

Training Session Plan

Court Report Writers Two-Day Program

AVERT
FAMILY VIOLENCE



**Collaborative Responses in
the Family Law System**



An Australian Government Initiative

Australian
INSTITUTE
of SOCIAL
RELATIONS™

Copyright

© Commonwealth of Australia 2010

This resource is protected by copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, and those explicitly granted below, all other rights are reserved.

With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and except where otherwise noted, all material presented in this training package is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivative Works 3.0 Australia licence <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/3.0/au/legalcode>. The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used are detailed on the It's an Honour website <http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/coat-arms/>.

For the avoidance of doubt, this means this licence only applies to material as set out in this training package.

You must include the following link: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/3.0/au/legalcode> when re-using or distributing this work so that it is clear to others that the Creative Commons licence applies to this copyright material.

The details of the relevant licence conditions are available on the Creative Commons website (accessible using the links provided) as is the full legal code for the CC BY-ND 3.0 AU licence <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/3.0/au/legalcode>.

Any reference to, reuse or distribution of all or part of this training package must be attributed in the following way: Australian Attorney-General's Department, **AVERT Family Violence: Collaborative Responses in the Family Law System**.

Contact us

Inquiries regarding the licence and any use of this resource are welcome at:

Assistant Secretary
Family Law Branch
Attorney-General's Department
3-5 National Circuit
Barton ACT 2600

Disclaimer

The information presented and opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government.



An Australian Government Initiative

Australian
INSTITUTE
of SOCIAL
RELATIONS™



Training Session Plan - Court Report Writers

Program Title: Family Violence Skills Training Program

Program Length: Two Days

Intended Participants: Court Report Writers

Program Learning Outcomes:

- Update knowledge about prevalence, dynamics and impact of family violence in contemporary Australia
- Increase recognition of key research themes and findings in the area of family violence.
- Develop ability to identify and respond effectively to people who are affected by family violence
- Develop awareness of the role of court report writers and other professional practitioners in relation to family violence
- Increase ability for reflective analytical thinking about good practice approaches in relation to family violence.

Pre-Course Activities:

Ensure participants receive:

- Pre-course Evaluation Form*
- Pre-reading for day one: AVERT Paper *Dimensions, Dynamics and Impact of 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.

Handouts for the Program:

A folder of additional reading can be provided for each participant containing the following AVERT Discussion Papers:

- Legal Frameworks*
- Responding to Diversity*
- Screening, Risk Assessment and Safety Planning*
- Prevention Strategies: Involving and Engaging Perpetrators*
- Multidisciplinary Collaboration and Integrated Responses to Family Violence*



Day One

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 from and something they already know about family violence.<input type="checkbox"/> Invite any initial comments about Family Violence and what participants know/do not know.<input type="checkbox"/> Briefly outline 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"/> 'Housekeeping' and timeframe details.<input type="checkbox"/> Collect <i>Pre-Course Evaluation</i> forms.	<p>Name stickers & pens</p> <p>PowerPoint: <i>Court Report Writer's Learning Outcomes</i></p> <p><i>Pre-Course Evaluation</i> forms</p>
60 min	<p>Overview of family violence</p> <p>Show Chapters 1 & 6 of <i>The Hon. Diana Bryant, Chief Justice</i>. Link her comments to the need for the Family Law System to respond effectively to family violence.</p> <p>Invite participants to comment on what they have just heard.</p> <p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> The seriousness with which FV is now taken.<input type="checkbox"/> Identifying and responding to FV is the responsibility of all workers across diverse roles within the system.<input type="checkbox"/> The historical shifts away from a) women as property and husbands rights to control them; and b) family violence as a private matter to now being seen as a public, legal and social matter.<input type="checkbox"/> Community attitudes have changed but there are still some deeply entrenched views and habits from the past.	<p>Chp. 1 & 6: <i>The Hon. Diana Bryant, Chief Justice</i> on DVD 3</p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
	<p>Ask participants to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> How seriously do you think FV is taken generally?<input type="checkbox"/> What messages do we receive about it in the social world e.g. media, entertainment industry?<input type="checkbox"/> Are there any double standards that you observe in relation to violence generally and in particular, to family violence?	
30 min	<p>What is Family Violence?</p> <p>Ask participants to brainstorm their ideas about family violence. Briefly draw out themes and highlight myths and facts from the Fact Sheet. In particular, ensure the following points are made :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> FV is also sometimes called domestic violence, spouse abuse, or intimate partner violence<input type="checkbox"/> FV 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"/> FV 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). <p>Present the PowerPoint: <i>Definitions of Family Violence</i> as further explanation of the previous points.</p>	<p>Fact Sheet: <i>Myths and Facts</i></p> <p>PowerPoint: <i>Definitions of Family Violence</i></p>
15 min	BREAK	



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
30 min	<p>Duluth Wheel of Violence Exercise</p> <p>Handout a copy of the <i>Duluth Wheel of Violence</i> Fact Sheet and talk through the components of the wheel.</p> <p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> The significance of non-physical violence and in particular, social isolation as a result of living with FV. For instance how does the violence impact the victim's relationship with family and friends?<input type="checkbox"/> The fear that results from living with violence becomes an 'organising principle' of a victim's life. It is something that shapes their behaviours and limits relationships and social activities.<input type="checkbox"/> The multiple impacts of FV on adult victims (utilise the <i>Impacts on Adult Victims</i> PowerPoint if required)<input type="checkbox"/> Control as an underpinning factor<input type="checkbox"/> How violent behaviours overlap and can be multiple and long term. <p>Ask for examples of types of violence that participants are familiar with professionally.</p>	<p>Fact Sheet: A copy of the <i>Duluth Wheel of Violence</i> for each participant</p> <p>PowerPoint: <i>Impact of FV on Adult Victims</i></p>
30 min	<p>Testimonial – Alice</p> <p>Show <i>Alice's</i> Testimonial</p> <p>In small groups, ask participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Summarise the key themes that emerge from this story<input type="checkbox"/> Note the dynamics of FV that are evident within the testimonial, that relate to the <i>Duluth Wheel</i><input type="checkbox"/> Reflect on what could have helped improve Alice's experience of the Court.	<p>Testimonial: <i>Alice</i> on DVD 5</p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
	<p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Degree of fear and uncertainty about events<input type="checkbox"/> Different culture of the court<input type="checkbox"/> The feeling of “fighting for your life” and not being believed<input type="checkbox"/> Double trauma of living with FV and then going through the court experience.	
45 min	<p>Language and Meaning Exercise</p> <p>Follow the detailed facilitator notes at the start of the exercise to conduct the <i>Language and Meaning Exercise</i></p>	<p>Exercise: <i>Language and Meaning</i></p> <p>Pencils, paper</p>
45 min	LUNCH	
60 min	<p>Testimonial – Rose</p> <p>Show <i>Rose’s Testimonial</i></p> <p>Ask participants to work in pairs to record what they believe to be the main issues for consideration by the court, in this testimonial. How would they most effectively express Rose’s needs and fears, to assist the court to take them into account?</p> <p>Remind participants to use the <i>Duluth Wheel</i> as a reference.</p> <p>Ask each pair to share their work, drawing out information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of family violence<input type="checkbox"/> Safety issues<input type="checkbox"/> Children’s needs and effects of the violence<input type="checkbox"/> Parenting capacity. <p>Create a dot point outline of a report on the whiteboard, as information emerges.</p>	<p>Testimonial: <i>Rose</i> on DVD 5</p>
15 min	BREAK	



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
60 min	<p><i>Dimensions and Dynamics of Family Violence - Quiz</i></p> <p>This exercise draws together knowledge covered during the whole day and within the pre-reading. The facilitator can use it to summarise key messages and make necessary clarifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Distribute a copy of the <i>Dynamics of FV Quiz</i> (without the answers) to each participant and ask them to answer the quiz in small groups.<input type="checkbox"/> Go through the answers as a whole group. (Prizes for tables who get more than 75% of the answers correct are an option)<input type="checkbox"/> Remind participants that the background to this quiz is in the pre-reading sent to them.	<p>Exercise: <i>Dynamics of FV Quiz</i> without answers, for each participant.</p> <p>Exercise: <i>Dynamics of FV Quiz</i> with answers for each participant.</p> <p>Sweets or Promotional materials such as pens, key rings etc as prizes (optional).</p>
45 min	<p>Opinion Piece – Alice Bailey</p> <p>Watch the Opinion Piece by <i>Alice Bailey</i></p> <p>Discuss key points emerging from this and relate them to the overall messages in the training program.</p> <p>Emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> The dynamics of violence and abuse involve emotional and psychological abuse<input type="checkbox"/> Safety is the key focus for screening and risk assessment	<p>Opinion Piece: <i>Alice Bailey</i> on DVD 3</p>
15 min	<p>Closing Round</p> <p>Invite participants to report to the whole group in a 'round', some new learning or any issues that have arisen for them from today. Elicit any questions that the group would like to address in tomorrow's program.</p>	



Day Two

TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
<p>30 min</p>	<p>Welcome and review</p> <p>Ask participants to each name something they learnt or a question that has arisen for them from yesterday.</p> <p>Use this round to re-iterate the important key messages from the day and respond to any clarifications.</p> <p>Establish the following as baseline knowledge for professionals in the court:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reminder of <i>Family Court definition of family violence</i> (on PowerPoint). Note: this covers forms of violence that are non-contact violence <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Duluth Wheel</i> types of violence <input type="checkbox"/> It is common for many forms of violence to operate at the same time. <input type="checkbox"/> Anyone experiencing or fearing violence is entitled to the protection of the law <input type="checkbox"/> A common thread in research is the problem of victims having to tell and retell their story – not always having the words or strength left to do this. <p>Amplify how vital their role is in the decisions that are made.</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Definitions of Family Violence</i></p>
<p>60 min</p>	<p>Scenario - <i>Jaber & Zahra's Story</i></p> <p>Family violence in the context of refugee trauma and acculturation.</p> <p>Ask participants, whilst watching this story, to identify and speculate about the cultural, migration and settlement issues that the different members of the family are faced with and how these relate to the family violence.</p> <p>In small groups consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What is the meaning of acculturation? <input type="checkbox"/> What is going on for the different characters in this story? <input type="checkbox"/> What are the family member's individual needs? <input type="checkbox"/> How does the family violence impact and combine with 	<p>Scenario: <i>Jaber and Zahra's Story</i> on DVD 2</p> <p>Professional Commentary by <i>Mark Murdoch, Judy Saba, Dina Lioumis</i> on DVD 2</p> <p>Paper: <i>Responding to Diversity</i> for each participant</p> <p>Fact Sheet: <i>Migration and Settlement</i></p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
	<p>migration and acculturation issues?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What points would you emphasise in describing the circumstances of this family?</p> <p>Ask each small group to feedback their response to the whole group and allow discussion to occur.</p> <p>Emphasise:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family violence is not excused or mitigated through experiences of racism or trauma</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Addressing migration and settlement issues can contribute to recovery from trauma and reduction in risk of family violence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Acculturation occurs at different rates and in different ways for each member of the family and this adds additional pressures.</p> <p>Show Professional Commentary by <i>Mark Murdoch, Judy Saba, Dina Lioumis</i> related to this story and ask for further comments or reactions.</p>	
15 min	Break	
45 min	<p>Risk Assessment Exercise</p> <p>Refer to the detailed facilitator notes for the <i>Risk Assessment Exercise</i>.</p> <p>This activity is designed to support participants to look for the combination of factors that present risk.</p> <p>Ask the group: how does this information support you to respond effectively to family violence within your professional role?</p>	<p>Exercise: <i>Risk Assessment</i></p> <p>Sets of <i>Risk Factor Cards</i> for each small group (from the <i>Risk Assessment Exercise</i>)</p> <p><i>Risk Assessment Scales</i> handout for each participant (from the <i>Risk Assessment Exercise</i>)</p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
60 min	<p>Impact of Family Violence on Children</p> <p>Present the PowerPoint: <i>Impact of Family Violence on Children</i>.</p> <p>In order to be familiar with the above issues it is important for the facilitator to have read both <i>the Dimensions, Dynamics and Impact Paper</i> and McIntosh et al report (see resources column here).</p> <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>PowerPoint: <i>Impact of Family Violence on Children</i></p> <p>Facilitator to read the AVERT Paper <i>Dimensions, Dynamics and Impact of Family Violence</i> and the ‘Integrated Findings’ section on pages 8-9 of McIntosh et al (2010). <i>Post Separation parenting arrangements</i> (See reference at end of this program)</p>
45 min	LUNCH	
60 min	<p>Scenario - Tony & Jessica’s Story</p> <p>Alert participants that they will be asked to prepare a court report regarding the story they are about to view and may therefore wish to take detailed notes, as necessary. They will be asked to share their ideas with the whole group.</p> <p>They should consider information covered during the training yesterday and today and in particular issues of current safety; parenting capacity; ongoing risk; and effects on children.</p> <p>Show <i>Tony and Jessica’s Story</i> and Professional Commentary by <i>Alice Bailey and Dr. Peter Furze</i></p> <p>In pairs, ask participants to draft a structure and headings for their report with dot point details in each section.</p> <p>What are their recommendations on the basis of the information they have seen?</p>	<p>Scenario: <i>Tony and Jessica’s Story</i> on DVD 2</p> <p>Professional Commentary: <i>Alice Bailey and Dr. Peter Furze</i> on DVD 2</p> <p>Pens and paper</p>



TIME	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE & FACILITATOR NOTES	RESOURCES REQUIRED
60 min	<p>Tony & Jessica's Story cont.</p> <p>Invite at least 3 volunteer pairs from the group to present their report.</p> <p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Any differences in perspective, language use or emphasis<input type="checkbox"/> How influential the expert comments at the end of the DVD were<input type="checkbox"/> Any issues in relation to working in a court context<input type="checkbox"/> Values and attitudes in relation to report writing - how do personal and social values influence what is reported?	
15 min	BREAK	
60 min	<p>Professional Collaboration</p> <p>Using the <i>Multidisciplinary Collaboration</i> PowerPoint as a guide, present a brief summary of information from the AVERT Paper: <i>Multidisciplinary Collaboration and Integrated Responses to Family Violence</i>.</p> <p>Invite participants to critique and add to the principles, processes, supports and inhibitors. They may also name individual services and professional groups relevant to their local context, with whom they can increase their collaboration.</p> <p>Reinforce how much difference an individual can make – simply with good interpersonal skills as well as providing good information.</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Multidisciplinary Collaboration</i></p> <p>Paper: <i>Multidisciplinary Collaboration and Integrated Responses to Family Violence</i></p> <p>Exercise: <i>Collaboration and Referral</i></p>
20 min	<p>Closing Round</p> <p>Invite participants to report to the whole group in a 'round', some learning they will take from the training.</p> <p>Handout final evaluation forms for completion and collect these before participants depart.</p>	<p><i>Post Course Evaluation Forms</i></p>

References

McIntosh, J. Smyth, B. (2010) *Post-separation parenting arrangements: patterns and developmental outcomes for infants and children, Synopsis of two studies* Family Transitions

http://www.familytransitions.com.au/Family_Transitions/Family_Transitions.html