

A Masquerade of Love

Young Women in Domestic Violence

Community Need

In 2006 our local Domestic and Family Violence Action Group (DFVAG) became highly concerned over the number of young women (aged 16-25) accessing domestic violence services. However a lack of resources hindered any immediate preventative action.

DFVAG Members

- ❖ Yarredi - Regional DV Service
- ❖ Victim Support Services
- ❖ SA Police
- ❖ Women's Health Services
- ❖ Centrelink - Social Worker
- ❖ Centacare - Catholic Family Services
- ❖ Drug & Alcohol Services SA
- ❖ Child & Youth Health
- ❖ Correctional Services
- ❖ Uniting Care Wesley

Community Need

While information regarding healthy relationships is generally covered in the SA Health and Physical Education curriculum, many women felt this was not delivered at a time where their maturity levels were adequate. They also identified that it focused mainly on the functionality and consequences of sex.

Community Need

The young women we worked with at Yarredi identified that they lacked insight in to what constituted a healthy relationship.

In hindsight, they were unable to identify behaviours that were controlling and abusive. They honestly believed they were in loving relationships.

Community Need

It seemed the ambiguity of numerous text messages, facebook stalking, as well as controlling and jealous behaviours masquerade as love and kept the young women engaged in the relationship.

Community Collaboration

- ❖ In 2008 the issue was revisited by the Domestic and Family Violence Action Group and a separate working group set up to address the issue.
- ❖ The aim of the program was to provide education that explored and promoted healthy relationships.
- ❖ Target audience - female and male students in year 11 or 12

Engaging the School

- ❖ The working group met with the local high school and highlighted the issues identified by the local services.
- ❖ The high school identified that they were having significant issues with student relationship dynamics.
- ❖ In fact they were spending over 40% of their time dealing with relationship and social issues rather than teaching.

Engaging the School

The working group offered the high school the following:

- ❖ A free, tailored and flexible program that would fit the school time table.
- ❖ A program that would meet both curriculum expectations and address the community issues.
- ❖ Easy access to local community services for their students.

Gender

- ❖ Gender inequality
- ❖ Gender statistics (Globally and in Australia)
- ❖ Gender stereotypes
- ❖ Gender in media inc. roles and responsibilities
- ❖ Media desensitization
- ❖ Pornography & relationships

Values & Beliefs

- ❖ How values and beliefs are developed
- ❖ Respecting other peoples values and beliefs
- ❖ Values and beliefs in relationships and sexual intimacy

Respectful Relationships

- ❖ Identifying a healthy relationship
- ❖ Identifying relationship abuse i.e power and control
- ❖ Relationship continuum

Abusive Relationships

- ❖ The Cycle of Violence
- ❖ Emotional, Psychological & Verbal Abuse
- ❖ Physical & Sexual Abuse
- ❖ Stalking & Surveillance
- ❖ Religious & Cultural Abuse
- ❖ Social Abuse & Isolation
- ❖ Financial Abuse

Law & Legal Issues

- ❖ Legal implications of abusive relationships
- ❖ Rights of the victim & perpetrator
- ❖ Intervention orders
- ❖ Sex & consent, sexual coercion, drink spiking
- ❖ Sexting and sexual images

Program Delivery 09/10

First program was delivered in 2009 by Yarredi and Victim Support Services. It was presented to the entire year 11 group at Port Lincoln High School.

Despite constructive feedback, the presentation was delivered in the same manner in 2010.

Program Feedback 09/10

- ❖ The program had good content however, the delivery was an issue. The delivery and terminology did not engage the students.
- ❖ The group was too big and the lack of respect and group dynamics created a high stress situation for the presenters.

Program Delivery 2011

- ❖ The program was delivered by Yarredi Services, Victim Support Services, Drug & Alcohol Services SA, Family Violence Legal Services Aboriginal Corporation, SA Police and Women's Health Services
- ❖ Smaller groups of around 30, year 11 students.
- ❖ Once a week over 10 weeks

Program Feedback 2011

- ❖ Again the program had great content, however, the delivery and terminology were problematic - There was inconsistent delivery and engagement with the students.
- ❖ The group size was excellent and easy to present to.
- ❖ The students identified that most of the presenters were boring and they didn't engage well.

Changes

- ❖ Change presentation slides
- ❖ Use youth friendly content and terminology
- ❖ Use technology and media i.e. youtube
- ❖ Use group activities in every session
- ❖ Have someone deliver the program that engages well with the audience - Continuity in delivery is important

Program Delivery 2012

- ❖ The program was delivered solely by Yarredi Services but supported by VSS, DASSA, FVLSAC, SAPOL & Women's Health Services.
- ❖ Program up dated - Made youth friendly and used more technology i.e. Youtube clips and interactive group activities.
- ❖ Small groups of about 30 year 11 students
- ❖ Twice a week over 5 weeks

Program Feedback 2012

- ❖ The program had youth relevant content and language.
- ❖ Delivery was consistent with excellent engagement from the students.
- ❖ The group size was excellent and easy to present to.
- ❖ The students provided very positive feedback about the program and discussed it outside of the sessions.

Continual Development

- ❖ Process of continual development is essential.
- ❖ Program needs to be reviewed and updated every year.
- ❖ Access to appropriately skilled presenters that are able to engage the target audience is **CRITICAL**

