

Training Session Plan

Children's Contact
Services Staff
One-Day Program

AVERT
FAMILY VIOLENCE



**Collaborative Responses in
the Family Law System**



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department

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Training Session Plan - Children's Contact Services Staff

Program Title: Family Violence Skills Training Program

Program Length: One Day

Intended Participants: Children's Contact Services Staff

Program Learning Outcomes:

- Knowledge of the dimensions and dynamics of family violence
- Knowledge of the impact of family violence on children
- Understanding of child focused practice in relation to family violence
- Ability to conduct risk assessment in relation to children
- Exploration of the role of CCS staff in identifying and responding to family violence.

Pre-Course Activities:

Ensure participants receive:

- Pre-Course Evaluation* form to complete and submit at commencement of the training
- Pre-readings:
 - AVERT Paper: *Dimensions, Dynamics and Impact of Family Violence*
 - AVERT Paper: *Multidisciplinary Collaboration and Integrated Responses to Family Violence*

Room Setting and Equipment:

It is recommended that this program be run with a group size no bigger than 25 and the tables should be arranged in "Cabaret" style allowing participants to work in small groups. Equipment necessary for the program includes:

- Video projection
- Whiteboard

Facilitator Preparation:

The AVERT Family Violence Training Package is a multi-disciplinary training package that will be delivered to different professions with different skill sets. Facilitators should tailor the package for their particular audience and context. The package has been constructed with



an assumption that an experienced trainer from within relevant professional groups will deliver the training.

Prior to delivering the program, it is essential for the facilitator to view all the video resources and read all the papers that are indicated for use in the session plans. These are listed for quick review at the end of this document and are located on the website under For Trainers/ Resources/ By Type. It is also recommended that facilitators practice any of the activities that are unfamiliar to them. This will assist in having a thorough understanding of the materials and being well prepared to answer any questions that participants may raise. This preparation also provides an opportunity for the facilitator to clarify any hesitations or queries they may have with any aspect of the training. Family violence can be an emotional and controversial topic in many groups. Practicing ways of responding to anticipated reactions will assist in the creation of a quality education experience.

When tailoring a package for a particular audience, facilitators may need to prepare some of their own PowerPoints and Handouts, drawn from the facilitator notes and general materials. A template PowerPoint and Fact Sheet is provided for this purpose on the website under Resources/ By Type/ Learning Materials.

Named fact sheets, discussion papers and resources for training exercises are all provided and can be found on the website under the program title. Points to emphasise are indicated in the session plans as well as in the detailed outline of training exercises.

All exercises, fact sheets, PowerPoints, discussion papers and course evaluation forms can be found on the website under Resources/ By Type.

Program timing in the session plan is a rough estimate and is based on a group of between 20 – 25 participants. However, the level of participation of each group necessarily impacts the amount of time that each activity will take. It is envisaged that each facilitator will know which exercises need to be curtailed if the program is running over time.

In many cases various sections of the Video Resources have been broken up into chapters (e.g. Scenarios; Overview of Family Law system). The appropriate chapters for specific exercises within the training programs are indicated as required. Chapters are listed under Resources/ By Type on the website. Click on the chapter required to start viewing.



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
15 min	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement of Indigenous custodians of the local area <input type="checkbox"/> Introductions – after the facilitator has been introduced, ask the participants to share with the person next to them, their name, where they are from and something they already know about family violence <input type="checkbox"/> Briefly outline the aims of the program <input type="checkbox"/> Alert participants to the sometimes challenging and distressing content in this program and provide group rules and support for debriefing if required <input type="checkbox"/> Outline ‘housekeeping’ and timeframe details <input type="checkbox"/> Collect the completed <i>Pre-Course Evaluation</i> forms. 	<p>Name stickers & pens</p> <p><i>CCS Learning Outcomes</i> PowerPoint</p> <p><i>Pre-Course Evaluation</i> forms</p>
30 min	<p>What is Family Violence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Collect the completed <i>Pre-Course Evaluation</i> forms. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask participants to brainstorm their ideas about family violence and report back any interesting issues from the introductory exercise above. <input type="checkbox"/> Invite comments about the pre-reading and what participants know/do not know or would like to learn today. <input type="checkbox"/> Draw out themes and highlight myths and facts <p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family violence is also sometimes called domestic violence, spouse abuse, or intimate partner violence <input type="checkbox"/> Family violence is fundamentally about the use of power and control and therefore different from relationship conflict <input type="checkbox"/> It is not only physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> It is a <i>pattern</i> of behaviour over time <input type="checkbox"/> It occurs in all populations and age groups <input type="checkbox"/> Family violence has long term harmful effects upon victims and also children who live in households where it is occurring. (Approximately 50% of children exposed to family violence develop long term mental health issues if recovery from the immediate trauma is not facilitated) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Present the PowerPoint: <i>Definitions of Family Violence</i> as further explanation of the previous points. 	<p>Fact Sheet: <i>Myths and Facts about Family Violence</i></p> <p>PowerPoint: <i>Definitions of FV</i></p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
45 min	<p>Private or Public Exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce this section with a statement on the high prevalence of FV within Family Court cases (and hence its likely presence in Child Contact arrangements). <input type="checkbox"/> Follow the detailed facilitator notes to conduct the <i>Private or Public</i> Exercise. <input type="checkbox"/> Refer participants to AVERT Paper: <i>Dimensions, Dynamics and Impacts of Family Violence</i> for information regarding the prevalence, types and dynamics of family violence. 	<p>Exercise: <i>Private or Public</i></p> <p><i>Private or Public</i> Cards (from Exercise sheet)</p>
15 min	<p>Break</p>	
45 min	<p>Impact of Family Violence on Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce the Expert Discussion of Dr Jennifer McIntosh and Professor Lawrence Moloney as an opportunity to hear from national experts in relation to the impact of family violence on children <input type="checkbox"/> Show Expert Discussion: <i>Impact on Children</i> (21min) <input type="checkbox"/> Debrief: were there any surprises for you, or points you found controversial? <input type="checkbox"/> Back up this discussion with facts and information from the AVERT Paper: <i>Dimensions, Dynamics and Impacts of Family Violence</i> and the PowerPoint: <i>Impact of FV on Children</i>. <p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Children who are exposed to violence and conflict require their own attention and support to recover and re-establish a “protective cocoon” <input type="checkbox"/> The old assumptions that children don’t notice or simply ‘get over’ trauma quickly are significantly refuted by research over the past 20 years <input type="checkbox"/> Infants and pre-school children are seriously impacted by family violence. This includes experiencing neurological harm (that occurs <i>without</i> physical assault happening to them) <input type="checkbox"/> Children who are compliant and well behaved should not be assumed to be ok; rather compliance maybe a sign of fear and trauma. 	<p>Expert Discussion: <i>Impact on Children</i> on DVD 4</p> <p>PowerPoint: <i>Impact of FV on Children</i></p> <p>Paper: <i>Dimensions, Dynamics and Impacts of Family Violence</i></p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
75 min	<p>Case Study Exercise - <i>Sam's Story</i></p> <p>Follow the detailed facilitator's instructions in Case Study Exercise – <i>Sam's Story</i>.</p> <p>Explain that this section will explore child focused work through an analysis of <i>Sam's Story</i>. Divide participants into four small groups.</p> <p>Hand out the case study of <i>Sam's Story</i> and allow participants 30 min to read and discuss the themes in their small groups. Ask them to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> What is going on for Sam?<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing on the previous session, what do you notice are the impacts on Sam, of living with family violence?<input type="checkbox"/> What does Sam need in this circumstance?<input type="checkbox"/> What does Danny need?<input type="checkbox"/> What does Jodi need?<input type="checkbox"/> What would be a child focused response?<input type="checkbox"/> What referral and collaboration options would you draw on to respond to this situation?<input type="checkbox"/> What are the ethical issues in this case study? <p>Invite the groups to share their deliberations and draw out a discussion about the worker “breaching” the Contact Order due to a policy of not forcing children to do something they do not wish to do.</p> <p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> It is entirely appropriate not to force children to do something they do not wish to do, even with a contact order in place<input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration and specialised input is important<input type="checkbox"/> Consideration of the effects upon a child's 'circle of safety' should shape the worker and system response<input type="checkbox"/> Engaging <i>both</i> parents in order to support their parenting capacity and focus on the child, is critical for safety	<p>Exercise: <i>Sam's Story</i> Case Study</p>
30 min	<p>Lunch</p>	
30 min	<p><i>Power Relations</i> Exercise</p> <p>The aim of the activity is to reflect on the impact of power and contextualise violence within power relations.</p>	<p>Exercise: <i>Power Relations</i></p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
	<p>Debrief the exercise by reflecting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> A child's power in the world – what number would a child have on their back?<input type="checkbox"/> A child's power in CCS interactions<input type="checkbox"/> What is a CCS worker's role in mediating the imbalance of power?	
45 min	<p><i>Indicators of Family Violence – Assessing Risk</i></p> <p>This activity is designed to support participants to look for the combination of factors that present risk and enables the facilitator to point out the use of power and coercive control.</p> <p>Conduct the <i>Risk Assessment</i> Exercise following the detailed facilitator notes</p> <p>Ask participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> How does this exercise support you in your child focused practice?	<p>Exercise: <i>Risk Assessment</i></p> <p>Sets of <i>Risk Factor Cards</i> for each small group (from Exercise sheet)</p> <p><i>Risk assessment Scales Handout</i> for each participant (from Exercise sheet)</p>
30 min	<p><i>Circle of Safety Exercise</i></p> <p>The purpose of this exercise is to identify what facilitates and interrupts a child's attachment and positive development.</p> <p>Refer to the detailed facilitator notes provided. Complete the Exercise, drawing from participants' own understandings and experience of working with families, ensuring the key points are elicited.</p>	<p>Exercise: <i>Circle of Safety</i></p> <p>Set of <i>Circle of Safety Cards</i> for each small group (from Exercise sheet)</p>
15 min	Break	
30 min	<p>Testimonial - Jacob</p> <p>View <i>Jacob's</i> Testimonial bearing in mind the concept of the 'circle of safety'.</p> <p>As a whole group discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> What is your overall response to Jacob's story?<input type="checkbox"/> What were the effects of Jacob's father's violence?<input type="checkbox"/> What would Jacob's 'circle of safety' have contained/not contained as a child?<input type="checkbox"/> What strengths do you see in Jacob?<input type="checkbox"/> In what ways might Jacob's childhood experiences impact on him as an adult?	<p>Testimonial: <i>Jacob</i> on DVD 5</p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
15 min	<p>Opinion Piece: <i>Sam Page</i></p> <p>Show the Opinion Piece by <i>Sam Page</i> as a concluding statement about the need for collaboration and skills in responding to family violence within the Family Law System.</p>	Opinion Piece: <i>Sam Page</i> on DVD
20 min	<p>Closing round and evaluation</p> <p>Invite participants to report to the whole group in a 'round', something from the program that they will share with others.</p> <p>Handout <i>Post-Course Evaluation Forms</i> for completion and collect these before participants depart.</p>	<i>Post-Course Evaluation Form</i>