# PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



# STORIES OF ACHIEVEMENT FROM MELBOURNE'S NORTH 2022





Women's Health In the North acknowledges the support of the Victoria Government.



Women's Health In the North acknowledges Victorian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we provide our services - the Wurunderji people of the Kulin nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and recognise the ongoing living culture of all Aboriginal people. WHIN acknowledges that Aboriginal sovereignty was never ceded and express hope for justice and reconcilation.

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# FOREWORD



Women's Health in the North are proud to present our third iteration of the Stories of Achievement series, a compilation of case studies that demonstrate the ongoing commitment of the Building a Respectful Community (BRC) Partnership – an alliance of 21 organisations that work together collaboratively to prevent gender-based violence and progress gender equality.

The case studies in this booklet are evidence of the continued strong collaboration of local government, health, and community organisations in the northern metropolitan region (NMR) and demonstrate ways in which the BRC Partners continue to develop their prevention practice and pave the way forward with fresh approaches that respond to emerging community need. In particular this Stories of Achievement addition includes innovative ways that our partners changed and adapted their practice to support this work to continue on throughout the challenging time of the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

These documented case studies tell stories specific to the northern region and support some of the fresh directions for the third iteration of the <u>The Building a Respectful Community Strategy</u> <u>2022-2026</u>. Women's Health In the North has led the development and continued roll out of the regional strategy since 2011 and will continue to advocate for evidence-based primary prevention efforts that engage communities and organisations throughout the NMR.

This document is a celebration of the diverse range of mutually reinforcing activities that BRC Partner organisations are undertaking in Melbourne's north from 2021 – 2022. These stories support us to reflect upon what is working so we can continue to strengthen and grow prevention efforts across the region.

Preventing gender-based violence requires collaboration, commitment and action. I hope these case studies serve as encouragement and motivation to each one to us as we continue in our work to create an equitable and safe community for all.

Misebourgh

Helen Riseborough WHIN Chief Executive Officer

# FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT



### BROTHERHOOD OF ST. LAURENCE

The Brotherhood of St Laurence's Family Violence Prevention Project is a place-based community led prevention initiative that was started as a pilot project in October 2018. The project has innovatively progressed its engagement with selected refugee and migrant communities from outer North in partnership with ethno-specific organizations such as Victorian Afghan Association and Oorja Foundation. The project aims to build the capacity of the selected communities to co-design and deliver culturally competent primary prevention strategies to address attitudes, believes and practices to promote gender equality and respectful relationships. The community led place-based structures of the project includes regular engagement and empowerment of the community leaders, women's groups and activities focusing men's engagement to promote respectful relationships, safety and wellbeing of women and children.

The project is engaging community leaders through establishment of community advisory group with equal representation of women and men community leaders. The project has developed their capacity to be able advocate for gender equality and respectful relationships, challenge gender stereotypes and ideas of men and masculinity, take bystander actions in challenging violence against women in their peer groups and communities and help individuals who are experiencing family violence to navigate support and services.

The project has chosen strength-based approach to work with men on preventing family violence believing the fact that men can help changing the social and cultural norms that leads to violence against women. Having 6 men in the community advisory groups with enhancement of their capacity on family violence prevention and gender equality has been a great guiding and driving force for the project to achieve its expected outcome of engaging men from the selected communities. The project's participants are continue engaging themselves as a change agent in the communities to challenge the harmful gender norms, beliefs and behaviours that leads to family violence.

Continued engagement of community advisory groups and women's group including men from the communities is helping to co-design the prevention initiatives that is more relevant and meaningful to the communities and both women and men form the communities feel safe, valued and comfortable to engage and discuss about family violence, gender equality and respectful relationships.



Participants of the Family Violence Prevention Project.

# FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT (CONTINUED)

The segment of the project work to prevent family violence been featured into the SBS news articles in May 2021: <u>https://www.sbs.com.au/news/after-several-</u> <u>women-suicided-this-melbourne-</u> <u>community-is-addressing-family-violence</u>

Interview of Judgebir Singh on the topic of Men's Engagement was featured by SBS Punjabi in December 2020 – Judgebir is a community advisory member: <u>https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/a</u> <u>udio/men-must-be-part-of-the-solution-</u> <u>for-preventing-family-violence-in-australia-</u> <u>judgebir-singh</u>

The project work has been successful in maintaining cultural identity, networking and collaboration to introduce communities to a range of services, as well as building trust and motivating meaningful engagement of communities in prevention of family violence. Building social connections and shared ownership in prevention work in a way that values cultural and social identity has been a key success factor in this work.

The SaSC's well-established community-led prevention initiative have given the selected communities a voice that is now being heard by partners, family services and local government including community themselves. In turn, this has enabled service sectors to understand community's issues of family violence, their needs and aspirations including barriers and challenges that the communities are facing to access the services.



Participants of the Family Violence Prevention Project in discussion and working together on creative projects.









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# PRESENTING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY VIOLENCE TO TRADES APPRENTICES: PILOT

# MELBOURNE POLYTECHNIC

# BACKGROUND

A key deliverable for Melbourne Polytechnic's Implementation Lead, Gender Equality and Family Violence Primary Prevention is raising awareness about Gender Equality and Family Violence among MP's students, and supporting the shift of cultural attitudes.

At the start of the 2022 academic year, the Implementation Lead approached the Acting Manager Construction in the VET directorate and discussed presenting to trades apprentices on Gender Equality and the prevention of Family Violence. A referral was made to the Acting Program Lead Electrical, who facilitated the timetabling of presentations to 35 classes of electrical trades apprentices over a three week period, with some catch-up sessions afterwards.

This student cohort is 97% men and 3% women, all 15 teachers present at the sessions were men, and the presenter was a man.

# **PURPOSE OF THE SESSION**

The session's purpose was to:

- Inform the apprentices, and vicariously the teachers, of:
  - MP's commitment and activities to promote GE & FVPP
  - What Family Violence is
  - Some Gender Equality and Family Violence facts and statistics
  - Specialist and MP support services available to students experiencing Family Violence
- Demonstrate/model to apprentices, and vicariously teachers:
  - MP's organisational commitment to GE & FVPP
  - Pro-social attitudes towards Family Violence
- Prepare for subsequent sessions at a later date by:
  - Establishing relationships with teaching staff
  - Learning about students' attitudes, behaviours and contexts
  - Identifying what students would like to hear
  - about at a later date, to maximise subsequent engagement.

# **FORMAT OF THE SESSION**

The format chosen for the session was a 15 minute face-to-face presentation in person, using five PowerPoint slides, because it was:

- Simpler to develop the material
- Less disruptive to classes and delivery of curriculum content
- Enabled presentation to a greater number of staff and students
- Facilitated the set-up of longer sessions at a later date if appropriate.

The PowerPoint slides contained only information on support services and their contact details, and the rest of the presentation was verbal.

# **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

The sessions set out to achieve the following outcomes:

- An increase in student knowledge about Gender Equality and Family Violence
- An increase in teacher awareness of MP's commitment to, and activities to promote, GE & FVPP
- The identification of what students would like to hear about at a later date.

# PRESENTING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY VIOLENCE TO TRADES APPRENTICES: PILOT (CONTINUED)

# **CONTENT OF THE SESSION**



The session included typical Gender Equality and Family Violence prevention content, including safety setting/trigger warning, Gender Equality statistics and Family Violence statistics. It also included polling the students by show of hands to ascertain interest in future presentations.

Some distinctive aspects of the session included:

- Instead of starting the session with Family Violence statistics, the introduction to the session used the model suggested in VicHealth's Framing Gender Equality: Message Guide (vision, barrier, action): a vision for Gender Equality, the barriers of rigid gender stereotypes and oppositional attitudes, and a call to action of learning more about the issues
- The session was informed by material from The Men's Project, avoiding messages that could be interpreted as judgmental or shaming, and highlighting rigid gender stereotypes
- Safety setting was addressed after the introduction, instead of at the beginning
- Statistics on men as victim-survivors, followed by comparative statistics on women as victim-survivors and men as perpetrators, were provided to provide a balanced perspective
- In addition, statistical comparisons were expressed in a relevant manner, converting population rates of intimate partner violence and sexual assault into prevalence in a class of 20 men and boys or 20 women and girls
- Statistics on the gender pay gap, and gendered discrimination, harassment and bullying experienced by Melbourne Polytechnic staff, and plans to address these
- A call to action at the end of the presentation, for students to identify one behaviour change they could make in their own lives, was included in some of the later presentations.

# **EVALUATION**

The sessions were delivered from 15 to 31 March 2022, with catch up sessions delivered 26 April to 5 May 2022. Table 1 below provides data from the sessions:

Table 1 - evaluation data	from the electrical trades sessions on Ge	ender Equality and Family	Violence prevention

Number of sessions delivered to students	35
Number of students to whom the session was delivered	396
Gender disaggregation	383 male (97%) 13 female (3%)
Total number of teachers present across all sessions	15, all male
Number of students who stated at the end of the session (by show of hands) that they:	
<ul> <li>Had learnt something new or were surprised by the facts</li> <li>Wanted to learn more about:</li> </ul>	189 (48% of total)
<ul> <li>Breaking down rigid gender stereotypes</li> </ul>	89 (22% of total )
<ul> <li>Respectful relationships</li> </ul>	71 (18% of total )
<ul> <li>Bystander action</li> </ul>	161 (41% of total)
Number of teachers who indicated by show of hands that they had learnt something new or were surprised by the facts	8 (53% of total

Only three students voiced resistance or backlash during the sessions. It is unclear if this resulted from scheduling the sessions before a class break when students may have been keen for the session to finish, or other more positive factors such as having a man conduct the presentation.

# PRESENTING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY VIOLENCE TO TRADES APPRENTICES: PILOT (CONTINUED)

An interview was conducted with key supervisory staff after the completion of the March 2022 sessions to:

- Share the data in Table 1
- Assess the impact on teacher awareness of MP's commitment to, and activities to promote, GE & FVPP
- Identify any improvements to the session content or process
- Present what students would like to hear about at a later date and discuss next steps.

Feedback received included:

- Teachers who had been present during the sessions were generally supportive of the content and were discussing the sessions between themselves afterwards
- Improvement suggestion to not rush through the content on contact details of specialist Family Violence support services, and to send the details onto apprentices after the session via teachers and the MarkBook student management application
- Strong support for presenting to other trades, and discussion around best approaches to setting up sessions
- Support for follow up sessions on bystander action, and discussion around best
- approaches to setting up sessions and potential external providers to deliver the training.

Feed back (continued):

- Include a discussion on what rigid gender stereotypes are and how students may experience them
- Add a slide on the difference between equity and equality
- Add slides to reinforce key statistics with images
- Include brief material on the connection between gender inequality and Family Violence; there is little room in a 15-minute presentation to fully explore the gendered drivers of violence
- Change the call to action to one for students to notice gender stereotypes in their own lives and assess whether they are 'fair', and think about whether they are fair when others experience them
- While the presentation is engaging, it is very difficult to engage students in critical reflection of their own lives in a 15-minute presentation with a lot of information such as this one.

# LEARNINGS FROM THE PILOT AND NEXT STEPS

The presentation is sound as is, and can be easily modified for predominantly female and mixed audiences. However, the level of engagement of students in critical reflection of their own lives may be limited. The presentation therefore lends itself to a program of broad, rather than deep, engagement, and one that opens the way for further engagement, for example presentation of information on being an Active Bystander.

# **OTHER FEEDBACK**

In addition, the session was presented to some key stakeholders for their suggestions, especially regarding improvements for a predominantly male audience and modifications for predominantly female and mixed audiences. These stakeholders were internal and external to Melbourne Polytechnic, being the Student Life at Melbourne Polytechnic (SLAM) team and personnel from The Men's Project.

Feedback received included:

- Few modifications are required to the existing presentation for predominantly female and mixed audiences
- Include 'red flags' or common scenarios that help all audiences to identify gender inequality and Family Violence, whether in others' behaviour or their own

The next steps at Melbourne Polytechnic, following this pilot, include:

- Modifying the presentation in line with applicable feedback
- Working across the institute to present the session to as many students as practicable
- Following up on presentations with further information, based on student responses, for example Active Bystander with the students in this pilot
- Considering ways to enable deeper engagement of students in critical reflection of their own lives
- Exploring options for making the presentation available to other TAFEs and contexts.

### Anthony Hinds Implementation Lead, Gender Equality & Family Violence Primary Prevention anthonyhinds@melbournepolytechnic.edu.au

# LET'S TALK MONEY

### WOMEN'S HEALTH IN THE NORTH

'Let's Talk Money' is an award-winning\* financial literacy program that aims to support the economic empowerment of migrant and refugee women living in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne. This unique financial literacy program aims to engage women who live in the Northern Metropolitan Region and beyond to deliver financial literacy workshops to migrant and refugee women in their communities. uses a train-the-trainer bilingual peer educator approach.

WHIN recruits, employs and skills up women from diverse cultural backgrounds to deliver practical, tailored money management workshops for women in their own language and community. The program has been developed to take action on the gendered drivers of violence against women as identified in Change the Story, Australia's national framework for preventing violence against women. In particular the program promotes women's decision making and independence.

#### In 2019, 'Let's Talk Money' won the Promoting

# WHY THIS PROJECT?

Newly arrived refugee and migrant women face particular barriers to economic participation and security due to: A lack of financial information in their first language and difficulties accessing interpreter services, cultural attitudes to money make accessing and dealing with financial institutions and government income-support agencies difficult, jargon and language used by financial institutions, lack of tailored financial information and social isolation.

The project aims to:

- Improve the financial literacy and capability of women from migrant and refugee backgrounds,
- Increase women's inclusion and participation in civic life with sound financial knowledge,
- Break linguistic, cultural and structural barriers to accessing financial knowledge,
- Take action on the gendered drivers of violence against women by promoting women's financial decision making and independence and challenging gender stereotypes and
- Promote leadership skills in women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

Gender Equality category of the highly regarded VicHealth Awards for health promotion sponsored by the Victorian Government. The prestigious award recognises the quality and success of the 'Let's Talk Money' program and acknowledges it as a leading example of gender equality work in Victoria.



Let's Talk Money peer educators with Coordinator Manasi (right image) and Let's Talk Money workshop (left).



Manasi Wagh-Nikam Community Programs Coordinator manasi.w@whin.org.au

# **Men of Moreland**

### ACTIVE MORELAND

Men of Moreland is a free holistic health program run by Active Moreland. It teaches men about topics impacting men's health, provides small group training and an opportunity for men in the community to meet and improve their social connections. Men of Moreland aims to support participants to create healthy behavior change that improves their health and wellbeing. The program is run at Oak Park Sport and Aquatic Centre and partners with community organisations that align with the programs values and goals.

This program dedicates two weeks to promoting healthy relationships and preventing gendered violence. In the 2022 program, Active Moreland partnered with Relationships Australia Victoria and Phil Cleary to educate participant's on genderbased violence and encouraged participants to become community champions.

Pre-workshop, the participants were able to identify that they knew this was an issue in the community and post-workshop they understood the extent of gender-based violence and how harmful it is within the community. The men reported feeling more equipped to have difficult conversations in relation to gender-based violence.





This program has expanded to a Women of Moreland program which is currently running.



Participants of the Men of Moreland program involved in activities and discussion.



**Bridget Le Roy Community Engagement Senior Coordinator** Bridget.Leroy@ymca.org.au

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS

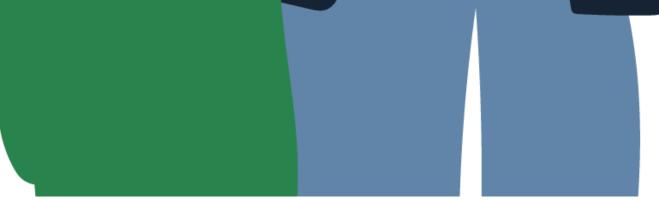
### LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

In early 2022, developed as part of our Gender Equality Action Plan, La Trobe University established the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee. The EDI Committee will guide organisational change to enable the University to be a global exemplar in higher education for equality, diversity, and inclusion. The University's Senior Executive Group will play a key role in driving institutional change and fostering equitable access, and a fair, inclusive, and safe environment for all staff and students as part of the University's strategic vision.

The EDI Committee is chaired by the university's Vice-Chancellor and is comprised of other members of the university's senior executive group, student representatives (including an international student), and representatives of the Working Groups that sit under the Committee.



The forementioned Working Groups include members of staff and also students and cover four key and important groups; Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, Gender Equality, Disability, and LGBTQIA+ Inclusion.



The Committee is charged with setting the University's diversity and inclusion agenda encompassing, but not limited to:

- Gender equity and intersectional gender equality
- Staff and students of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities
- Staff and students with disability
- Staff and students in neurominority and neurodiverse groups
- Staff and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Accreditation programs for diversity and inclusion

Whilst the establishment of this Committee and the Working Groups is still relatively recent, the engagement and shared focus from the Working Group members is encouraging.

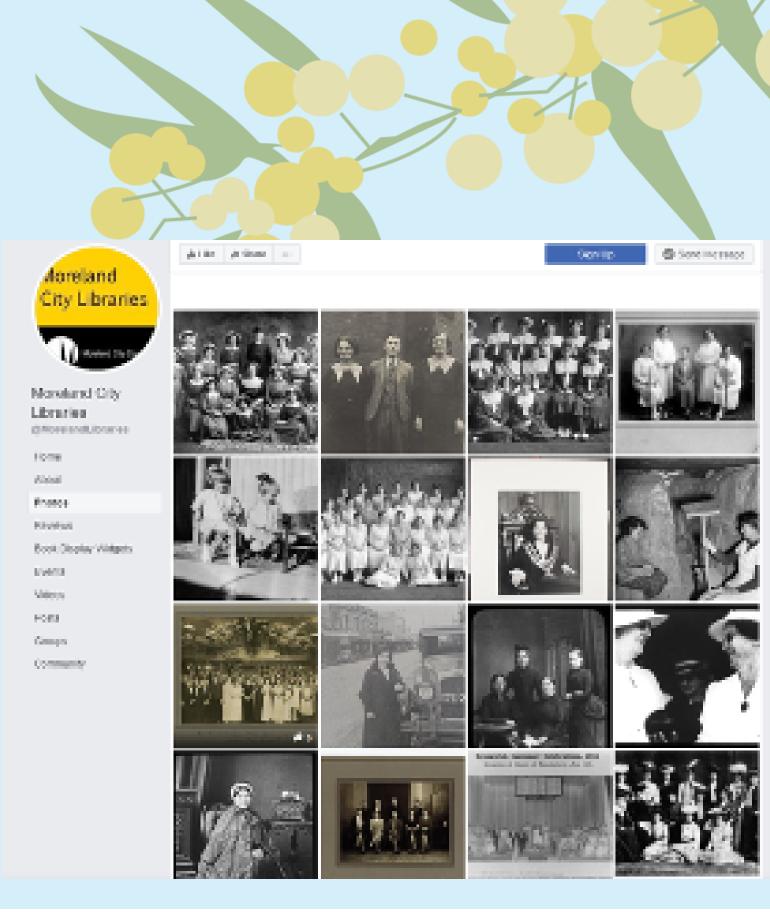
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# PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY AT THE LIBRARY

# MORELAND CITY LIBRARIES

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Moreland City Libraries enjoy celebrating International Women's Day each year, showcasing social, economic, cultural and historical achievements of women. In the past couple of years with restrictions and lockdowns it has not always been possible to run the in-person programs for the numbers of participants we would usually have attend. For this reason, we provided community to participate in an online environment and at times have also used a hybrid model by enabling interested community members to decide for themselves whether they were ready to visit the library or join online. The past two years of IWD events demonstrates different ways we were able to continue engagement and not allow the pandemic to be a barrier to participation in this important occasion.



More Wonderful Women of Moreland Facebook Gallery

#### International Women's Day 2022

On Tuesday 8 March The Nazis Knew My Name event was held at Brunswick Library. The Nazis Knew My Name is an extraordinarily moving memoir by Australian Slovakian Holocaust survivor Magda Hellinger, who saved an untold number of lives at Auschwitz through everyday acts of courage, kindness and ingenuity. Her daughter, Maya Lee and local writer David Brewster, discussed this aweinspiring tale which offered incredible insight into human nature, the power of resilience, and the goodness that can shine through even in the most horrific of conditions. This event was livestreamed on Facebook and continues to be available on Moreland City Libraries' YouTube channel now as well.

#### International Women's Day 2021

Due to the pandemic, in-person events were limited at this time so instead Moreland City Libraries featured a Facebook Gallery of More Wonderful Women of Moreland that showcased photos from the Local History collection.

# 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Each year Moreland City Libraries provide collateral through our libraries as part of community education and prevention of gender-based violence. In 2020, staff members were also encouraged to wear a "No violence, No silence" T-shirt.



# **PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY AT THE LIBRARY**(CONTINUED)

# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

There is a suite of library programs provided each year which are designed to inform, educate, raise awareness and inspire our local community. Some were delivered online, others in-person and some using a hybrid model of both over the past two years, dependent on pandemic restrictions at that time. We have learnt during this time that some people who were unable to access our libraries in-person, were engaged more with our programs due to the opportunity of providing them online, while others were limited in their capacity for engagement due to lack of digital skills or access to technology. Our lesson learned is to provide a hybrid model when and where we can which allows for all these options.

Here is a sample of programs that promoted gender equality and family violence prevention:

- **Captive to captivating** An insight into the journey of self-discovery through the awareness and healing of a splintered soul. Ebru discussed her resilience in breaking free from domestic violence and the constraint of cultural beliefs. This event was an in-person program.
- See what you made me do Jess Hill, award-winning investigative journalist and author discussed a new approach to reducing domestic violence and the systems that enable them. This also featured a live Q & A for participants. This event is still available on both our Facebook and YouTube channel.
- Supporting gender diverse young people Rebekah Robertson is the author of About a Girl, and recipient of the Medal of the Order of Australia for her work as an advocate and ally for trans and gender diverse youth in Australia. She discussed her book, her work, and her journey supporting gender diverse young people, as ally and parent. This event is still available on both our Facebook and YouTube channel.
- Dirty little secrets Dirty Little Secrets is a raw and honest account of Nandita Chakraborty's journey to find love, her triumphs and failures in this expedition, and how the accident that caused her brain injury changed her life forever. This event also featured on International Women's Day 2022 and was livestreamed at the time on Zoom.
- Queer Youth Clothes Swap and Artisan Market This clothes swap was open to any young person (ages 12–

25) who identified as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as the adults in their lives. It was proudly presented in partnership with Moreland Youth Services, and in association with Queerspace Youth & (in)visible, and Pink Ember Studio. Participants brought along their pre-loved clothes, shoes, and accessories and sustainably found new outfits to express themselves. There was also opportunity to purchase new artworks and support local Queer artists in the process and hang out with local LGBTQIA+ organisations with lots of resources on hand. Lessons learned for this event was to be flexible due to the nature of the event and requiring people to be there in-person. This event changed date three times, but persistence paid off, and was incorporated into the Midsumma 2022 program.

### **PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES**

After running a successful pilot program in 2019, Health and Wellbeing for Women, Moreland City Libraries applied for a Library Health and Wellbeing Innovation Grant this year. Unfortunately, the submission was unsuccessful, but it provided the opportunity to reconnect with Manal Shehab from Sisters4Sisters, and to build connections with WIRE and Northern Community Legal Centre. By looking to run a family violence prevention program out of a public library provides a unique opportunity for the women who can visit the library anonymously, have access to technology in the library setting, and access a program in a safe and welcoming space. As libraries are open to all and people visit for a variety of reasons, it enables women to access a program in a space where it will be unknown to others what the purpose of their visit would be. We will continue to explore opportunities, partnerships and seek funding pathways with the aim to provide a program that supports women experiencing family violence.

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# MULTICULTURAL COVID-19 FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM

# WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic entrenched vulnerabilities already experienced within multicultural communities, particularly for women and children whose risk and experience of family violence increased. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, the project adopted a community-led and place-based approach to preventing family violence within the City of Whittlesea. More specifically, the project built the capability of multicultural communities to recognise and respond to family violence.

The program was driven by the cultural expertise and the lived experience of local community members. A community leaders working group (CLWG) was established that provided representation and gave voice to the diverse experiences of the local community. The CLWG comprised of eight women and two men from South Asian, Arabic speaking, Nepalese and African backgrounds all of whose experiences spoke to the complexity of the way in which migration pathways, gender, culture, race and class play out for people.



Members of the Community Leaders Working Group and specialist family violence services at the Community Safety and Wellbeing Forum held in partnership with the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence in May 2022.

Members of the CLWG participated in family violence training, community mobilising activities and codesigned the development of culturally specific inlanguage family violence resources. The program culminated in a Community Safety and Wellbeing forum with the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence, specialist family violence services and community members. The forum provided a space for community members and services to come together to engage in a mutually beneficial dialogue that increased the community's knowledge of the family violence service system and also helped support services to deliver more culturally safe practices.

#### **SUCCESSES AND LEARNINGS**

One of the most significant achievements of the project has been female members of the CLWG self- reporting an increase in their confidence and ability to take on leadership roles in the community – all evidence of working to address the underlying drivers of family violence. A great example of this included a CLWG member being invited by a Victorian Member of Parliament to share her story of family violence and her journey as a survivor advocate in Parliament. Another example of leadership being championed by female members of the CLWG included them taking on key roles at the Community Safety and Wellbeing forum. These roles included: leading roundtable discussions with service providers and community, addressing audience members and providing acknowledgements to open the forum, and providing discussion feedback to forum members.

#### **Toni Bentley Community Primary Prevention Projects Coordinator** <u>tbentley@whittleseacc.org.au</u>

Project funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)

# PHASE 2: WHITTLESEA CALD Communities Family Violence Project

### WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project (WCFVP) uses a whole of community approach that includes and empowers people to develop local solutions specific to the Whittlesea community. In 2012, Whittlesea Community Connections established and coordinated the original WCFVP. The WCFVP was an integrated place based response developed with residents, community groups and agencies. WCFVP evaluation findings suggest that a consistent, integrated approach is vital for systemic and cultural change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding family violence. Additionally, the original project found the importance of women's centered planning strengthened through the CALD Women's Advisory Group. Phase 2 of the WCFVP began in July 2021 and incorporates the learnings from the 2012 WCFVP.

The project will work with Multicultural women and men, children, young people and families, community groups and religious leaders from diverse cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds living in and connected to the City of Whittlesea. Across the 3 year funding period we are aiming to reach a minimum of 260 people.Phase 2 covers the areas of primary prevention, early intervention and family violence awareness raising.

WCFVP Phase 2 will incorporate 6 elements with corresponding activities that include:

- Empowering Women: development of women's leadership and employment skills particularly in roles and pathways that challenge gender stereotypes.
- Capacity building families, community and religious leaders: parenting and conflict resolution in a new culture that support behaviour and attitude change around respectful
- Early intervention during settlement: FV awareness raising built into Adult Migrant English Program classes in partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic, VLA, DET and DSCV.
- Early years and young people: scoping activity with new Multicultural families guiding future primary prevention activities in the Early Years. FV awareness raising built into Young Adult Migrant English Program classes in partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic, VLA, DET and DSCV.
  Coordination/ integration: whole of community approach to primary prevention with the Project Steering Group and Community Leader Working Group/ CALD Women's Advisory Group leading the coordination and integration of activities of the project.

relationships, FV training with community groups in partnership with Victorian Legal Aid (VLA), Department of Education and Training (DET), and Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV). Scoping activity focusing on working with Multifaith Community Organisations to build referral pathways for Multicultural community to access Faith leaders with FV and Prevention knowledge.

• Collective system change: opportunities for CALD communities to have a voice and for learning to influence policy change at the systems level.

# **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Expected outcomes of the project for community include increased understanding of gender inequity as a key driver of family violence, family violence in the Australian legal, social and cultural context, available support services and increased capacity and confidence to develop relationships among peers, in families and community. For women from diverse cultural backgrounds this project will also lead to increased skills, confidence and capacity to be active participants in their community through employment, leadership and other opportunities that challenge gender stereotypes. Evaluation methods, processes and structures involving community in the project will lead to community identified solutions that will have a broader and more long-lasting impact.

Katriece Bolden Gender Equity & Family Violence Team Leader kbolden@whittleseacc.org.au



# **RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS SCHOOL PROGRAM**

### DPV HEALTH

DPV Health are working towards creating a community that is respectful and inclusive, ensuring all women and their children live free from all forms of violence within the DPV Health catchment. In partnership with Department of Education (DET), DPV Health support schools in Hume & Whittlesea on their Respectful Relationships journey.

DPV Health engaged Mernda Primary, Mernda Park Primary & Ashley Park to collaborate on the design of a campaign kit. The aim of this kit was to visually promote and display messages of equality and respect, that will help work towards a safe and inclusive community. This kit featured different visual elements that were to be displayed on school grounds, including fence banners, floor decals, stickers, and a reception plaque.

DPV Health consulted each school and they provided insight into their school's needs, gaps, and priorities. Using a whole of school approach, attitudes and behaviours of the students, staff and the parent community were assessed. The common themes that were identified were respecting and accepting other and showing kindness. Using these themes, four messages were created, and we ensured that messages aligned with the school's values.

To ensure engagement and sustainability, evaluation measures were implemented to gather baseline data and initial reactions to the campaign material. Results indicate this kit has been a great conversation starter between students, staff, and parents.

Schools have now embedded activities that reinforce the messaging of the kit, which will help contribute to improving the attitudes and behaviours of the whole school community.

To find out more, click here : <u>Respectful Relationships School Program | DPV Health</u>



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# LET'S BRING CHANGE TOGETHER: ETHNIC MEDIA RESOURCE

### DPV HEALTH

'Let's Bring Change Together' is a co-designed and community-led project that aims to highlight the issue of family violence, encourage people to talk about it and seek help. The video seeks to educate and motivate members from the South Asian community to have conversations on family violence and promote the importance of feeling safe at home, in the community and within Australia.

Family violence is a significant public health issue in Whittlesea, with compelling statistical data indicating high rates of family violence. From 2020 -2021, Whittlesea police responded to 3,307 incidents. According to police crime statistics, these numbers continue to rise.

A reported suicide cluster among the South Asian women between 2018-2019 raised concerns among the Whittlesea Community. DPV Health, City of Whittlesea, Victoria Police, and other key stakeholders established a working group named 'Crossroads Wellbeing Network' to address this issue. All stakeholders identified limited access and availability of evidence-based resources that were in language and easily accessible for community members. DPV Health used this opportunity to create, design and develop a resource that was accessible, in language and easy to understand. A co-design approach was utilised to ensure that the resources were culturally appropriate and significant impactful.

# **IMPACT OF CO-DESIGN GROUP**

- The planned approach for the video was to raise awareness of family violence and discuss the support services available. After consultation of the co-design group, the focus now is on elders in the community, giving community members permission to talk about family violence and seek help. This was a significant change from the codesign group about people knowing about services but not seeking help because they were afraid of judgment from the community.
- The development of four videos was planned, with the new approach suggested by the co-design group; one video was created in three languages
- The video was planned to be spoken in English with subtitles in key languages. Feedback from the group was that they prefer to consume information in spoken language without subtitles or captions. The videos are in spoken Punjabi, Hindi, and English.
- The video's title 'Let's Bring Change Together' was nominated and suggested by the co-design group.

During the project planning and implementation phase there was recognition of the intersecting forms of oppression that effects the prevalence and dynamics of violence against women in the South Asian Community.



# LET'S BRING CHANGE TOGETHER: ETHNIC MEDIA RESOURCE (CONTINUED)

# SUCCESSES AND LEARNINGS



The successes and learnings of this work have been measured by conducting focus groups with the group members about their experience of being in the group and from others from the community who have viewed the video.



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Everything was absolutely amazing! The whole event went very smoothly, speakers were so interesting to listen to and the final video was very professional.



Brilliant to see the impact of community co-design on the final video product. The key messages, visual imagery and style of video is guaranteed to connect with South East Asian community members, the co-design process ensured this objective would be met.



The videos' ability to capture multiple generations was fabulous.



DPV Health will continue to work with members of the South Asian community in Hume & Whittlesea, key stakeholders, and partners to promote this resource. A targeted promotion plan will be developed to ensure impact and reach within the



target audience.

Watch the video here: Let's Bring Change Together DPV Health



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# **RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Respectful Relationships is about embedding a culture of respect and equality across our entire community, from our classrooms to staffrooms, sporting fields, fetes and social events. This approach leads to positive impacts on student's academic outcomes, their mental health, classroom behavior, and relationships between teachers and students. Together, we can lead the way in saying yes to respect and equality, and creating genuine and lasting change so that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. At it's core Respectful Relationships is a human rightsinitiative because we know students who have a clear sense of their own rights and responsibilities are more likely to protect those of others.

We are implementing Respectful Relationships across Victorian schools and early childhood services through a lead and partner schools initiative, providing intensive training and support to over 1950 government, Catholic and Independent schools to implement the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships. In the Hume Moreland area we support, 72 Government and 13 non Government schools. In the North East Metro area we support 142 Government and 36 non Government schools. We use a whole school approach that includes the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships teaching materials for Foundation to Year 12. We have a professional development program for early childhood educators. A regional Respectful Relationships workforce of a Project Lead and a Liaison Officer support schools and early childhood education settings to implement Respectful Relationships education and strengthen referral and response to family violence.

### **STUDENT STATEMENTS**

#### Improved sense of empathy

It (RRR program) helped people because they had a chance in an environment where they knew they wouldn't be judged to let out their

#### Improved capacity to deal with challenges

**The program has changed the way I think** about them (challenges). It's not only my problem, it's a problem that we all go through – it's common. If you do go through it, you know that you are not the only one and you can talk to others and you don't have to hide it from others.

worries and have people understand.



#### Improved help seeking

It really has impacted me because it has helped me find ways where I can find help, I can ask people for help, I know what I need help with. I was so grateful to be educated to see these kinds of things.



#### Improved respect for diversity

• People were set in their ways, they forgot people take offence, they didn't know what it meant. A lot of things have stopped, people are more aware of what they are saying. Much more making sure they're saying the right thing.





#### Improved relationships across/between genders

When you are first friends and stuff, they (boys) don't really show the inside, they are more like trying to be tough men. Once we are in SEL they actually show that they have emotions and feelings. This helped to get to know them more, to know who they really are.

#### Improved capacity for coping



It was helpful because when you are angry you sort of lash out. With the coping strategies you can sort of calm yourself down easily.



**Michele Louise Riali Respectful Relationships Liaison Officer** michele.riali@education.vic.gov.au

# BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES: ADAPTING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAM BABY MAKES 3 FOR CALD (CHINESE BACKGROUND) FAMILIES.

### HEALTHABILITY

Since 2008 healthAbility has worked in partnership with Maternal & Child Health Services, and more recently with public maternity services to promote gender equality in the transition to parenthood through its Baby Makes 3 program. The program is designed to promote equal and respectful relationships and challenge the gendered expectation of being a parent.

In 2021, healthAbility developed a partnership with 5 Chinese community services organizations to codesign and adapt the program model and resources , to ensure, culturally safety, relevance and accessibility for Chinese background families.

This four staged co-design process approach includes

• Context: Initial meetings were held with the project partners to understand the opportunities and need for adaption. • Preparation (building partnerships): Gender Equality Champion training delivered to 12 staff from 5 partner organisations providing an overview of the BM3 and how it supports families. Adaption: A Cultural adaptation group was formed post the GE Champion training (5 participants from 5 organisations) to adapt the tools and resources for families with Chinese background. A series of four 3 hour adaption workshops were conducted - these workshops were facilitated by healthAbility staff - however discussion were mostly in Chinese language to enable exploration of the content with cultural safety. • Trialling: The resources will be trailed with the Chinese background families and will be available for wider use within the community through LGA, public maternity services and organisations working with diverse communities in Victoria.

# **BARRIERS AND ENABLING FACTORS**

Identifying aligned partners and building trust among partnering organizations and getting them on board was the main challenge for this process.

Genuine collaboration and engagement throughout the process was another challenge that was identified and overcome through understanding and addressing the mutual benefits.

Being open to working with a different language during the adaptation process was essential but a challenging to us. There for having a bilingual staff member to facilitate this process was essential to this process which led to quality conversations.

### **KEY LEARNINGS**

Key to this piece of work was working in partnership with organisations with cultural expertise to guide and shape the co-design process.

The co-design approach provides a framework for the process and has been an effective way to engage with the different cultural groups to adapt the resources and tools in the future.



### Sulo Colombage Gender Equality Officer Sulochana.Colombage@healthability.org.au

# YOURCH WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAM-2 YEARS ON

### YOUR COMMUNITY HEALTH

In 2020, Your Community Health (YourCH) developed their first organisational Gender Equality Work Plan, formed a Gender Equality Working Group and set about implementing changes to improve gender equality in the workplace.

Staff across the whole of organisation were engaged in developing the Action Plan through a survey, and these findings were combined with Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) measures to develop an organisational Work Plan.

Regular working group meetings, chaired by a YourCH Director and including representation from Senior Management and People & Culture, enabled the organisation to complete a range of activities and changes to improve gender equality across the organisation. These included reviewing and amending key organisational policies, particularly recruitment, induction and leave policies, introducing gender equity training for all leadership staff, developing an intersectionality tool for policy and procedure review and development, and participating in events such as International Women's Day, Week Without Violence and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. A Terms of Reference also supported the Working Group with their purpose and activities. Women's Health in the North were engaged as consultants to hold focus groups using the Workplace Equality and Respect (WER) Frameworks from Out Watch and when expert knowledge was required. These factors were enablers for making positive change and sharing knowledge across all staff.



# **MOVING FORWARD**

A key consideration for continuing this work moving forward has been the introduction of the Rainbow Tick Accreditation and Trans and Gender Diverse in Community Health (TGDiCH) program at YourCH. It became apparent when reviewing the organisational Gender Equity Work Plan that the language had a strong focus on the gender binary of female and male, and this needs to be changed to ensure that gender diversity is included in future gender equality work.

> Jo van Dort Health Promotion Officer Jo.VanDort@yourch.org.au

# **GENDER EQUITY IN THE EARLY YEARS**

# DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

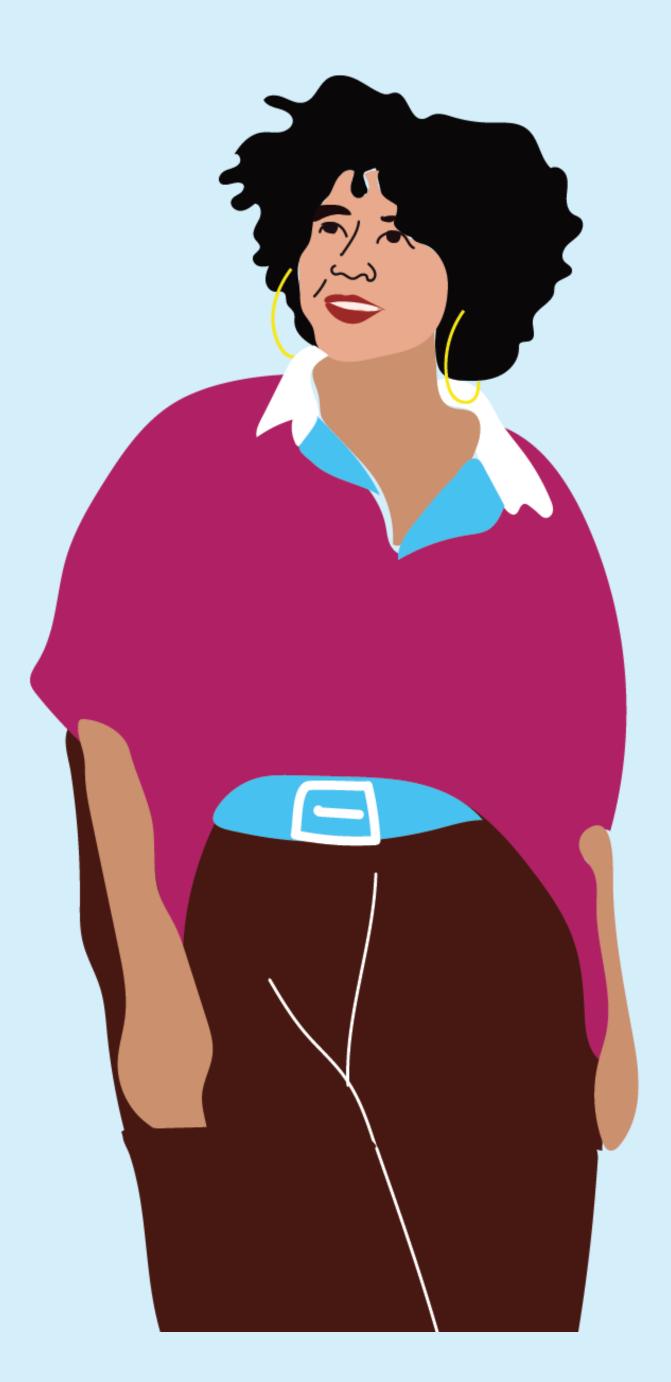
Since 2015, Darebin City Council has been working with Early Years Educators to challenge stereotypical notions of gender and create foundations for learning that are respectful and promote positive gender norms.

In 2019, Council delivered the Gender Equity in the Early Years: a whole of service pilot, which piloted the approach and tools from Creating Gender Equity in the Early Years: A Resource for Local Government.

The project contributed to a body of evidence surrounding the opportunities for respectful relationships education and primary prevention in early years settings.

An Early Years Gender Equity Officer worked directly with educators at pilot sites in a mentorship capacity. 'Gender equity in the early years' training was delivered by WHIN staff across the three services in Darebin and the project was evaluated by the University of Melbourne.

Since this project, Council continues to work with Early Years educators across Darebin, providing professional development opportunities, training and resources. Council also convenes a Gender Equity Community of Practice, where Early Years educators can connect and share resources.



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# GPAN x Fitzroy Football Club



### BANKSIA GARDENS COMMUNITY SERVICES

In 2021, the GPAN Project established a relationship with Fitzroy FC at the request of the club's leadership team. They were looking to address cultural and structural inequalities within the club.

GPAN has delivered and will continue to deliver a series of respectful relationships workshops to players, volunteers and staff at Fitzroy FC, aged from 19 onwards. Women, men and gender diverse people are participating in the workshops. These workshops have been enabled due to the work being player lead, the group had buy-in to these workshops from the beginning as they had been requested and supported by the leadership team. However, a barrier has been engaging young men in these conversations, particularly challenging when there is an all-female facilitation team.

As a result of these workshops, GPAN applied for the SRV 'Preventing Violence Through Sports Grant' and hope to expand the project into other local sporting clubs. Achievements: gaining access to a typically male-dominated environment and getting the young players to identify inequalities within their club and

### **KEY LEARNINGS**

The participants are the experts in their club environment. Once we have worked with them to become gender equity advocates, the players and staff can identify the needs of their specific club to become a more equitable environment. It is important to note that the clubs may have already started to make changes that must be celebrated and appreciated.



#### brainstorm areas for improvement.

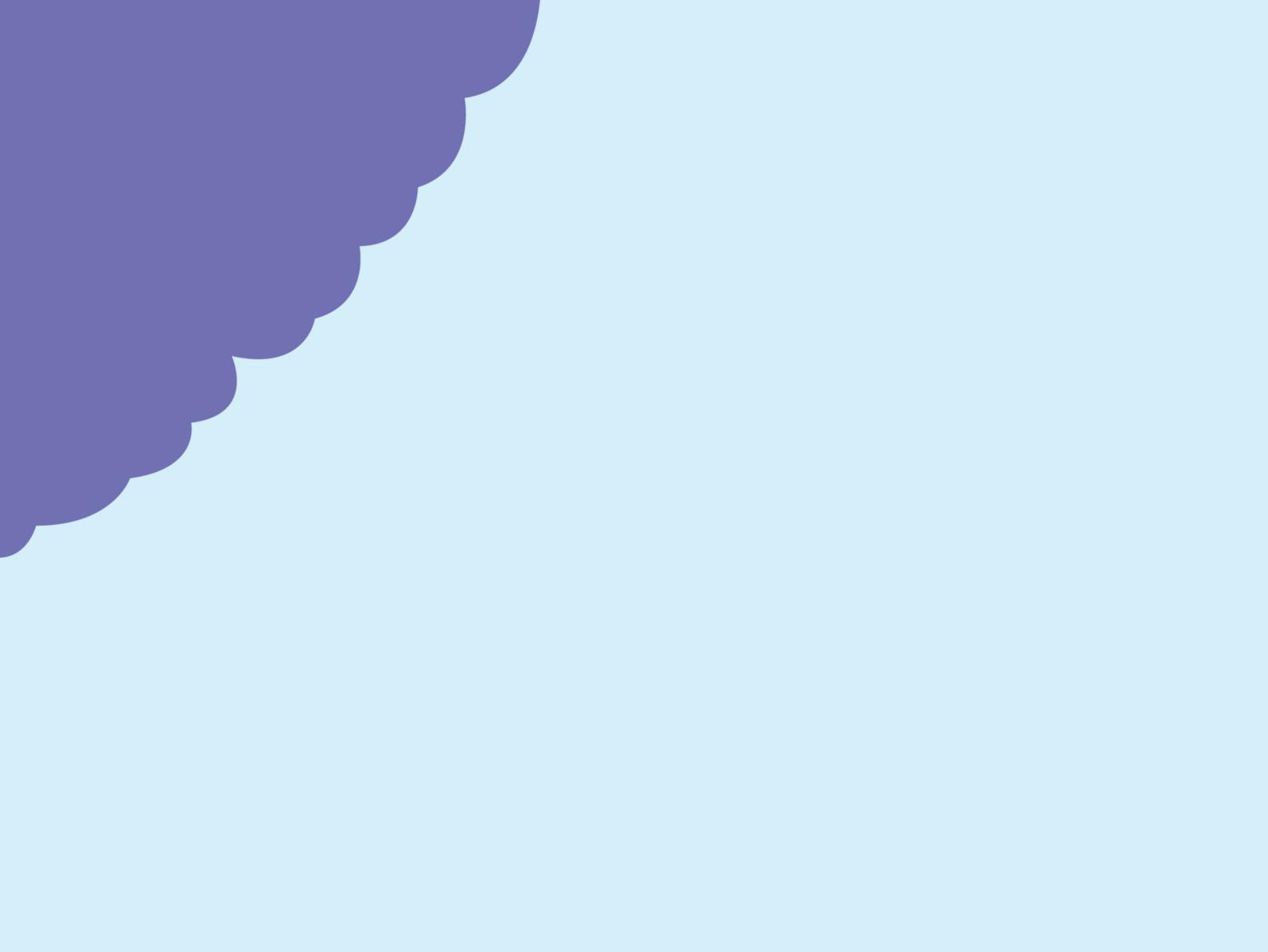
# GPAN leadership team at Fitzroy Bowls Club and GPANers at a Fitzroy Football Club Women's Match.







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