



*Don't forget me when you're
talkin DV*

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What's the problem?

- Family Violence is a high priority for the Mount Isa Police District and is identified as having a significant effect on the community - especially young people.
- Research indicates that children are exposed to domestic violence in most incidents that come to the attention of police and other service providers. Children may be the direct victims of domestic violence or may suffer as a result of witnessing or hearing violence. Although not all children exposed to domestic violence will be affected in the same way, most studies show that the effects may be long lasting and very damaging.
- Anecdotal evidence from service providers indicates young people are in abusive domestic relationships at a young age and need help.
- High numbers of youth are offending and displaying violent behaviour towards partners, peers and the public
- Children who are witnesses of this violence are not always counted – until they enter the Youth Justice System.
- The over representation of Indigenous youth in the justice system is evidence of a problem that has been handed down from the old to the young.



2008 AUSTRALASIAN POLICING STRATEGY ON THE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

The reduction of family violence is an Australasian policing priority. Family violence has a measurable impact on many individuals, families and communities each day.



2008 AUSTRALASIAN POLICING STRATEGY ON THE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

“We will work across all Australasian police jurisdictions and with our government and non-government partners to reduce and prevent family violence. We are committed to sharing information, research, experiences and knowledge to continually improve our response and knowledge base”



What's the problem?

- A lot of our local kids live in a state of trauma
- Poor parenting, alcohol abuse, violence, verbal and sexual abuse is a way of life.
- The threat of jail is pointless for some of these kids – it can be the closest thing to a normal life they have known. They will reoffend many times to get back in to Youth Detention.
- 'A traumatic stress reaction may occur when: a person experiences, witnesses, or is confronted with an event or events that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or threat to the physical integrity of self or others, and the person's response involves intense fear, helplessness or horror'

(Qld Dept of public prosecutions report: Indigenous Women within the criminal justice system ((Brisbane: Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions))



Why is it happening?

- While most victimized children never become chronic criminals, being severely abused or neglected can lead to changed patterns of behaviour and even permanent changes in children's brains.
- Some abused or neglected children have trouble learning empathy, while others develop a predisposition to misinterpret actions as threatening and react violently.
- This sharply increases the risk that these children will grow up to be arrested for crimes.
- Research by Dr. Cathy Spatz Widom found that children who were abused and neglected had almost twice the odds of being arrested as a juvenile.

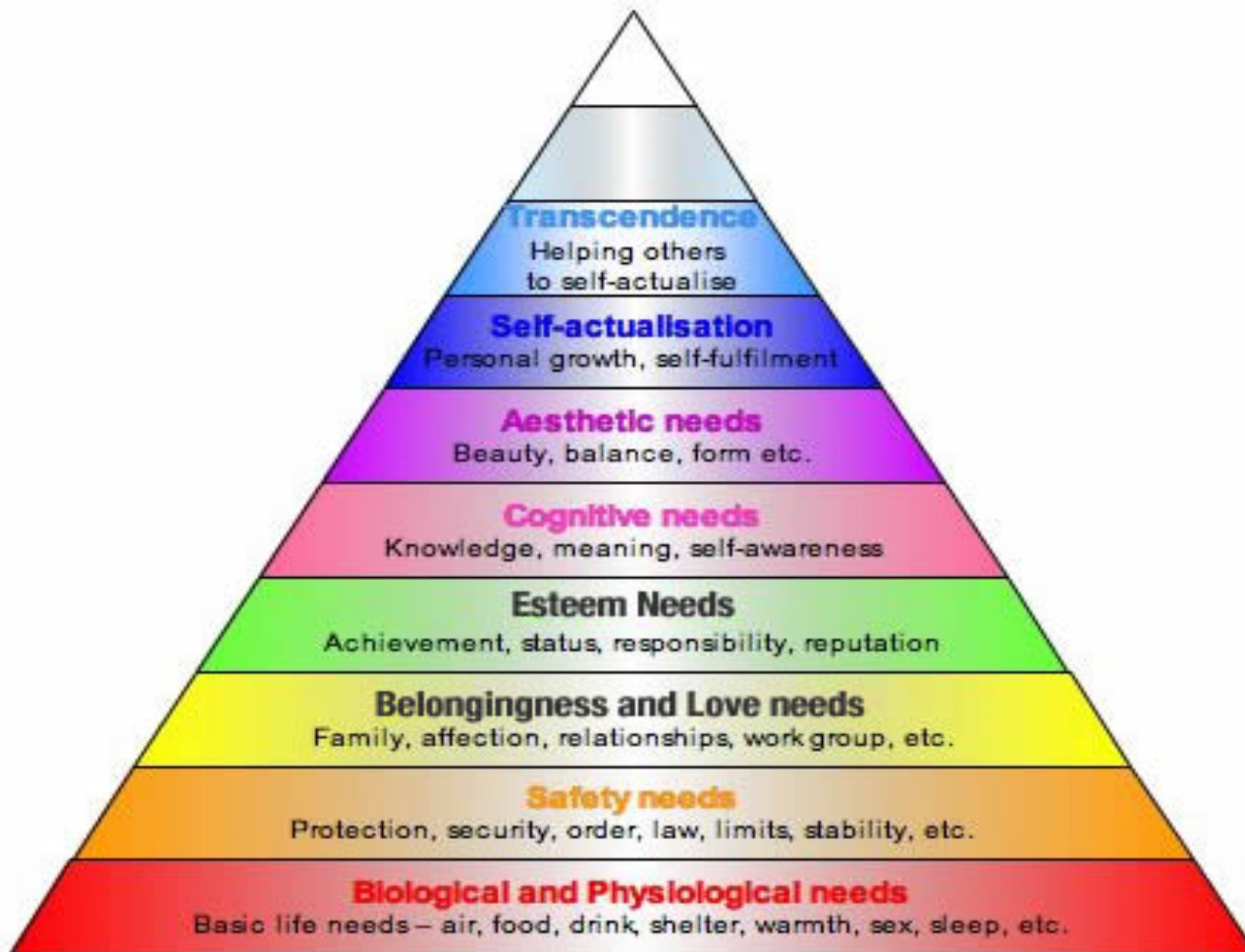
(Source: Sounding the Alarm: Strengthening Families in a Weak Economy to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect)



What's out there?

- Perpetrator and victim programs are only available to those 18 and over who have contact with the Criminal Justice System.
- By this age however, young people can be the parents of 3 or 4 children and are well established in violent behaviour patterns - their small children are witnesses.
- They are officially children but parents: parents enforcing the cycle of violence because they don't know any different





Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



4 Methods of Crime Prevention

- **Situational Approach:** Directed at stopping crime before it occurs and involves the design, organisation and management of the physical and cultural environment e.g. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- **Community Based Approach:** These focus on larger environments such as neighbourhoods and involve initiatives that target ‘at risk’ groups
- **Developmental Approach:** Early intervention approaches involve intervention early in developmental pathways that may lead to the emergence and recurrence of criminal behaviours and other social problems
- **Criminal Justice Approach:** Involves traditional deterrence, incapacitation and rehabilitation strategies undertaken by law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system.



Strike while the iron is hot!

- Programs are more likely to be beneficial if they target not only individuals who are having to cope with adverse circumstances, but also focus on times of transition and stress.

(Source: Resiliency Resource Website)



How did we respond to the problem?

- Establish partnerships in the Mount Isa Community between Service Providers and Department of Communities Youth Justice, coordinated by QPS SCCPO for the delivery of a moderated version of the Ending Family Violence program to under 17's
- Include compulsory DV education into youth justice orders
- Make local Magistrates aware of the program so that they can refer youth at sentencing
- Establish the mind set that DV is not acceptable to young people
- Break the silence for youth on the subject of DV and how it affects them
- Provide youth with knowledge about DV along with courage to speak out
- Promote discussion with young people who are on current orders about the subject of DV to generate a campaign relevant to their age group
- Collate a Youth DV Pack with information and contact numbers for support
- Give case and youth workers the opportunity to direct youth affected by DV to relevant services and tailor programs relevant to their individual needs



Ending Family Violence

- Informal learning approach (Andrews and Hughes 1976)
- Learning through observation and imitation rather than verbal instruction, oral or written (Andrews and Hughes 1976)
- Personal trial and error as apposed to demonstration
- Learning through real life performance
- Mastering context specific skills
- Person orientated rather than information orientated
- Teachers are people focused rather than performance focused



The Healing Circle

- Understanding violence – its never ok
- The influence of alcohol – don't blame the grog
- Alcohol and violence in families
- Consequences of violence – don't silence the violence
- Making it stop – breaking the cycle
- Empowerment – what do you want?
- Relapse prevention



Response Effectiveness Indicators

DV education compulsory in youth justice system

Partnership established between Youth Justice, Service Providers and Police Service sustained

Youth educated on what DV is and how to break the cycle in their own life

Youth generated poster and slogan on display in city and in media

Youth empowered to break the cycle of DV through knowledge of what DV is

Youth ownership of DV slogan

DV considered unacceptable by young adults

Youth directed to DV support services as necessary

Youth DV packs distributed to youth on orders and during outreach activities throughout Mount Isa and Gulf areas

Youth discussing DV openly

Youth provided with support and information they may have previously missed out on

Increase of young females/males approaching services for help



Not everything that is faced
Can be changed
But nothing can be changed
Until it is faced

(James Baldwin 1924-87)



Remember...

- **Access to information and to education are rights that belong to young people as much as adults.**
- **Extra efforts must be made to reach young people who are not part of the formal education system.**
- **Different education efforts will take different approaches**



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Thankyou for listening!

Any Questions?

