

Culturally Safe Service Provision: FVPLS Victoria

Presenters:

Antoinette Braybrook , Chief Executive Officer

Jenni Smith, Principal Solicitor

Tania McKenna, Policy and Education Manager

About FVPLS Victoria

- Established in 2002
- One of 14 family violence prevention and legal services (FVPLS) across Australia funded by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department (AGD)
- Funding is also provided by the State government and other sources to provide services to parts of Victoria not funded by the Commonwealth AGD



About FVPLS Victoria cont.

- Assist Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander victims/survivors of family violence and sexual assault
- Assist non-Aboriginal carer's of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Assist women and men (majority of clients are female)



FVPLS Victoria Offices

Melbourne

Warrnambool

Mildura

Bairnsdale



About FVPLS Victoria cont.

Legal services:

- family violence intervention orders
- victims assistance
- child protection
- family law
- other family violence related matters



About FVPLS Victoria cont.

- Policy and law reform
- Community education projects



Why is Culturally Safe Service Provision Important?

- Law and justice system used as a tool of oppression
- History of racism and vilification against Koori and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- Other disadvantage such as economic exclusion and poverty, substance abuse, poor physical and/or mental health



Cultural safety

An environment in which:

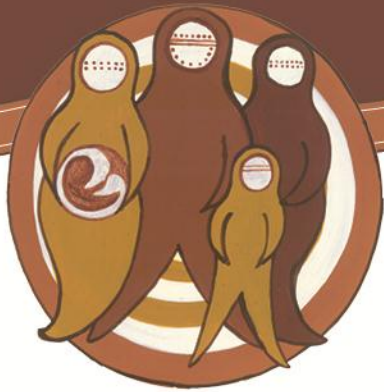
- Koori people feel safe
- Koori people can draw strength in their identity, culture and community
- There is shared respect, meaning, knowledge, and experience



Cultural Security

- An obligation on service providers to actively ensure that that the service meets the cultural needs of the clients
- Having policies and procedures in place to ensure that all clients have access to high quality service provision
- A top level down approach to embedding particular practices across all aspects of service delivery





Culturally Safe Legal Service Delivery

From the perspective of
FVPLS Victoria

Elements of Culturally Safe Legal Service Delivery

- Cultural awareness
- Staff
- Intake process's
- Communicating with clients
- Getting instructions
- Ensuring ongoing advocacy



Cultural Security

- This is what is imbedded in our legal service delivery
 - That all staff attend cultural awareness training as part of induction and ongoing
 - Informal ways of learning
 - Key influence of Koori staff



Staff

- Holistic structure
- Role of PLSW
- Staff have been recruited on the basis of their cultural sensitivity
- Focus on the importance of quality and therefore training



Intake process's

- Importance of referrals and the community's perception of us
- Training of staff and questions we ask at intake
- Identifying and responding to conflicts that arise in relation to Koori staff



Communicating with clients

- Non judgmental approach
- Appropriate ways of communicating – style guide
- Role of PLSW



Getting instructions/Intake

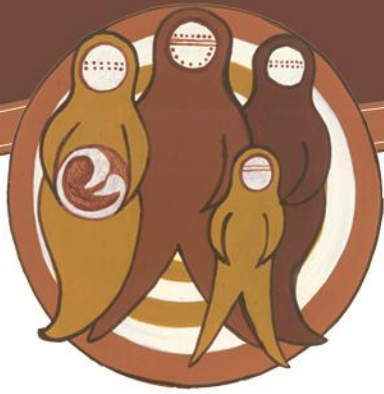
- Flexibility
- Involvement
- Following up
- advice



Ensuring ongoing advocacy

- Redressing culturally inappropriate behavior by other institutions
- Ensuring institutional compliance with Koori specific requirements in legislative and other procedures
- Identifying and reporting to our Policy Unit systematic issues





Culturally Safe Community Education Programs

From the perspective of
FVPLS Victoria

Key Elements of Culturally Safe Community Education Programs

- Staff
- Community consultation and partnerships
- Culturally safe spaces
- Holistic programs
- Communicating key messages
- Managing trauma
- Maintaining community trust and confidence



Staff

- Employ Aboriginal staff to deliver programs where possible
- All CLE staff receive formal and informal cultural awareness training



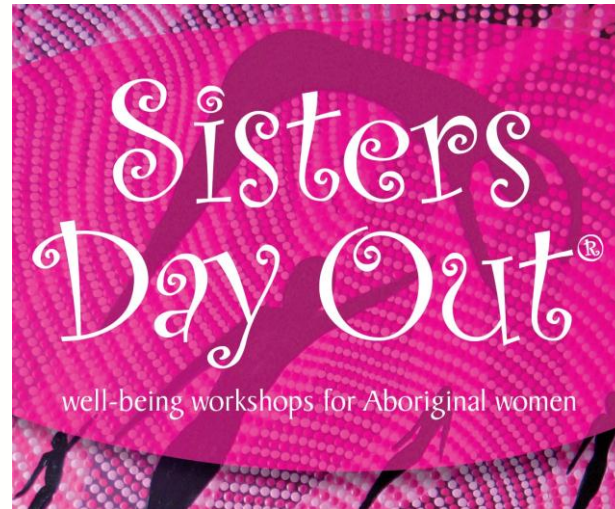
Community Consultation and Partnership

- Local knowledge of issues
- Local ownership of resolutions
- Platform for policy and law reform advocacy



Culturally Safe Spaces

- Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and colors, artwork.
- Aboriginal presenters
- Cultural protocols
- Traditional activities – yarning circles, beading



Holistic Programs

Incorporate activities that:

- strengthen the communities capacity to response to respond to family violence
- address disadvantage
- develop individual resilience



Holistic Programs cont.

- demystify law and justice processes to encourage access to justice
- educate how the law can be used to help prevent , protect and recover from family violence
- Improve the capacity of agencies to respond to Koori women experiencing family violence



Communicating Key Messages

- Presenting information using a variety of formats to deliver key clear messages including:
 - story telling
 - games
 - artwork
 - promotional items



Managing trauma

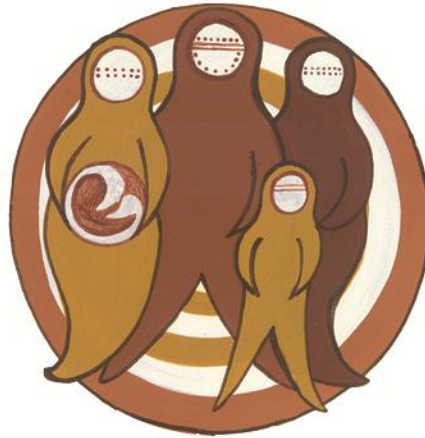
- Having a counsellor available for any participants during family violence discussions
- Having a solicitor available for any participants who require legal advice
- Focusing on activities that promote well-being and strengths



Maintaining Community Trust and Confidence

- Major/minor presence model
- Consultation with other legal services
- Advocacy for sustained ongoing program funding





Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention & Legal Service Victoria
(FVPLS Victoria)

Standing Firm Against Family Violence

1800 105 303