

## 1. What causes domestic, family and sexual violence?

The cause of domestic violence is generational.

In past generations, the practise of smacking children was accepted as 'normal'

Unfortunately it is a habit that breeds violence, and creates a scenario of being hit, hitting another or observing violence in the home, conditions the mind to believe that its okay.

Adults that were hit as children, often say, "Well I was hit, and it didn't do me any harm" Unfortunately the harm that it did to them was to cause them to believe that it was a justifiable act. It was not ..not then, not now!

Being violent to children, grows violent children/adults, not always but mostly!

From a very early age if a child either observes violence or abuse of any kind between consenting adults, the child accepts that this is a way to control a lover, partner or child.

A child who is "smacked" by a *loving* parent, forms the neurologic concept that hitting is what is done to teach, gain control over others, especially at a time of disapproval.

A child that is hit at a time of 'parental discipline', especially if the parent or guardian is angry, then cuddled after the incident occurs, they feel love or feels the warmth of parental affection. This creates a loop in the brain, and the possible belief that "Loving people cause me pain", or some such similar belief system.

Being hit by a partner, can feel familiar and similar to being "smacked" hit or even beaten as a child. The victim, collapses into a child state, and very often will not fight back as the memory of the "adult child" relationship is activated.

In the case of a sexual partner the loving affection comes, when the perpetrator regains some equilibrium, gets their own way, quietens down and attempts to re-establish civility, often gifts, or even "make up sex" or some form of propitiation is accepted by the victim.

So the cycle begins.

This is not some weird concept!!

Seventy (70) countries around the world have made smacking children illegal!

South Korea and Cambodia are two of the most recent to make hitting children illegal.

Studies have shown that hitting children, grants permission for violence to be acceptable. Below are just two of the studies....There are many more.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8386132/>

<https://aifs.gov.au/resources/short-articles/what-does-evidence-tell-us-about-physical-punishment-children>

## 2. What works, or will work, to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence?

Before a government is brave enough to make hitting children and normalising violence in the home illegal, one way to stop violence in the home is to provide *free*, anger management education for those who are on the brink of creating a violent situation in the home, be that male or female

Compulsory 'anger management' classes for perpetrators of domestic violence as a part of their legal punishment for harming another, could be beneficial for all parties involved.

## 3 What existing initiatives are directed at addressing the attitudes and systems that drive domestic, family and sexual violence? Are they effective?

Is there education about domestic, family, violence such as coercive control, financial control, physical violence etc taught as a social science subject in schools?

Qualified/ specialist teachers on this subject would be able not only teach on these matters but can handle any issues that arise for a student that identifies with these behaviours in their homes. Students would need support after recognising DV in their homes, it will cause them to feel angry and helpless to change anything as a child.

Follow up counselling needs to be available, for the family who has been seen as victims of DV.... this is a cultural and societal problem and will require a deep change in the environment and society to support lasting change.

## 3. Information which may allow for the identification of individuals who are at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence?

I don't work in this area, so I feel unqualified to answer this question.

My clients come to me as those who have already identified as victims of family violence, either coercive or physical, and wish to relieve the 'held trauma' and emotional damage from those circumstances.

## 5..What is needed to allow for this information to be used by government and specialist domestic, family and sexual violence services?

All information, that is given in these submissions, need to be taken seriously by government agencies, I feel that if the information that is given by all parties is too outside the paradigm or guidelines of investigation, it could be put to one side and not considered seriously as a way of mitigating, and eventually ceasing the increase in domestic violence.

## What interventions should be considered to manage the risk of a person who is identified as being at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating domestic, family and sexual violence?

In my opinion this is not the role of the police.

Maybe it could be considered that a specific unit be set up, to investigate, attend and remove perpetrators for the scenes for domestic violence.

I know that one woman, [REDACTED] was visited by police when she called for help , after her husband, suffering from dementia, was threatening to kill her. The young police, didn't know what to do. She insisted that he was taken away from the scene, by ambulance, where he went to hospital for assessment. She is safe now, however, the police were going to leave her in the house, where she was being threatened and he was still enraged...

The police are not ideally trained to attend domestic violence situation, but there is nobody else to call, at a time of immediate threat.

The perpetrator should always be removed from the premises.

## 5. What are the elements of a best practice crisis response which will meet the needs of:

a. a victim-survivor? The perpetrator needs to be removed from the scene, immediately

### b. a victim-survivor who is a child?

The child needs to be believed about their abuse, even if an adult denies it. Child therapists need to be involved at an early stage, and the child removed from harm's way, temporarily, until some education of the perpetrator has been achieved and further counselling has taken place as a family...

Children of violence, verbal abuse and sexual abuse are often unstable due to the lack of trust of adults and become reactive ... understandably these behaviours will manifest, well trained therapists will help a great deal, and it takes time. Removal from family, without any education of the parents, guardians, or carers is not useful, despite the child being angry the sense of belonging to a family is vital to emotional development. Education is the key.

Acknowledging that every victim-survivor will have different needs depending on their personal circumstances, are there universal needs that will arise for all victim-survivors?

My background is as a [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

All my clients who have been victim/survivors of domestic violence, or sexual abuse, have suffered from a deep sense of shame.

Their deepest beliefs are that they were somehow to blame that they got themselves into this position of being abused.

"I must deserve it", "I must have done something wrong", "I'll just put up with it for now, and not tell anyone" "I'm too embarrassed to say that I'm living with a perpetrator" (this is especially true of professional women) Or the most horrible one is "They must love me, to be this passionate about changing me"

This last postulate, is a direct throwback to the child/parent relationship I first referred to in this submission.

What are the best practice approaches to supporting a victim- survivor to recover from trauma and the mental, physical, emotional and economic impacts of domestic violence?

In my experience and in my work, I work with all aspects of the experience of trauma related to domestic violence.

- Physical; I teach clients to look after their own bodies, exercise, eat well, stay away as much as possible from alcohol, too much sugar and sedentary practises..ie computer addiction.
- Emotional: I encourage clients to allow themselves to grieve that passing of time, and the "what could have been's" of the relationship. I teach a breathing technique to help people release a great deal of pain and held anger in the body..It works.
- Mentally: I help people to retrain their mind to understand that they are the victims of someone else's behaviour and they have probably become a victim because they are so strong (because they tolerated it for so long!) and not weak like they thought they were. This change of mindset often flicks the switch!
- Spiritually : this is not always recognised, but sometimes people towards the end of their sessions, come to understand that they deserve better and go forward to create this.

6. Taking into account your response to question 14, what best practice approaches are already in place in the domestic, family and sexual violence systems in South Australia?

I don't work in this area I'm not qualified to answer this, I only see those who have stepped away from any government systems.