committee with support from Ingkinjta Congress Male health to implement and monitor all workshop recommendations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Continue to seek recurrent funding for all strategies and programs in the region.</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>Attract 3 year Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Develop a communication strategy to promote Stop the Violence in the region.</td>
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<td>Effective communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Develop and deliver conflict resolution and cultural brokerage training programs.</td>
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<td>Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Develop and delivery community based action plans building capacity in developing local solutions for local problems.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Community based action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work towards developing best practice for family violence service delivery at local, regional and national levels.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Best Practice service delivery</td>
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<td>7. Develop cross agency linkages and partnerships to improve service delivery</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Engaging and working with Indigenous women in problem solving and implementation of all plans and strategies</td>
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<td>Engaging women</td>
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<td>9. Establish a national network of communities and stakeholders to create coordinated approach to Stop the Violence</td>
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<td>National support networks</td>
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<td>10. Establish a method of evaluating reduction in our Stop The Violence strategies</td>
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<td>Evaluation of reduction targets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stage 2 World Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja communications plan

A major recommendation of the workshop is to develop a communications strategy that will communicate clearly and effectively our vision and objectives for the next three years and beyond. It will be once again a living document driven by the steering committee which will guide, inform and direct joint efforts of our communities and stakeholders to Stop The Violence. It is proposed that a draft of this communication be in place and actioned by the end of August 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Background-The need</td>
<td>There is a need to develop a long term sustainable, innovative, cost effective communication strategy that has clear objectives, engages all sections of the community with targeted messages and meets the needs of all stakeholders to Stop the Violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Funding and budgets</td>
<td>Identify funding bodies and sponsors and the budget required to create a cost effective communications strategy. FaHCSIA have provided an initial $130,000 to get this communications strategy underway ASAP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Issues</td>
<td>Identify the issues that may be barriers in achieving our communication objectives and state how these issues will be addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Communication Objectives</td>
<td>The communication strategy will support all elements of the plan to inform, persuade and motivate a wide range of logistical and behavioural changes, resulting in an evaluated reduction of violence in the defined regions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 Target audiences               | • *Primary Target Audience* Individual Aboriginal males and women, Aboriginal communities and organisations who will be directly affected by our messages or need to be exposed to our messages  
• *Secondary Target Audience – Non-Aboriginal*. Our secondary target will be non-Aboriginal people who need to receive the campaign messages, and non-Aboriginal people who influence the target audiences now or in the future |
| 6 Research                       | Review all research and effectiveness of previous Family Violence campaigns and programs. |
| 7 Communications design          | Branding of strategy: How will the campaign look and feel to target our audience effectively? |
| 8 Key Messages                   | What are the key messages of the campaign that will engage and inform and persuade our target audiences. |
| 9 Communication activities       | Communications mix: television, radio, Internet, posters, events, information kits, road shows and merchandising. |
| 10 Evaluation                    | What evaluation steps are in place to monitor and evaluate the success of the communications strategy |
The positive work at this workshop following on from 2008 Aboriginal Male Health Summit here at Inteyerrkwe, was aimed at developing practical outcomes to Stop the Violence in Central Australia and to enhance the engagement of Aboriginal males in their communities safe and secure future by identifying immediate priorities at all levels of society-personal, community local, organisational, regional and by influencing national policy and agendas.

This workshop report along with Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission report 2006: “Ending Family Violence and Abuse in Aboriginal Communities” and other reports once again echo each other concerns about the governments’ ongoing lack of community engagement, commitment, accountability, cultural respect and support for Aboriginal males.

Governments are to be commended for commissioning reports and funding programs such as this workshop but the same messages and recommendations are often ignored resulting in a fragmented approach to Indigenous engagement and outcomes.

We await your response:

Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja- Call for Government action

Our thanks to:
Hon. Warren Snowdon
MHR for representing the Federal Govt. at the workshop

Our thanks to:
Hon. Karl Hampton
MLA for representing the NT Govt at the workshop

Worla Nyintanti Atwerrentye Itja : Signed by the community elders and leaders from Central Australian communities who attended this workshop