



Anglicans Promoting Respectful Relationships

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

DRAFT STRATEGIC POLICY

**For the Prevention of Violence Against
Women**

Presented by the Social Responsibilities Committee,
Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

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1. Preamble and Purpose

Our world is a mixture of hopeful opportunities and harmful challenges. The people of our world experience these opportunities and challenges in different measure. This difference is sometimes due to natural causes, but is more often caused by unjust and discriminatory practices embedded in our cultural and civic life.

Gender discrimination is a major cause of unequal opportunities and challenges between women and men. Male privilege and power, though lessened in many places, remains a source of this discrimination. A significant result of gender discrimination is violence against women, which occurs across all Australian communities at an alarming rate. Violence against women is the major contributor to ill health for women under 45 in Australia, and one woman is killed on average every week by an intimate partner or ex-intimate partner. The social and financial cost of Violence Against Women is significant.

Christians make known the healing love of Christ through our active commitment to justice, compassion, healing and peace. As the Body of Christ in our world, we continue the Gospel mission of Jesus, who was particularly concerned for those who experienced the affects of injustice and discrimination.

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, a part of the Body of Christ, has a responsibility to this vocation of justice and compassion. This responsibility is twofold - to seek to end injustice in our world, and to ensure that we ourselves do not perpetuate it.

The Prevention of Violence Against Women is a significant part of our vocation. The purpose of this Strategic Policy is to guide the Diocese in this area.

2. Vision

A *community* in which women are free from the fear of violence, and relationships between men and women are characterised by respect and equality.

A *Diocese* with an explicit commitment to the prevention of violence against women.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. 1 John 4:16-18

3. Values

3.1. Equality

All people are created in equality by God and should be able to live free from discrimination and injustice. *Galatians 3:27-28*

3.2. Freedom

Freedom is an integral aspect of the gift of life and of the grace of God. To live in freedom is an expression of human dignity and respect. *Romans 8:1-2*

3.3. Peace

The hope of peace is a central component of the reconciling message of God for all people, and a sign of the kingdom of God. *2 Corinthians 13:11*

3.4. Justice

Justice is one of the most tangible expressions of the nature of God in action. To seek justice for all people is to make the presence of God known in our midst. *Micah 6:8*

3.5. Compassion

To exercise compassion for those in need is to express our commitment to our common humanity as God's people. *Matthew 9:35-36*

4. Definitions

4.1. Violence Against Women

From the United Nation's 'Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women 1993', any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.'

4.2. Primary Prevention

From the VicHealth Primary Prevention Framework, Primary prevention interventions are those that seek to prevent violence before it occurs. Interventions can be targeted to the whole population (universal) or particular groups that are at higher risk of using or experiencing violence in the future.'

4.3. Determinants

Determinants are influencing factors or elements which determine outcomes. VicHealth recognises that, the key determinants and contributing factors to the perpetration of violence against women are: unequal power relations between men and women; adherence to rigid gender stereotypes; broader cultures of violence'. (from A Right to Respect)

4.4. The Diocese

Within this Strategic Policy the term 'The Diocese' refers to all segments of Diocesan life, including parishes, the Anglican Centre, Anglican Schools, chaplaincy services, the Episcopacy and all ordained and lay staff of the Diocese.

5. Policy Context

5.1. International Context

The United Nations *Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)* provides an international context and rationale for this Strategic Policy.

5.2. National Context

In April 2009 the Federal Government released *The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women: Immediate Government Actions*. This was followed up by *The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children*, including the first three-year action plan. The second document is an initiative of The Council of Australian Governments. Together, these reports form part of the combined national and state response to violence against women.

5.3. State

The Victorian response is outlined in, *A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women, 2010-2020*, November 2009. This report is connected to a number of key documents produced by VicHealth, including, *Preventing Violence Before it Occurs: a framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women*, December 2007, and, *National Survey on Community Attitudes to Violence Against Women 2009: Changing cultures, changing attitudes-preventing violence against women*, March 2010.

5.4. Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Within our own Diocese this Policy sits alongside a number of key local and national documents in the area of Professional Standards, such as *Faithfulness in Service: a national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers; the Code of good Practice for Clergy; the Professional Standards Act 2009*.

6. Core Strategies 2011-2012

- **Increase awareness within the Diocese of the existence and impact of violence against women through a process of *education*.**
- **Use the health determinants model to identify within the Diocese areas for action through a process of *investigation*.**
- **Encourage within the Diocese a commitment to primary prevention through active *participation* in national, local and Diocesan primary prevention programs.**
- **Develop an Ecumenical / Interfaith Taskforce to guide ongoing work in the future**

6.1. Increase awareness within the Diocese of the existence and impact of violence against women through a process of education

Leadership	Archbishop in Council
Contributors	Regional Bishops and Archdeacons Social Responsibilities Committee Area Deans
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide PVAW poster for all ADM facilities. 2. Provide list of potential guest speakers / preachers on PVAW and encourage all parishes to address this topic on one Sunday of each year. 3. Encourage lay and ordained leadership to make use of the <i>Peer Mentoring Programs</i>, such as those developed by the Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project. 4. Provide fact sheets and articles for use in pew sheets and other local publications. 5. Add PVAW page to ADM Website, including this policy and other resources.
Schedule	Actions to commence from authorisation of this policy. Anglican Parishes and Agencies to be surveyed in August 2012 by SRC for evidence of take-up, and a report made to the 2012 Synod.
Resources	Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships <i>Peer Mentoring Program</i> Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships <i>Faith Promoting Respect Tool Kit</i> White Ribbon Day Australia Ambassadors list Faith Trust Institute, USA, for Resources and on-line training, information
Outcomes	Greater presence of information around the Diocese on PVAW. Lay and ordained leadership better informed about PVAW. Increased awareness of PVAW in Diocese generally. Increased commitment to development of PVAW programs and activities.

6.2. Use the health determinants model to identify within the Diocese areas for action through a process of investigation.

Leadership	Archbishop in Council
Contributors	Regional Bishops and Archdeacons Social Responsibilities Committee Area Deans Director of Theological Education Director of Professional Standards Registry
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage all ADM facilities to make use of audit tool produced by Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project. 2. Investigate ways in which PVAW training can be integrated into existing training of ordinands and Professional Standards Seminars.
Schedule	Audit to be undertaken during 2012 and report made back to 2012 Synod.
Resources	Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships <i>Faith Promoting Respect Tool Kit</i>
Outcomes	Greater awareness of the ways in which determinants of Violence Against women (gender inequity, rigid gender roles, and low sanctions against violence) are embedded in policies and practices of Diocese. Greater clarity about areas for action. Evidence produced for next stage of strategic work.

6.3. Encourage within the Diocese a commitment to primary prevention through active participation in national, local and Diocesan prevention programs.

Leadership	Archbishop in Council
Contributors	Regional Bishops and Archdeacons Social Responsibilities Committee Area Deans VicHealth, Office of Women's Policy White Ribbon Day and other stakeholders
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Training Day for faith leaders on Primary Prevention and Violence Against Women in partnership with VicHealth 2. Encourage all ADM Facilities to identify and plan for 3 activities they can undertake in the coming 12 months. 3. Provide all parishes, agencies and schools with copy of Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project <i>Faith Promoting Respect Tool Kit</i>. 4. Encourage all Deaneries to discuss PVAW at one Deanery gathering during 2012.
Schedule	Actions to commence from authorisation of this policy. Anglican Parishes and Agencies to be surveyed in August 2012 for evidence of take-up, and a report made to the 2012 Synod.
Resources	Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships <i>Faith Promoting Respect Tool Kit</i> . VicHealth, <i>Short Course for Prevention of Violence Against Women</i>
Outcomes	Primary prevention activities happening in 50% of ADM facilities during 2012. <i>Faith Promoting Respect Tool Kit</i> accessible in all facilities.

6.4. Develop an Ecumenical / Interfaith Taskforce to guide ongoing work in the future

Leadership	Archbishop in Council
Contributors	Regional Bishops and Archdeacons Victorian Council of Churches Faith Communities Council of Victoria
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange Round Table Conversation with nominated faith leaders to set strategy for Ecumenical / Interfaith response to Prevention of Violence Against Women.
Schedule	Report from Round Table to be presented to 2012 Synod.
Resources	Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships <i>Faith Promoting Respect Tool Kit</i> . VicHealth, <i>Short Course for Prevention of Violence Against Women</i>
Outcomes	Development of process for Prevention of Violence Against Women to happen strategically at Ecumenical / Interfaith level as well at single faith level.

7. Review and Reporting

Archbishop in Council, through the Social Responsibilities Committee, will take responsibility for gathering, collating and reporting on the results of this Strategic Policy, as per the guidelines listed in the Schedule of each of the four core strategies. This report to be presented to the 2012 Synod. The report to include a review of the Strategic Policy and recommendations for Core strategies for 2012 – 2015.

Appendix 1

Types of Domestic Violence

Physical

Hitting; Punching; Dragging by hair; Choking; Burning; Slapping; Pinching; Stabbing; Pushing/shoving; Restraining; Tying up; Gagging; Physical intimidation; Use of body language e.g. standing over/invading personal space; Threatened with gun/other weapons; Damage to possessions/property; Dragged out of bed in middle of night to perform tasks e.g. housework; denying medication or over medicating; putting something out of reach of a person with disability

Social

Prevented from studying or advancing self/skills; Denigration/putdowns before family friends & others; Public humiliation; Isolating by being obnoxious in front of friends and family-driving them away; Interfering with car to control movements; Prevent from having contact with friends/families; Imprisoned at home; Phone calls monitored e.g. STD calls on bill; Denied access to phone e.g. phone locked; Threats to 'out' a gay or lesbian; Preventing a woman from attending medical appointments on her own

Sexual

Coerced sexual activities e.g. forced to perform acts which find humiliating; Forced to have sex with and/or in front of others; Forced to have sex with animals; Rape with objects; Forced to wear clothes which make you feel degraded; Forced to be constantly sexually available no matter how tired, sick or uninterested; Waking up to find you are being raped; Mutilation of genitals/breasts; Sexual harassment; Forced sterilisation; Forced abortion or pregnancy

Financial

Controlling all finances and denying access to money; Coercion to sign contracts without being an equal partner or fully informed; Gambling all the money and assets away leaving family destitute; Overzealous scrutiny of expenditures; Dragging out Family Court proceedings in order to force all funds to be spent in legal costs; Forced to hand over the pay; Incurring debts and then disappearing leaving the debts to be paid by the partner left behind

Spiritual

Undermining spiritual beliefs/practices; Use of spiritual/religious rituals to abuse; Denial of access to religious practices/networks; Within some cults-use of brainwashing and controls over all aspects of life; Forced to participate in religion you don't want to join; Forced to participate in rituals

Emotional

Yelling abuse; Name calling; Mind games; Crazy making behaviours; Undermining parenting skills; Criticising beliefs; Criticising abilities; Put downs; Emotional withdrawal at times of need silent treatment; Threats to kill/to harm/to suicide; Harming/killing pets; Use of anger to control; Excessive controlling jealousy; Prevent from studying; Destroying books, notes, essays; Stalking/harassment behaviour

Systemic

Myths and stereotypes about people (eg indigenous, gay and lesbian, people with disabilities) prevent people from obtaining their basic human rights. They have a direct effect on the development and also the absence of services, laws, public programs and social policies. Myths, stereotypes and social systems not only influence public opinion, but can also influence the action of individuals. There may be times when a person experiences individual and systemic abuse at the same time. What is especially harmful about systemic abuse is that people (e.g. with disabilities) are often dependent on the people or systems that are abusing them.

Based on material taken from the manual "Responding to family violence and abuse: an Independent Living Approach", Canadian