

Family & Domestic Violence Working Group

LOCAL ACTION PLAN

Preamble

A local Family & Domestic Violence Working Group was convened by Mark Ryan MP, State Member for Morayfield, to engage with community members about what we can all do to eliminate family and domestic violence in our community.

Through a series of forums, the Working Group has identified areas of need in our local community and strategies to respond to that need.

At all times, the Working Group demonstrated a strong commitment to working together positively and using each community member's experiences to develop goodwill and a collaborative approach for taking action. This Local Action Plan is a result of those efforts and is presented to the Queensland Government for consideration.

In the spirit of the *Not Now, Not Ever* Report by Dame Quentin Bryce, this Local Action Plan sets out the Working Group's priorities for local action. This approach reflects the Working Group's desire to operate within the framework of the broader community discussion currently underway.

Our community affirms its commitment that family and domestic violence is never acceptable. Not now, not ever.

Culture and attitude

1. Education & Intervention Programs for Men (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendations 15 & 39)

The Morayfield Region is lacking in available programs to support men. Men (whether those men are aggrieved or perpetrators) should be engaged. Funding should be made available for local behaviour change support programs, local perpetrator programs, and local respectful relationships programs specifically for our boys and our men. Also, consideration needs to be given to establishing a dedicated local men's space where programs can be delivered and support provided.

2. Respectful Relationships courses delivered at local sporting clubs (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendation 15)

By partnering with local sporting groups to deliver respectful relationships courses to local people, our community can embed positive cultural and attitudinal change and own our vision of eliminating family and domestic violence. Funding should be made available for respectful relationships programs to be delivered in partnership with local sporting clubs. Where possible, such programs should also develop respectful relationships towards people with intellectual and other disability.

3. Trial of a Respectful Relationships program in local schools (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendation 24)

It is vital that our community engages local school students about respectful relationships. Early intervention is essential. Funding should be made available for respectful relationships programs to be delivered in local schools including in local special schools and special education programs.

4. Trauma informed counselling awareness and education (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendation 49)

The tragedy of family and domestic violence affects our entire community including our local counsellors, community workers, public sector workers and business employees. Funding should be made available to provide local trauma informed counselling awareness and education programs for those people who may engage with people experiencing family and domestic violence on a regular basis.

NOT NOW, NOT EVER

Integrated responses

5. Women's Welcoming Centre (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendations 15, 39 & 75)

Modelled on other successful centres, a local Women's Welcoming Centre would provide a safe place for women and a space for the coordination and delivery of education, empowerment, support & prevention programs. The necessary planning work should now be undertaken by Government so a local Centre can be delivered as soon as possible. This planning work includes identifying ways to fund a facility, suite of programs and a dedicated Centre Manager.

6. Need for a local Project Officer/Coordinator (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendations 39 & 71)

Operating from existing resources within the Department of Communities, a Project Officer/Coordinator (based locally) is needed to map existing services in the Morayfield region and create a comprehensive database; build networks between existing and new service providers and encourage collaboration and the sharing of resources; coordinate new initiatives; and provide advice and support to service providers and community organisations.

7. Access to emergency and short-term housing (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendations 85, 88 & 89)

There needs to be more and smoother local pathways for local people, and their families, experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) family and domestic violence to access emergency, short-term, and longer-term affordable housing. Existing local housing options and pathways should be expanded to address the local need.

Justice and the law

8. Family and Domestic Violence Court in Caboolture (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendation 96)

The Working Group firmly believes that our Region needs a dedicated Family and Domestic Violence Court. Following the completion of the current trial of a dedicated Family and Domestic Violence Court at Southport, the Caboolture Courthouse should be a priority for the rollout of this court model.

9. Dedicated Domestic Violence Specialists at Police Stations and Courts (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendations 39 & 126)

The Working Group considered that it was important that dedicated duty lawyers be assigned to the Caboolture Courthouse during days when family and domestic violence matters are being heard. Funding for these dedicated duty lawyers should continue to be provided. It was further identified that a dedicated Support Officer was needed at each police station to provide support and advice to people experiencing family and domestic violence.

10. Trial of a Streamlined DVO Process (*Not Now, Not Ever* Recommendation 134)

A streamlined approach to the making of Domestic Violence Orders (DVO) is needed to provide greater protection to people experiencing family and domestic violence. The Working Group would like to see any trial of a new approach to the DVO application process run in our Region.¹

Conclusion

This Local Action Plan has been compiled by our community and is presented to the Queensland Government with the best of intentions. We are committed to working with the Queensland Government to eliminate family and domestic violence in our community.

NOT NOW, NOT EVER

¹ Such approach could be modelled on the WA Police Orders: <http://www.police.wa.gov.au/YOURSAFETY/FamilyViolence/tabid/895/Default.aspx#policeorder>