



The Equal, Safe and Strong Project

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT: November 2016

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ShantiWorks

EQUALITY PEACE JUSTICE

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Executive Summary

The issue of family violence has gained prominence in the broader community as a significant social concern that affects the safety and wellbeing of women and children. With an estimated 1 in 3 women affected by family violence, it is crucial that this awareness is translated into positive social change (VicHealth, 2007). Increasingly, efforts to address family violence in the community have highlighted the need to develop primary prevention strategies, which seek to reduce the future risk of family violence via early intervention (Gleeson, Kearney, Leung & Brislanes, 2015). Implementing primary prevention strategies within the school environment is considered particularly effective due to accessibility, affordability and broad community reach (Waldren & Wall, 2014). Moreover, such a strategy targets young people, who are believed to be in the early stages of developing gendered ideas about intimate relationships and may benefit from opportunities to examine and challenge these ideas. Of concern, the 'Young Australian's attitude towards Violence Against Women' survey, which researched the views of young people aged 16-24, showed that young people may already hold concerning attitudes about men's violence against women (Harris et al., 2015).

The Equal, Safe and Strong Project was a pilot respectful relationships program working with three secondary school communities as a prevention of family violence initiative. The Project was funded by the Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership Family Violence Working Group (SMPCP FVWG), and managed by the Women's Health in the South East (WHISE). ShantiWorks, a small feminist consulting group with specialist expertise in the family violence sector, were commissioned to develop, implement and evaluate the program. The participating school communities were Brighton Secondary College, East Bentleigh Secondary College and Mentone Girls' Secondary College.

The Project aims were:

- To increase the knowledge and skills by those in the school community to practice respectful relationships, and to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes.
- To build the school's capacity to embed gender equitable and inclusive policies, practices through leadership, knowledge and behaviours.
- To build the capacity of school communities to identify and respond effectively to those affected by violence.
- To foster stronger and more integrated relationships between schools and local service providers to ensure strong support for young people experiencing violence.

The Project developed a respectful relationships curriculum based on existing primary prevention strategies within schools, which are guided by best practice principles (Carmody, 2015; Gleeson et al., 2015; Ollis, 2011; VicHealth, 2012). These principles, among other things, emphasise an overtly feminist framework and a whole-of-school approach (Ollis, 2011). That is, the strategies must clearly recognise the role of gender in family violence and recruit the entire school community in prevention efforts. Primary prevention strategies aimed at young people within schools employ respectful relationships and bystander action approaches that seek to: (1) challenge gendered and violence-supportive cultural norms and; (2) encourage young people to challenge these norms (Ollis, 2011). ShantiWorks utilised a feminist Theory of Change in developing this respectful relationship curriculum, which recognises the importance of a gendered perspective or lens. This approach centres the insights and experiences of both participants and facilitators in the learning process.

The Project training package was implemented in the nominated schools between March and September of 2016 and involved the provision of five training sessions with students, five training sessions with teachers, and two training sessions with parents in total. There was variability in the implementation of the Project across schools due to issues of school commitment and availability. The Project was evaluated throughout and at the end of the implementation process, using focus groups, individual interviews, observation notes and verbal feedback. The information gained in both the implementation and the evaluations phases of the Project informed the themes and recommendations for future family violence prevention programs in schools.

The Project was most successful in achieving the aim of increasing the knowledge and skills of the school community to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes and then to consider and develop ways to confront sexist behaviours. These learnings were more evident in schools where the entirety of the training package could be delivered to students, over an extended timeframe, compared to schools in which the training time was significantly reduced. In more time-limited contexts, the capacity of the Project to support the students' learning and to draw links between gender inequity and gendered violence was significantly limited and concerns for their responses to and understanding of, the issue was raised. The use of media and exploratory activities was identified as critical in facilitating participants' learning and participants noted the impact of these on their understanding of the issue.

The Project seemed to elicit disclosures from participants of their direct or vicarious experiences of gender stereotyping, sexism and gendered/family violence and this highlighted the importance of responding to disclosures in the training package. In addition, the inclusion of parents was recognised as important in the whole-of-school approach. Parents recognised the importance of the issue of family violence/gendered violence and voiced their approval that the school was addressing this concern. They also spoke of their concerns in being able to support and guide their children around the issues of gendered violence/family violence.

The Project was less successful in achieving the aims associated with the whole-of-school approach, in terms of influencing school policy and practice concerning gender equity and responses to family violence and fostering stronger connections to family violence service providers. This seemed to be due to issues in the implementation of the Project, with respect to time management and the commitment and responsibilities assumed by the schools and the management team.

Several recommendations are proposed because of this Project, to strengthen the potential of these whole of school approaches to violence prevention:

- The need to dedicate sufficient time to delivering the training curriculum, as single sessions were insufficient in facilitating participant's understanding of the topic and had some negative impacts upon the participants.
- The value of an overtly feminist framework, which recognises gender and other aspects of a person's identity (e.g., race, class, sexuality, etc.) that can inform a structural understanding of violence.
- The importance of a facilitation approach that emphasises opportunities for participants to process information on this sensitive topic and not just deliver content.
- The efficacy of media as a learning tool.
- The significance of developing collaborative working relationships with clear agreements, covering expectations and accountabilities.

- The reality that such programs elicit disclosures from participants and the need to anticipate and develop effective responses to such disclosures in the program implementation.

1. Introduction

The Equal, Safe and Strong Project (the Project) was a high school based respectful relationships program funded by the Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership Family Violence Working Group (SMPCP FVWG). This group is a voluntary alliance between 15 active local governments, health and welfare agencies and community organisations, who are committed to contributing to primary prevention of family violence in the communities of Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, and Stonnington.

The Project was a pilot family violence prevention project working with three different secondary schools, including Brighton Secondary College, East Bentleigh Secondary College, and Mentone Girls Secondary College. Women's Health in the South East (WHISE), who managed this Project, were responsible for recruitment of, and engagement with, the three school communities. This responsibility included: briefing key school staff, supporting the implementation of the Project schedule and managing communications between schools and the Project designers and evaluators. ShantiWorks¹ were commissioned to develop the program content, facilitate family violence prevention sessions with teachers, parents and students, and then evaluate the Project.

The Project was originally designed around three key aims, to:

- increase understanding of primary prevention of family violence and its causes.
- build the capacity of teachers to identify and support students who have experienced violence.
- foster stronger and more integrated working relationships between schools and service.

The Project team then decided to update these aims as they believed they could be modified to better reflect the hopes of the SMPCP FVWG.

The revised Project aims were:

- to increase the knowledge and skills by those in the school community to practice respectful relationships, and to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes.
- to build the school's capacity to embed gender equitable and inclusive policies, practices through leadership, knowledge and behaviours.
- to build the capacity of school communities to identify and respond effectively to those affected by violence.
- to foster stronger and more integrated relationships between schools and local service providers to ensure strong support for young people experiencing violence.

The Project began in August 2015 and was completed in November, 2016.

¹ ShantiWorks is a feminist organisation specialising in violence prevention projects, working with victim-survivors of family violence and providing supervision services and training to organisations working in family violence related areas.

This report provides an overview of the Project, beginning with an overview of primary prevention strategies within schools and best practice principles, which guided the development the Project. Then, a description of the methodological frameworks underpinning the ShantiWorks' approach is presented, followed by the presentation of the Project themes. The Project Themes cover: (1) the success indicators of this Project model; (2) critical program content elements and materials, and; (3) the learnings of all three participant cohorts. The report then offers recommendations to contribute to future violence prevention efforts and, more specifically, school based Projects. The recommendations are offered to contribute to the current state of play in Victoria, where respectful relationship curriculum is being introduced across schools.

1.1. Primary Prevention Strategies within School Communities

Family violence has gained prominence as a significant social concern that affects the safety and wellbeing of women and children, with an estimated 1 in 3 women affected by family violence (Gleeson et al, 2015). Over three-quarters (78%) of women who experience family violence report that their children have been exposed to family violence, either directly and indirectly (Cox, 2015). Increasingly, efforts to address family violence in the community have highlighted the need to develop primary prevention strategies which seek to reduce the future risk of family violence via early intervention in the underlying causes (Gleeson et al, 2015).

A primary prevention approach understands the underlying causes of men's violence against women as unequal power relations between women and men, adherence to rigid gender stereotypes and broader violence-supportive cultures (VicHealth, 2012). The approach then addresses the underlying causes by promoting protective factors. Protective factors are actions or cultural changes that guard against the occurrence of men's violence against women. Protective factors include: creating healthy and respectful communities and interactions; providing alternative models of masculinity and relationship possibilities; calling on bystander responses and actions to sexism and more specifically; calling on men's leadership to challenge violence-supportive attitudes (VicHealth, 2007; Flood, 2010; Wells et al., 2013).

Implementing primary prevention strategies within the school environment is considered particularly effective due to accessibility, affordability and broad community reach (Waldren & Wall, 2014). Moreover, such a strategy targets young people, who are believed to be in the early stages of developing gendered ideas about intimate relationships and may benefit from opportunities to examine and challenge these ideas. Sexist and violence supportive attitudes are socially constructed and thus, can change and be unlearned (Gleeson et. al, 2015).

Of concern, the 'Young Australian's attitude towards Violence Against Women' survey, which examined the views of young people aged 16-24, showed that young people may already hold concerning attitudes about men's violence against women (Harris et al, 2015). For example, 1 in 5 young Australians surveyed believed that there are some situations when women bear part of the responsibility for sexual assault. In addition, nearly half (46%) agree that tracking a partner by electronic means without consent is acceptable. Another study by Breckenridge and Cale (2015) found that 1 in 3 young men do not consider checking their partner's email or phone without consent to be domestic violence.

To understand and challenge these notions, Ollis suggests that best practice principles addressing gendered violence in schools "starts from the assumption that sexuality is positive and links

information and critical thinking with empowerment, choice and an acceptance of diversity” (2011:3). These principles include the following:

1. An approach that is overtly feminist, recognising individual agency as well as broader social structures such as gender, class, race and power in gender and sexuality construction.
2. Relevant, inclusive and culturally sensitive practice and reflection.
3. A common program framework and logic that clearly articulates the link between gender, power and violence and a theory of change that will outline how the program will achieve its intended outcomes.
4. Effective curriculum delivery.
5. A whole-school approach, including staff, parents/guardians, students and community (Carmody, 2015).
6. Conducting impact evaluation of the strategy on the whole school. (Ollis, 2011; Flood, Fergus & Heenan, 2009; VicHealth, 2009; Partners in Prevention [PIP], 2015).

Two common approaches that centre these best practice principles are the *respectful relationships* and *bystander action* approaches. These approaches bring forward the importance of challenging attitudes and behaviours that are disrespectful and oppressive, with an emphasis on gender, to eradicate family violence.

Respectful relationship programs with children and young people are a key primary prevention approach within the current ‘National Council’s Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children’ (Sutherland et al., 2015). These programs have been the focus of several state initiatives (Carmody, 2015; VicHealth, 2007). Addressing behaviours, attitudes and school cultures that may condone or perpetrate violent supportive attitudes is important for program success. Carmody suggests that this requires a focus on ethics and, more specifically, sexual ethics. She states that ‘ethics is concerned with what is ‘right’, ‘fair’, ‘just’, or ‘good’ (however) the point of ethics is not to moralise or dictate what is to be done’ (2015: 112-113).

Crabbe and Corlett (2010) suggest that, within a respectful relationships program, it is important for young people to develop good critiquing abilities, alongside emotional literacy and self-care. They emphasise the need to address young people’s high degree of exposure to pornography. This exposure tends to portray images that are highly patriarchal and to include acts of sexualised aggression performed on women by men that are portrayed as ‘desirable’ and ‘sexy’. As such, age-appropriate opportunities should be provided for young people to develop an understanding of the violence-supportive design of the pornography industry and of other mainstream media (e.g., popular music, fashion cultures) that promote sexist and violence-supportive ideas of intimate relationships.

Over the last 5 years, the bystander action approach has become a standard strategy to support respectful relationships training and other prevention efforts (VicHealth, 2012; Gleeson et al., 2015).

The Australian approach to bystander action has taken on a different focus to its overseas counterparts. Projects in the USA have focussed on men (and women) intervening in potential incidents of sexual assault and rape, particularly on university campuses (Banyard & Moynihan, 2005). In comparison, Australia’s approach has been to motivate bystanders to act in addressing gender inequality, sexism and violence supportive attitudes. This locates the approach within the prevention framework (Powell, 2014).

1.2. The Importance of a Feminist Framework and Theory of Change

An overtly feminist framework is a critical best practice principle in the development and implementation of prevention programs aimed at addressing family violence, and gendered violence in general (Castelino, 2011; Ollis, 2011). A feminist framework views gender as socially constructed and holds gender violence prevention programs accountable to naming, exploring and dismantling rigid gender stereotypes to challenge sexist and violence-supportive norms. A feminist framework provides a gendered lens by recognising that we live in a culture where patriarchy informs, defines and shapes how we see ourselves, our ways of relating, and our organisations and community spaces.

A theory of change (TOC) with a feminist framework in gender violence prevention supports us all to learn how to be and relate differently within current violence supportive and sexist norms, cultures and institutions. A TOC articulates the underlying assumptions of a project and then maps the actions and events that are linked to impacts and outcomes to explain how change has happened. With a feminist Theory of Change there is a focus on a structural perspective, rather than problematising individuals and their behaviours.

Key ethical and practical considerations that underlie a feminist framework include the following elements:

- Personal and political stories and contexts matter: we are doing this work in a sexist culture, a culture that values male power and leadership over women.
- Seeking gender justice through identifying issues of oppression at a personal, group, or institutional level.
- Advocating for women and others who are marginalised, and attending to injustices.
- Gender inequality and inequity are an everyday issue for women and therefore require work at the individual, community and institutional levels.
- Re-imagining and helping re-construct the social order.
- The further empowerment of women, not side-lining them, in the mission for gender equality and justice.

Freire (2001) provides a philosophy about mutual learning and the socio-cultural influences on the educational environment, which should inform the development of a prevention program in schools. Critically, Freire notes that the school is a community within a community and, as such, is shaped by the same social norms on violence and respectful relationships. Therefore, schools are micro communities and as such have potential to be a site for change and a support for young people to develop into ethical and engaged citizens.

'It's my good sense in the first place that leads me to suspect that the school, which is the space in which both teachers and students are the subjects of education, cannot abstract itself from the socio-cultural and economic conditions of its students, their families, and their communities...It's impossible to talk of respect for students, for the dignity that is in the process of coming to be, for the identities that are in the process of construction, without taking into consideration the conditions in which they are living and the importance of the knowledge derived from life experience, which they bring with them to school. I can in no way underestimate such knowledge. Or what is worse, ridicule it' (Freire, 2001: 43-44).

1.3. Summary of Approaches to Respectful Relationships Programs

In summary, the use of primary prevention strategies in schools is regarded as a useful way of addressing family violence in the community. The approach is founded on the idea that family violence can be overcome by challenging socially constructed and gendered ideas about intimate relationships, and violence-supportive attitudes. Young people are already showing attitudes that support or condone gendered violence and/or family violence; yet, these attitudes may be amenable to change with intervention. Primary prevention strategies aimed at young people within schools employ respectful relationships and bystander action approaches that seek to: (1) challenge gendered and violence-supportive cultural norms and; (2) encourage young people to challenge these norms. Primary prevention strategies within schools are guided by best practice principles, which, among other things, emphasise an overtly feminist framework and a whole of school approach. That is, the strategies must clearly recognise the role of gender in family violence and recruit the entire school community in prevention efforts.

A feminist theory of change emphasises the use of a 'gendered lens' in understanding the issue of family violence, and the recognition of structural issues that underpin violence supportive norms. As such, changes in family violence or gendered violence is believed to require a cultural change. The school community is one context in which the broader culture is reflected and can be a site for change with broad community reach.

2. Project Development & Design

2.1. Project Aims

The development of the Equal Safe and Strong Project was based on best practice principles guiding prevention programs within schools, in addition to ideas drawn from the existing respectful relationships and bystander actions approaches (Cale et. al., 2015., Campo, 2015., Carmody, 2015., Crabb, 2010., Gleeson et. al., 2015 & Ollis, 2011).

The Project was originally designed around three key aims, to:

- increase understanding of primary prevention of family violence and its causes.
- build the capacity of teachers to identify and support students who have experienced violence.
- foster stronger and more integrated working relationships between schools and service.

In early stages of the project development, the aims were revised with the intention to emphasise a gendered understanding of family violence and a whole of school approach. As such, the Project aims were revised to include the following:

The revised Project aims were:

- to increase the knowledge and skills by those in the school community to practice respectful relationships, and to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes.
- to build the school's capacity to embed gender equitable and inclusive policies, practices through leadership, knowledge and behaviours.
- to build the capacity of school communities to identify and respond effectively to those affected by violence.
- to foster stronger and more integrated relationships between schools and local service providers to ensure strong support for young people experiencing violence.

There is a growing practice base of leadership and peer mentoring in violence prevention efforts (Crabbe & Corlett, 2010., Castelino et al., 2015., Katz, Jackson, 1995., Women's Health Grampians, 2016.,). The idea of peer mentoring and leadership was brought forward as a design element, with a focus on including students in active social engagement of challenging sexism and violence supportive attitudes.

In consultation with ShantiWorks, the Project team became aware of one further Project enhancement, relating to an increased inclusion of parents/guardians within the model. Campo (2015) notes the importance of ensuring that prevention work occurs alongside supporting families and improving access to appropriate services, education and social support. Possibilities (beyond the original idea of providing information in the school newsletter) included parent information sessions. This development moved closer to addressing the best practice principle outlined above that recommends including parents in a whole-school approach.

The Project aimed to create space and opportunity for school community members to increase their awareness, understanding and their connectedness to what matters to them in relation to sexism and violence against women. The success of the training is dependent upon connecting participants to their ethics and values for social and gender justice, human rights and respectful relationships. In doing so, they are likely to be urged to respond to violence against women and girls and all other forms of sexism.

2.2. Program Content and Process

Table 1 below provides an overview of the topics or themes required to be covered in the training sessions provided by the Project facilitators to students, teachers and parents, as directed by the funding body. The topics encompass four broad themes relating to family violence, including: gender equity; respect and relationships; power and violence, and; bystander intervention. These topics served to guide the development of the content of training sessions and essentially, the development of the Project Package (Appendix 1).

Table 1: List of Contents Required by SMPCP FVWG

1. Areas to be covered	
Topic	
Gender Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is gender? • Gender stereotypes and expectations (media, history, biological, family, behavioural and social difference). • How these stereotypes are reinforced (expectation of ourselves and others, goals and achievements, social media). • How social norms, expectations and stereotypes are formed, enacted and influence our lives. • Dispelling gender stereotypes. • The benefits of a gender equitable environment.
Respect and Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect the diversity of relationships young people experience (family, teachers, peers, intimate relationships). • What is a respectful relationship? • Building a respectful relationship. • Gender expectations in relationships.
Power and Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define violence. • The gendered nature of violence. • The implications of gender based violence.
Bystander Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing gender based violence. • Provide students with the awareness, skills, and ability to challenge attitudes, social norms, behaviours and practices in their school and wider community that support violence against women. • How to help a friend - Increase awareness and understanding about how to support people who have experienced relationship violence.

Program content elements and materials were developed to cover: 1) the continuum of violence against women, from sexism to family violence; 2) the roots causes of violence against women and; 3) a continuum of responses to all forms of violence against women (from bystander action to management of disclosures).

The training sessions emphasise the facilitation of ‘consciousness-raising’ through process-oriented conversations and activities. Consciousness-raising is a process of raising self-awareness through collective self-inquiry and group reflection, and the bringing together of action and reflection (Freire, 1970). This is central to a feminist approach towards collective change. This approach works to create individual and collective opportunities and spaces for consciousness-raising about gender equality, sexism and violence against women. Through this process, participants develop a practical and a deeper knowledge of gendered violence. As participants’ thinking changes, so do their actions, policy designs and responses to and engagement with gendered violence prevention.

ShantiWorks’ approach complements the ideas brought forward in Carmody’s (2015) framework. ShantiWorks’ utilises a feminist community mobilisation framework which seeks to create spaces to explore the cultural ethics, assumptions and norms about gender, sexism and violence. Connected to this ethical exploration is the importance of supporting individuals and school communities to develop an ability to critically analyse, and hopefully actively challenge and re-shape violence supportive societal messages, norms, traditions and cultures.

The approach to training seeks to encourage participants to consider how they can utilise new learnings about gender and non-violence, to bring about positive social change. There are several

strategies for positively influencing social norms in schools, as well as, the broader social community context. Some strategies/tools for change that were considered included peer mentoring and the bystander action approach. In order for the whole Project team to be informed of the approach to facilitation and as an offering to future school projects, the activities facilitated have been collated in a brief 'Project package'.

2.3 The Project Package

The Project Package (see Appendix 1) provides an overview of the program content, which includes the following:

- 1) An introduction that outlines basic details of the Project, the reasons for its development and a brief discussion on the theoretical framework it is based on.
- 2) An outline of the Project aims as set out in the Project plan.
- 3) A Theory of Change model developed in line with Project expectations and requirements.
- 4) An outline of the Feminist Participatory Action Research and Evaluation approach.
- 5) An outline of the key aspects of the facilitation process.
- 6) An implementation guide, including a section that considers safety ('Do No Harm').
- 7) An activities section, which outlines each of the activities in line with Project aims and expectations.
- 8) References for this document that double as a resource library for those interested.
- 9) Appendices including a literature review and some of the key tools required for the training sessions.

The Project Package includes detailed information in relation to the delivery of training sessions also. For students, the training sessions were designed to be carried out over 2-3 sessions within a month, and to be of 120-240 minutes' duration each. Although it would have been ideal to have as many sessions with teachers, 1-2 sessions were considered possible considering time constraints. Additional activity suggestions are provided in the package if more time is available (in recognition of the limitations of a 2-4-hour pilot training program). Ideally, training sessions are spaced in this way to allow time for participants to absorb, reflect on and consolidate their learning in subsequent sessions, further develop their interactions with members of their community and institutions (such as media) outside of the sessions. Each activity can be undertaken on its own, with educational and awareness raising value; however, completion of the series of activities allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the prevalence and every day nature of the issue of gendered violence.

Within each training session, facilitators are required to:

- facilitate information and critical reflection exercises.
- provide space for participants to discuss and practise new ideas and homework to stretch individual learning between training sessions.
- support the explorations, reflections, tensions and learning moments, as well as to provide referrals and resources to participants.

Different components can be modified during each training session, considering:

- the time available at each session.
- the number of sessions to be held with the group.
- the audience (teachers/parents/students).

- age, in the student sessions.
- school demographics (such as co-educational or same-sex schools).
- previous session responses and feedback leading to further activity development and improvement.

2.4. Prevention and Response

The need to incorporate responses to family violence was considered in the development of the Project, to: (1) equip participants with strategies to respond to potential disclosures of family violence, and; (2) to encourage participants to draw the link between gender inequality, sexism and gendered violence. The development of appropriate strategies to respond to violence was viewed as necessary to foster a culture of respect and non-violence, and to ensuring the safety and well-being of victims/survivors who may disclose to participants.

2.5. Facilitation Philosophy

The facilitation approach of the Project was significantly influenced by Carmody's (2015) work, which places an emphasis on bringing forward and exploring individual ethics in relation to respectful relationships. How a person's ethics reflect, accept or challenge dominant social discourses of gender and sexuality, and men's violence against women is brought forward. In addition, the approach was influenced by the work of Freire (2001), who recognises the training or learning space as a microcosm of society, and acknowledges the influence of socio-cultural norms, attitudes and behaviours on individuals in the space.

The ShantiWorks' approach to facilitation is founded in feminist mobilisation theory of mutual learning and of recognising and bringing forward the ideas and lived experience of participants. Facilitators seek to allow space for participants to make sense of new knowledge and reflect on their own ethics concerning gender and social justice. Facilitators then seek to utilise participants' personal and shared experiences to develop a deeper understanding of their learning, or new knowledge. This requires facilitators to begin to know and understand their audience. For this to occur, 'we must be speaking with and not just speaking to' (hooks, 2015: 31).

The ShantiWorks' facilitation framework aims to create transformative learning experiences. Transformative learning occurs when people develop a deeper, richer, textured understanding of themselves, their location and power and their world. For this to occur, education must include:

- making visible the dominant norms and structures.
- critical reflection of ethics and standards for living.
- technical skills to enact the new knowledge.
- the students-participants as active in their learning (Freire, 1993).

Transformative learning is about (re-)discovering personal and political power, and supporting critical awareness for learners, who are then inspired to act upon their world and the injustices. Facilitators seek to invite participants (often using media as prompts) into discussions about the messages conveyed relating gender and intimate relationships and their experience of such messages in their daily lives.

2.6. Use of Media

The use of media as a teaching tool was incorporated into program content, with a view to demonstrate the prevalence of gender stereotypes and violence-supportive narratives in our society. Media is an effective means of ‘unpacking’ ideas of masculinity and femininity, and developing an understanding of how this relates to men’s violence against women. A range of advertisements, song clips, movie/TV examples, and awareness campaigns were utilised in the content development.

2.7. Consideration of Non-Binary Gender Identities and Other Identities

Developing an understanding of gender and its relationship to violence is an important best practice principle in primary prevention programs (Gleeson et. al., 2015). The concept of gender as referred to in this Project specifically relates to the construction of identities, relationships and interactions based on the meaning and value of what it is to be male and female. These gender roles are taught and maintained through social, institutional and political structures, such as family, media, policy and legislation (Wall, 2014). ShantiWorks recognises that specifying the ‘male’ and ‘female’ binary is problematic as it does not recognise gender as a spectrum and the reality that many people do not identify as male or female, or may identify as both. Nevertheless, the focus on ‘male’ and ‘female’ is considered important for two key reasons:

- The issue of family violence/intimate partner violence/dating violence is primarily an issue of men’s violence against women, and understanding and addressing this is imperative if we are to prevent and ultimately, eradicate such behaviour.
- Gender in mainstream society continues to be presented and reinforced as a binary and understanding and unpacking this is important when developing an awareness of the oppression of women based on gender that leads to gendered violence.

It was considered important to overt the issue of the gender binary within sessions, to acknowledge the limitations and issues in the construction of gender, whilst acknowledging the prevalence of men’s violence against women.

In the program development and implementation, ShantiWorks also considered the need to consider and acknowledge other social identities as well, by way of:

- endeavouring to be aware of our own social identities and how our beliefs, experiences and assumptions may influence the way in which we understand the content, our facilitation approach, as well as the dynamic between ourselves and the participants.
- at times, locating ourselves in terms of privilege experienced and then naming that social identity as impacting on the experience of gender (such as white privilege and heteronormativity).
- using the words and voices of people representing marginalised social identities (such as words written by Australian indigenous women as an acknowledgement to country or slam poets speaking about their experience of racism).
- being mindful of the gender of ShantiWorks team members when allocating tasks/roles.

2.8. Consideration of the Needs of Different Schools

This pilot Project embraced a whole of school approach and, therefore, in the development of the overall program and material, the following considerations were factored in:

- Each school's individual characteristics, goals and schedules.
- Management and care of multiple project participants including teachers, students and parents.
- The age of the student cohort as this varied across the 3 schools.
- Varying content depending on the participant group, the number of sessions and the allocated timeframe.
- Risk and safety management and response plans for identifying domestic violence, dating violence, sexism and harassment.

The ShantiWorks' facilitators then explored and evaluated what students, teachers and parents would commit to within their community in the form of sharing their new and developing understanding and challenging these violence supportive attitudes in the everyday.

2.9. Consideration of School Policies and Procedures

A key aim of this Project included embedding policies and procedures into the school community that worked to challenge sexism and violence supportive attitudes. It would also provide for an appropriate process for responding to disclosures of violence.

It is important that any gender equality policy is read as a companion document to the wider school mission. An understanding of the construction of gender and violence and its implications for policy and practice, as well as curriculum developments, is necessary to create a respectful, non-violent foundation for the school community. A gender equality policy is based on a framework that notes:

- an understanding of the construction of gender.
- the impact of gender social construction on curriculum, teaching and learning.
- the taken for granted sexism and violence supportive cultures and attitudes.
- support for change at the individual, relational and community levels.
- engagement with the leadership team and then the teaching staff.

Although there was a plan to engage the leadership team in family violence and prevention policy development, this was not possible during the life of the Project. Time and resource limitations meant that the Project manager struggled to engage school leadership beyond organising some training sessions. The Project manager reported a difficulty in engaging with school leadership beyond the individual liaison in each school.

The Project team altered their expectation in regards to the aim of developing school policies and procedures and engaged ShantiWorks to conduct a session with WHISE to skill them in conducting this process in future. The training brought forward the importance, in such processes, of:

- creating a picture of all staffs' understandings of gender and equality in their school community.
- examining the extent to which policies and processes are gender sensitive.
- providing a forum for the discussion of the key issues.
- developing an action plan/policy for gender equality and violence prevention review and development.

The WHISE Project manager reported an interest in following up this process beyond the life of this Project.

2.10. Anticipated Issues/Risks

It is important in any Project to consider possible issues and risks that may occur and develop and implement processes to prevent and mitigate such risks. Given ShantiWorks' experience in primary prevention of men's violence against women, we have identified particular issues and risks when developing projects:

- The potential for participants to disclose experiences of violence (usually as victims but also as a perpetrator of violence).
- The possibility of participants experiencing disclosures by peers in their communities.
- The possibility of participants displaying problematic behaviours in the training sessions, behaviours which contradict the aims of the Project.

To address each of these risks, ShantiWorks aimed (in line with contractual requirements) to:

- provide age appropriate training in how to respond to disclosures to teachers, staff and students.
- discuss these issues and risks regularly with the Project Manager and inform her if any such risks were realised.
- ensure facilitators are trained and experienced in responding to disclosures.
- embed strategies within the program facilitation that set up respectful communication practices (and these were explicit and regularly updated throughout training sessions).
- consider these risks in the development of school policies and practices training conducted with the Project management team.

Whilst no significant risk issues were raised during this Project, this preparation is considered imperative for the safety and wellbeing of all Project participants.

3. Project Implementation, Evaluation & Limitations

3.1. Project Implementation

The proposed project design and methodology (as outlined in table 2 below) was devised to be flexibly negotiated with the three school communities and included the following:

1. Project meeting with WHISE and the SMPCP FVWG.
2. Develop curricula and program based on the Project aims.
3. Provide information and training sessions with teachers within and across sites to grow and share site learnings and knowledge. This allows for immediate sphere of influence learnings and then cross fertilisation of knowledge and skills, which builds community partnerships, networks and sustainability. Providing teachers with the training first allows them to support and role model mentoring with students.
4. Work with students within and across sites to grow and share site learnings and knowledge with their peers and even the wider school community.

Table 2: Original Project Proposal

	Proposed Methodology	Details	Accountability
1	Project meeting with key stakeholders	Develop and discuss program design, schedules and timelines Build in regular meetings over the life of the project	Throughout the project each development / product will be presented to the SMPCP FVWG and other key stakeholders (e.g. school staff where appropriate) for review, feedback and these changes will be managed. This will occur through project meetings, emails and phone calls as required.
2	Develop curricula and program	Based on the Project's noted expectations and to be negotiated through a collaborative process with SMPCP and school staff, may include: Theoretical framework; program outline, structure and content; relevant resources; presentation materials (include Power Point display) and; relevant local information and referral resources.	
3	Provide information and training sessions with teachers	This will occur within and across sites to grow and share site learnings and knowledge. This allows for immediate sphere of influence learnings and then cross fertilisation of knowledge and skills, which builds community partnerships, networks and sustainability. Providing teachers with the training first allows them to support and role model mentoring with students. Training may involve creating processes for staff to support students experiencing violence and supporting each other in response to hearing about violence within their community.	
4	Group process with students	To occur within and across sites to grow and share site learnings and knowledge. 120 students will be selected in consultation with teaching staff and the SMPCP FVWG. Work will include the use of age and culturally appropriate multimedia and prioritise group work and discussions to allow for content processing and knowledge development within and between participants. Content to be determined collaboratively, but may include: gender inequality and the link to violence against women and girls; being an ethical and active bystander; our ethics and developing respectful relationships; consent; the gendered nature of sexual expectations and; the nature of men's violence against women and how to respond to disclosures of violence.	
5	Focus groups with teachers, students and SMPCP FVWG	This to occur after training to allow critical reflection and evaluation of the project and program	
6	Develop a gender equity policy for each school	To occur in collaboration with the SMPCP FVWG and schools with the aim to increase the understanding of family violence, its causes and the process of prevention; to provide teaching staff with the skills to identify and support students who have experienced violence; and for teachers to be able to deliver this support through the creation of sustainable working relationships with service providers. These aims meet the requirements of the Project, with the overarching goal to reduce family violence in the three local areas (the Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston Local Government Areas)	
7	Develop resource booklet	For ongoing reference and to build in Project sustainability by providing practical, straightforward information and linking participants with appropriate referral services	
8	Development of final report	Meeting all SMPCP requirements as negotiated but including: evaluation results; recommendations for future Project iterations and; final program, curricula and resources. Final financial acquittal to be provided.	

ShantiWorks was required to be flexible and respond to each school’s schedule and plans and the needs of WHISE as Project managers. The actual Project design varied substantially from the original proposal. Variations were necessary due to time limitations and delays. The delivery of the project was different in each school, with variations across year level, group numbers per session, number of sessions, and allocated session length. These variations were directed by school staff managing participant availability. Table 3 below provides an outline of the description of how the Project was implemented across the three schools and highlights key differences.

Table 3: School Sessions Completed				
School	Participant	No. Attended	Details	
Brighton Secondary College	Year 8 students (mixed gender)	13	3 X 90 minute sessions	
	Teacher session	15	Half hour session	
	Observation of year 8 students	5	50-minute presentation to other year 8 students	
Bentleigh Secondary College	Year 10 students (mixed gender)	26	1 X 5-hour session	
	Teacher session	40 and 50	1 X 1-hour information session	
	School community parents/guardians	20	1 X 90-minute session	
Mentone Girls Secondary College	Year 10 (girls only) students	200	1 X 1-hour session	
	Teacher-Student leaders	60	1 X 30 minute 1 X 1-hour session	
	School community parents/guardians	45	1 X 90-minute session	

As shown in Table 3, three sessions were delivered to a small number of Year 8 students (13) at Brighton Secondary College across three weeks, whereas the entire curriculum was delivered to a larger, yet still manageable number of Year 10 students (26) at Bentleigh Secondary College in a full-day session. For Mentone Girls’ Secondary College, a brief single session was provided to a large group of students (200), which significantly restricted the amount of content that could be delivered and impeded meaningful opportunities to support students’ exploration and analysis of the content.

A single parent session was provided to parents of students at Mentone Girls’ Secondary College and at Bentleigh Secondary College. A parent session was not provided to Brighton Secondary College. Teacher sessions were delivered to all schools, with one session provided to teaching staff at Brighton Secondary College and two sessions provided to teaching staff at Mentone Girls’ Secondary College and Bentleigh Secondary College.

The differences in program implementation across schools were due to time constraints and the availability of students, teachers and parents. Staff at Brighton Secondary College conveyed the belief that parents would not be interested in attending an out of hours’ session. Further, teaching staff indicated that they did not require more than one session due to pre-existing knowledge of the topic.

The differences across schools allowed for comparisons in approaches and structure, but required further work in the re-configuring the training package to suit the needs of each school. This restructuring was necessary to ensure the content was appropriate for the time available within sessions and to manage the potential risks associated with rushing or limiting the learning process.

3.2. Program Evaluation Methods

ShantiWorks utilises a feminist participatory action research approach to evaluation. Feminist participatory action research is a process in which researchers engage program participants as partners in evaluation design and process, question development and data analysis. Feminist participatory action evaluation is designed to:

- explore and respond to the social issues at the local level.
- be embedded in feminist values and principles.
- be based on complexity.
- manage both quantitative and qualitative research.
- work within appropriate and differentiated time frames and resources.
- be adapted to the level and nature of work and strategies of each organisation/ partnership/ school.
- ensure participants inform, co-design and participate in the monitoring and evaluation of change processes.
- prioritise learning in the evaluation goals.
- capture, analyse and address negative as well as positive changes.
- abandon, revise and/or recast our frameworks to respond to the local changing environment and needs.

The ‘focus group’ is a key tool used to extract and validate learning from the project (see Appendix 3 for examples of questions used in focus group). Such group processes are more conversational in style and suit the participatory and action-oriented approach, as both the process and the content of the Project are valued. Focus groups concentrate on what matters to the participants. They seek to understand and validate participants’ wisdoms and current experiences. This process brings forward and centralises the participants’ priorities, insights, changes and learnings. In the circumstance where an individual was unable to attend a focus group or has particularly important/personal offering to the project, individual interviews was also utilised.

Further to focus groups and interviews, ShantiWorks commissioned the assistance of interns² as observers, to collect and collate notes from each session. These notes were primarily quotes of participants, allowing facilitators to reflect on the responses from the session and develop and adapt activities and content as required. This has also allowed for the participants’ words and insights to inform and be included in this report. Further, the interns provided insight, feedback and support

² Interns were commissioned by ShantiWorks to participate in all facets of the Project including content development, attending facilitated sessions and evaluative roles. Interns included two second year psychology students, dedicated to the movement of gender equality and the eradication of violence against women. As 20-year-olds, they could provide support, assisting ShantiWorks in developing age appropriate relevant resources and activity plans.

which has been instrumental to the refining of the workshop materials, content and final training package, and the evaluation.

Given the timing and scheduling limitations and the flexible Project development, evaluation processes were undertaken throughout the life of the Project. For example, rather than relying on focus groups at the completion of the workshop sessions, ShantiWorks asked participants to reflect on their experiences, learnings and hopes for change after several sessions.

ShantiWorks offered focus groups and individual interviews and other communications. ShantiWorks also attended a peer leadership session, conducted by year 8 students to another class of year 8 students at Brighton Secondary College.

Process	Participants	Number of attendees
Focus Groups	2 X student	9 and 12
	1 X teacher	4
Interviews	3 X teacher	3
	1 X project manager	1
Observation	1 X student presentation Intern observers were present at all 11 facilitated sessions	5 presenters

3.3. Limitations

There were several limitations to the implementation of the Project, which is likely to have impacted upon the achievement of the stated aims and the ability of the Project to impact upon the whole-of-school approach.

3.3.1. Time Management

Time management is a common struggle in family violence prevention projects, and this Project was no exception. The Project commenced in August 2015 and was scheduled to be completed in July 2016. However, the Project was extended to November 2016 due to schedule and planning conflicts within each school, including:

- schools having difficulty fitting another program into their already very busy schedule and curriculum.
- project managers frequently spoke of difficulties in contacting school staff to arrange sessions.
- changes in both school and Project management staff that led to further delays.

3.3.2. Reduction of the Training Package

Due to the availability of participant groups, the number of sessions delivered and the number of participants attending sessions varied considerably across the three schools. As such, the training package had to be adjusted to suit the varying availability and needs of the three schools. For example, only students at Brighton Secondary College received the training package in the manner intended (i.e., three 1.5 hour sessions across three weeks), but a parent session was not provided. This meant

that the content had to be reduced and refined for the other two schools (i.e., Bentleigh Secondary College and Mentone Girls' Secondary College), to ensure the content was appropriate for time-limited sessions.

As an example, Mentone Girls' Secondary College requested a 1-hour session with 200 students, and in this context, it was not possible nor appropriate to discuss the issue of family violence in detail and ways to respond. This posed concerns as to the safety and wellbeing of students, in terms of being exposed to a highly sensitive topic, but with limited capacity to establish a relationship with facilitators, to explore the issue in depth, and to seek support if needed. In comparison, at Brighton Secondary College, training sessions were delivered to a small group of students (13) once a week across three weeks for two hours at a time. This meant that facilitators could hold discussions that placed a stronger focus on family violence because the students could be supported adequately during and after the sessions, as necessary.

3.3.3. School Commitment to the Project

The responsibility for the implementation of the Project was often assigned to one or two staff members within each school and the participating students, which impacted upon the capacity to apply a whole-of-school approach. In effect, the broader policy and whole of school cultural change processes were not able to be addressed across all school management structures. Overall, there was difficulty in implementing the extensive expectations of the Project in the context of a small pilot, the limited availability of the schools, and the time taken to arrange the entire implementation of the Project.

4. Project Outcomes and Themes

This section provides an overview of the Project experience for the school community, and key achievements of the Project with respect to its aims. The Project was most successful in achieving the aim of increasing the knowledge and skills of the school community to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes and to challenge these. The Project was less successful in achieving the aims associated with the whole-of-school approach, in terms of influencing school policy and practice concerning gender equity and responses to family violence and fostering stronger connections to family violence service providers. This section provides an overview of the participants' responses to the training curriculum and impact upon their learning and an examination of limitations that impeded the achievement of all aims.

4.1. Achieving the Aims of the Project

The aims of the Project were as follows:

1. To increase the knowledge and skills by those in the school community to practice respectful relationships, and to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes.
2. To build the school's capacity to embed gender equitable and inclusive policies, practices through leadership, knowledge and behaviours.
3. To build the capacity of school communities to identify and respond effectively to those affected by violence.

4. To foster stronger and more integrated relationships between schools and local service providers to ensure strong support for young people experiencing violence.

The Project made movements towards meeting each of the four aims of the project. However, it was most successful in achieving the first aim, and less successful in achieving the remaining three aims. That is, the facilitation of student, parent and teacher training sessions seemed to contribute to the knowledge and skills of the school community with respect to practicing respectful relationships, and recognising gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes. However, the Project was limited in its capacity to: (1) influence school policy on gender equitable and inclusive policies and practices; (2) build the capacity to school communities to identify and respond to family violence, and; (3) to foster more integrated relationships between schools and local service providers. This was mainly due to issues of responsibility and resource allocation to the Project within the schools, in addition to issues in the communication, management and implementation of the Project between schools and WHISE.

4.2. Participant Responses to Content and Process

Developing respectful relationships as a meaningful way to reduce family violence must emphasise gender power, stereotypes and the attitudes that condone violence. The Project centred this learning in all its sessions with students, teachers and parents. This was carried out utilising the transformative learning framework outlined above. This approach brought forward relevant insights, experience and knowledge of both facilitators and participants in relation to sexism, discrimination and family violence. The facilitation process then asked participants to share their learning within their community to broaden the reach of the Project.

4.2.1. Developing a 'Gendered Lens'

The session content and process sought to support the participants' development of a 'gendered lens'. A 'gendered lens' involved developing an understanding and awareness of gender stereotypes and sexism and its relationship with family violence. Participants were encouraged to recognise the knowledge they had about sexism and media, and to highlight the similarities and differences of their experiences in the groups. This activity process allowed for a building of a picture of the mainstream ideas that permeate our social worlds and the gendered constraints applied at individual and community levels.

The Case Study below illustrates an example of this process with Year 8 Students at Brighton Secondary College.

CASE STUDY: Year 8 students developing a gendered lens utilising media

This activity provides supportive media to begin to bring forward the construction of gender, from childhood into adulthood.

Utilising the media examples of advertisements directed at children, the facilitators asked students what messages stood out to them, from a gendered perspective:

'Girls are more barbie dolls and boys are iron man stuff and a lot more fun...'

'Colour scheme for boys and girls.'

'Girls are wearing makeup despite being young.'

'It's making pink and purple and lying on a bed reading a magazine normal and what girls should be like.'

'There are not boys on a girl's toy, this is meant for girls.'

'Boys are smarter than girls, the girls are for looks.'

'It doesn't matter if we (girls) are smart, as long as you look good.'

The facilitators then showed images of adult men and asked a similar question:

'Men together drinking alcohol...'

'Men are meant to like alcohol and sport.'

'Men have to do sports; this is not so much for girls.'

'It's interesting that they use the word armour, which you associate with fighting.'

'To smell like a man's man.'

Follow on question: Boys and men get a lot of pressure to man up and be a man and so on, what happens if they don't meet this stereotype?

'They get bullied.'

'They feel like less of a man because they don't fit the stereotype.'

'If someone's not sporty enough, don't be gay.'

'The stereotype that a man should ask out a woman and women should wait for men.'

Facilitators then showed images of women in advertisements and asked what messages the students noticed:

'Over sexualising woman.'

'Girls have to wear makeup and look perfect.'

'The makeup products are different on models to what they really are.'

'It's basically all Photoshop, if you don't look like this then there's no point.'

Participants were then asked to apply these ideas to their everyday lives: How aware are you of these messages in your everyday lives?

'Friend that covers her acne with makeup but is then shamed when she doesn't wear makeup 'this is why we can't trust women (because the 'makeup face' is not her real face)'. '

Further to this makeup comment:

'A joke on social media "always take your girlfriend swimming on the first date" disrespecting women and so on...'

'We must always be attractive. '

'I don't think I'm aware of it because it's just natural to see these advertisements everywhere...with all the internet and media everywhere, we are just surrounded by it.'

4.2.2. Consciousness-Raising & Bystander Action

As outlined in the 'Young Australian's attitude towards Violence Against Women' survey (Harris et al., 2015), which examined the views of young people aged 16-24, people who hold sexist attitudes do not necessarily use violence themselves. It does, however, suggest that such attitudes contribute to a socialisation and culture that minimises, condones and even encourages violence. While this is a significant and concerning issue (arguably across all age groups), ShantiWorks' experience in the schools suggested that young people hold many important insights that can be built upon to challenge the concerning attitudes outlined in the survey.

The ShantiWorks team conducted an evaluation focus group with these student presenters and other participants. These students named several examples of experiences of sexism within their school community, including instances where they have attempted to address the issue:

'A few of the boys in our class, we had to write an art creative piece about monsters, and a few of the boys wrote graphic stories that were almost pornographic. Then we went on a writing excursion and when we had lunch we had what was almost an intervention, like we all talked about how inappropriate the behaviour had been.'

'You have to tell them that its wrong.'

'Another place I noticed a lot of stereotypes was our school's production this year. There were a lot of presentations, and the production coordinator went on stage and apologised for how many gender stereotypes there had been. It was a male show written by three boys with a male hero and a girl was taking snapchats- that was her character.'

'In my classes its really divided, two groups of girls and three groups of boys in P.E. Not really because there's no seats but it can be hard for people who want to make different friends.'

'I feel like some of the boys in my class are afraid to talk to the girls.'

'Teachers put the girls in one group and they don't really have a choice.'

'Our classes have a seating plan so it sort of alternates, it sort of works but sort of doesn't, because we have one group who likes to pick on kids, one who likes to stay out of the trouble and then the girls who sort of get picked on by the others. And in P.E. sometimes the girls ask to be together 'because the guys don't even look to pass the ball to them.'

'The team needed a boy because it was missing a boy, so he wouldn't let a girl join the team, then one girl said I'm basically half boy and he let her join.'

'Today when we played hockey there was one team of all boys and the teacher said you can't be together because you'll win everything but then they didn't end up winning, we did.'

'Our class is really divided into stereotypes, like a whole wall of boys who are really sporty and just play games and don't care about their work and then there is my group who is boys and girls, and then there is a girls group.'

It is possible that some of these students were aware of these issues prior to participating in the Project; however, it is noteworthy that many reported a new awareness, concerns and issues in the focus groups sessions. This suggested a development in their lenses in relation to gendered

disrespectful, sexist and abusive attitudes and behaviours (whether experienced in their interactions with others or noted in the lyrics of songs or television scenes).

Members of the ShantiWorks team observed one group of year 8 Brighton Secondary College students presenting their learnings with a classroom of their peers. Key observations from this observation included:

- The students engaged the class in discussions about issues of sexism and violence (as opposed to simply information provision).
- The students clearly named the gendered nature of violence and then used media examples to support the class to understand this.
- The students had taken time to collect some of their own media examples to use alongside those presented by ShantiWorks.
- The students actively chose to use an example of a young woman speaking about racism (to expose critical social issues) and named racism.
- On exiting the room, the young people who presented asked their support teacher about the possibility of future presentations, excited by the prospect of continuing to share workshops on challenging sexism.

4.2.3. Understanding the Links Between Gender Inequality and Gendered Violence

The Project incorporated elements of prevention and response to family violence in the training sessions. More specifically, participants were provided with opportunities to explore and challenge sexism and violence-supportive ideas, in addition to opportunities to discuss strategies to respond to disclosures of violence. In doing so, links between gender stereotypes and inequality, and gendered violence were drawn.

Understanding the linkages or spectrum of sexism, disrespect and violence renders important the seemingly harmless sexist joke, the dismissal of aggressive play or the gendered structures and learning frameworks within the school environment. Discussing what violence is, who perpetrates it and how to respond, as well as unpacking disrespect and sexism, allows the facilitators to move the conversations along the spectrum, to process the learnings and to address a broader range of relevant experiences and theories within the sessions.

Due to school scheduling constraints, it was not possible to cover both sexism/stereotyping (prevention) and responding to disclosures of violence in some sessions. Such experiences highlighted the issues that can arise from not covering all aspects.

In ShantiWorks' experience, during sessions where it was not possible, due to time constraints, to cover each aspect, the following occurred:

- Where focussing on the development of an understanding of family violence and how to respond, without time to address sexism and violence supportive attitudes, participants were left asking '*But what can we do to avoid this, to prevent this, we get this is important but what can we do?!*' (Staff participant)
- When the material focusses only on sexism and gender issues (without discussion about men's violence against women) student's comments included: '*it is not fair to pick on him, girls do it too*' and '*it's just a song and he always gets flack*' (Mentone students)

participating in brief one off session) and other comments that condoned or dismissed violence supportive material.

In sessions where ShantiWorks had the time to discuss the types of violence, how to respond to disclosures and challenging sexism and violence supportive attitudes, the participants tended to:

- develop an understanding of the link between stereotypes, sexism, violence supportive attitudes and men's violence against women.
- Be more likely to develop motivations to challenge sexism based on their understanding of the significance of the issue of men's violence against women.

ShantiWorks' experienced a notable level of insight in students who were informed about both responding to family violence and the causes, their level of insight was notable:

'I am more conscious of language across the school.'

'Take more notice in other's feelings.'

'Keep talking about it and reminding them.'

'Like to see language use changes in school – a friendlier environment.'

'Stop accepting what is in the media is okay.'

'People would stop accepting things in media, such as the Justin Bieber clip.'

'I didn't realise, about the Justin Bieber video that I'd never thought about the lyrics before.'

'I've been listening to songs over and over to try and understand the lyrics... They seem all different, now when you listen to lyrics.'

'Instead of seeing the songs in a positive way you see it in more of a negative way, when you recognise it you see it in a different light.'

'On the internet there are always stereotypes, or on the news, or on an ad, there the ad for links with the girls.'

'Yesterday on fathers-day, on the Foxtel music channel they had top 100 songs for dad to rock out too on mothers-day, Michael Bubl ...'

'I saw this thing on the news last night for liposuction and she was already beautiful.'

'I saw on snapchat, there are apps now so that guys can keep track of girl's periods. It has different emoji's for different moods.'

'I get really annoyed, when just because I get mad or I'm really annoyed and then guys go straight to, oh are you on your period. It's just so annoying.'

'Or they say that you are over reacting...'

(Quotes from Bentleigh Students focus group)

Interestingly some students spoke in ways that suggested they were applying their learnings about the negative impact of sexist language and respectful ways of speaking more broadly. When asked, what differences would they notice if their school became more respectful, their responses included:

'I've noticed words being said like 'gay' and they don't understand what it means. Don't know the intention of it. They are using it as an insult. They don't know the meaning behind it.'

'People would stop insulting people when some people have a disability such as down syndrome... I hope disability judgement stops.'

'On Social media – the use of words 'gay' 'retard'. Those words would be reduced. People that use that language, might be questioned by others why they said that.'

'Less bullying – people get bullied for being different and don't fit into a box.'

'Social media stuff changes'.

'Reduce what is said online'. (Bentleigh student focus group)

4.2.4. Emotional Responses to the Topic

Beyond the intellectual experience, the sensitive themes presented in the program content (i.e., sexism, family violence, dating violence, etc.) often elicited a range of strong emotional responses from participants in all the groups. In addition to the likelihood of people experiencing family violence to be present in the session (including victim-survivors and perpetrators), the Project brought forward the issue of gender inequality and gendered violence to the forefront of participants' minds. Prior to the Project, participants' awareness of these issues may have been distant or peripheral. The workshop sessions created space and opportunity for education and new understandings about violent supportive attitudes and behaviours. It was, therefore at times, confronting and upsetting. Facilitators noted that it was a more intense and provocative experience for teachers and students who participated in brief one off sessions that didn't allow for time to explore and understand the issues.

This strong emotional, visceral response is important to prepare for as facilitators, to ensure that participants maintain a sense of safety in the space. Due attention is required to take care of the participants who are vocal with their concerns, as well as those who are silent and uncomfortable.

Some brief examples of the visceral expression of this experience:

'What can we do, to support the students, to change this?' (Mentone Teacher session)

'I found the rates of violence shocking.' (Mentone Teacher session)

'We are not these men! These men are monsters!' (Mentone Teacher session)

'I thought things had changed since the 70's, but everything the students have said suggests things haven't improved much at all...we fought so that girls would have better options, more choices, so that attitudes would change, but what [the students] have said today is that little has changed' (Teacher, Brighton student session).

'The Justin Bieber clip was a huge learning for me. I knew all the words to the song and didn't even realise the messages that were in there. Since the session I have realised there are so many songs with these messages, songs that I used to like but can't listen to now'. (Brighton student participant, focus group).

As noted by the above quotes, participants are speaking their initial experiences out loud, without any pause to reflect and digest the issue of dating violence or sexism or sexual assault in music videos. Skilled facilitators, who have process as well as content expertise, can enhance the session and provide a solid duty of care. Strategies included: using broader knowledge to validate their experiences; placing their experiences in a societal context (moving away from the individual); checking in throughout the session and offering further support. If necessary, facilitators also moved conversations along in order to take care of the what was shared and heard by participants.

4.2.5. Gender Politics and Dynamics

The concept of gender was used to explain the social construction of male and female identities, interactions and relationships, refers to the expectations and values placed on an individual based on the identity ascribed them, rather than biological understandings (Wall, 2014). This is particularly relevant to this Project as family violence is considered and understood as a gendered issue: the clear majority of violence perpetrated in families and other intimate relationships are perpetrated by men against women (and their children). This is a key learning in violence prevention projects. It requires an understanding of the inequalities, barriers and discriminatory practices that privilege men and disadvantage women in our community. These in turn provide the structures and cultures that condone and encourage men's violence against women.

Projects such as the Equal, Safe and Strong Project occur within the very structures and cultures that privilege men and disadvantage women and this must be considered when facilitating such sessions. There is often discomfort when the gendered nature of violence is brought forward. Common comments that were highlighted in this Project include:

'It isn't just men who perpetrate violence, it is women too' (A teacher reported saying this to students when students who participated in the Project were presenting a gendered account of violence to other students).

'Girls change their mind you know; they send mixed messages'. (Female student participant)

'Justin Bieber gets a lot a flack, he has apologised you know...'. (Female student participant)

Other gendered power relations and practices included:

- male participants dominating the speaking in the spaces: *'The men don't realise, we have a lot of knowledge and experience in this, they spoke so much, they need to listen.'* (Female participant commenting after a teacher session)
- more female participants than males: *'It was hard to find boys that were interested but we got a few.'* (Co-ed school teacher recruiting students for the Project)
- boys in the session 'holding court' with some of the girls.

These comments are to be expected given gender culture and gendered social power relations. These sessions can provide space to reveal these attitudes and behaviours for exploration.

Of course, as already discussed, gender is not the only social identity impacting on the relationships and process occurring in the sessions. Theorists of intersectionality outline the limitations of theorising 'gender as a unified collective transcending race and class' (Samuels & Ross-Sheriff, 2008, p. 5) and arguably, other sites of power and oppression. Discussing gender is important in the context of an issue such as violence, but to consider gender as a single analytical frame further undermines and

invisibilises the impact of oppression based on other social identities. For example, race, immigration status, socio-economic status, sexuality and ability all intersect with women's (and men's) experience of power and oppression based on gender.

In order for this to be understood in the context of this Project we will now outline an example of an activity utilised in the session, that is adapted from the approach of other violence prevention projects (Act@Work:<http://whg.org.au/priorities-programs/prevention-of-violence-against-women/actatwork-3> [accessed 10/11/16] and Mentors in Violence Prevention: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/criminology-law/violence-research-prevention-program/training-development> [accessed 10/11/16] for example). If carried out without consideration of other social identities, there is the risk of further marginalising by reinforcing problematic stereotypes.

4.2.6. Participant Disclosures and Duty of Care

It is also possible that disclosures of domestic violence or sexism or sexual harassment may occur in the space. During this Project disclosures of patriarchal and disrespectful attitudes and behaviours only generally occurred in the third person ('Someone that I know') but some students began to speak of noticing behaviours in the school that they considered oppressive, such as bullying behaviours. Girls mentioned behaviours that underestimated their abilities based on their sex and boys discussed bullying because they did not fit the mainstream 'tough, sporty' idea of what it is to be male.

The example outlined below is an illustration of one concerning revelation that was detailed in a parent session. This is provided to assist in gaining a sense of the types of disclosures that may occur, how to manage them with care, how they may be utilised for further learning and to underscore the importance of preparing for such circumstances.

A female participant in a teacher session shared an experience she had in a car park where she witnessed a man being violent to his female partner, *'He was screaming at her. He spat in her face. Head-butted her'*. The female participant saw the woman in the shop, *'I was wondering what to do, I walked up to her in [the shop] and told her to come home with me. She said he's okay. He is on Ice. He will be okay. This happens all the time. She didn't get it'*. The participant brought forward the myth that if she wanted to, she would leave. Many of the participants agreed that women needed to be educated and empowered to want to leave, stating that women are *'brainwashed by partners', or 'not educated'*. ShantiWorks utilised this example to acknowledge the pain family violence causes. The notion of *'brainwashing'* was explored and what that means as a tactic of control. Further, the myth that women are *'not educate that's why they are abused'* was challenged and it was noted that women experiencing violence are managing risks all the time.

It is important to provide participants with the opportunities to engage in discussions about their learnings and their reactions to the learnings; to normalise emotional responses and to provide further ongoing support options if required/desired. ShantiWorks provided this by:

- setting up group rules that suggested that the content is often relevant to ourselves and the people we know. Facilitators explained it is their role to take care of the space and for participants to take actions to take care of themselves as required (such as speaking to a facilitator, taking a break or asking a question).
- structuring in at the beginning and end of the sessions, information about services available to provide support (such as 1800RESPECT and local organisations).
- regularly encouraging participants to discuss their experience of learning and to ask questions.

- staying back after the session for quiet and more private discussions.

4.3. Effective Learning Tools

Two activities were considered most impactful and useful by the Project team and those participants who provided feedback. This included the use of media items and the gender box activity.

4.3.1. The Use of Media

The participants (including students, teachers and parents alike) appeared to respond strongly and positively to the use of media in demonstrating the prevalence of gendered ideas about intimate relationships and violence. Media (such as in the form of video clips and images from popular culture) seemed to the *'bring the issues to life'* (teacher participant), adding to the verbal messages.

The use of media allowed participants to identify and explore the prevalence/saturation of messages of men's violence against women, and to raise their awareness of these messages. For students who attended multiple sessions over three weeks, the use of media allowed them to recognise further examples of gender stereotyping, sexism or gendered violence in their environment, including in their media consumption. It was media clips that students stated they wanted to share with their fellow students. They did this by unpacking the messages received in advertisements and the sexist actions and attitudes prevalent in well-known music videos.

Examples of comments in response to media resources included:

'The clip about the violence was really powerful'. (Teacher session participant)

'The violence in the modern ads is really concerning, and what about computer games!' (Parent session participant)

'I have heard this Justin Bieber song so many times, but I never realised the meaning behind the words. And since we worked on it there have been so many songs I have heard that are like that'. (Bentleigh student focus group participant)

Another participant commented, *'They watch it and think this is normal sex. Girls think "this is what I should be doing with a boy"'*. Many of the participants agreed with this comment.

The facilitators linked the use of men's violence against women in the broader media to pornography, demonstrating that young people are flooded with messages which promote unequal power relations between women and men. The facilitators identified that even if young people are not seeing pornography they are seeing similar messages in music videos.

Comments from this teacher session, motivated by the use of media included:

'Kids hear it in the car; it is so casual'.

'What they've seen in popular fiction: "she likes it rough"'.

'This is normal sex. This is what I should be doing with a boy'.

'Even language in talkback radio like Nova and Fox [reproduced these concerning messages]. 'They use crude, sexual language about "banging a bird"'.

'Kids hear it in the car; it is so casual'.

In using media, attempts were made to adapt to each audience, using younger or more modern examples for younger people for example. Facilitators noted the response of the audiences and changed resources depending on this response.

A selection of both serious and humorous examples were used to give a sense of the gravity of the issues, whilst 'lighter' provided some educational comic relief during the session. A combination of the two showed that challenging stereotypes or sexism can be achieved in a variety of ways (e.g., using humour via the clip 'If Women's Roles in Ads were Played by Men': https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SrpARP_M0o). These emotional connections of humour, concern, sadness and sometimes anger, were an important part of the process. Participants developed a connection to the issue, recognising its prevalence and how it relates to their understanding and experience of intimate relationships.

4.3.2. The 'Gender Box' Activity

The gender box activity is used to explore gender stereotypes. The participants are asked to describe key social ideas and expectations of what it is to be male and female. Participants are then asked to consider what the ramifications are for people who attempt to step outside, or do not identify with, these expectations. Finally, the participants are asked to name the institutions that support these stereotypes.

This first element of this activity asks participants to name the stereotypes that are ascribed men and women and their responses are placed inside boxes with these labels ('male' and 'female'). From this, participants discuss what labels are applied to men and then women who do not conform with these stereotypes.

These discussions brought forward the many attributes ascribed to males and females that are violence supportive. Common examples given by participants were '*men are strong, independent, not able to show emotion, in control, bosses, 'boys will be boys'*' and women are '*weak, dependent, emotional, caring, nurturing...*'. Participants could name these from their own experiences and were also prompted by the previous activity which showed how boys/girls, men/women are portrayed in everyday media.

It is important to discuss various sites of marginalisation beyond gender, otherwise it is possible for the following to occur:

- Individuals who do not identify within the binary of 'male' and 'female' may be silenced in the space. This exclusionary binary may be further perpetuated in the minds of cisgendered people within the room.
- Ideas of what it is to be male and female in dominant mainstream Australia do not necessarily reflect the experience of all groups. This includes people of colour, people who identify as LGBTIQ, people with disabilities and potentially those who are from lower socio-economic (poor) communities.

To discuss the problems of the gender binary challenged the very notion of mainstream conceptions of gender. This added depth and perspective to the issue of the construction of gender, it's links to violence, while also working toward an approach that was inclusive of all gender and sexual identities. It also allowed for young people (particularly those who have already given thought and energy to the

movement to eradicate homophobia and heterosexist attitudes) to make sense of the connections with their new and existing knowledge and how perhaps their learning could compliment their work.

'We are part of an LGBTI group who meets at school and we think this is connected... understanding gender and violence is really important.' (Bentleigh student participant during a group work discussion)

Conversations about the intersection of racism and sexism were discussed at different points in this activity as the Project evolved. Facilitator's made a point of mentioning during discussions that the mainstream ideas of what it is to be male or female does not reflect the experience of all people.

ShantiWorks emphasised the importance of developing a gendered lens to make sense of the messages we receive from various social institutions, particularly utilising a range of media to develop and explore the importance of applying a gendered lens.

4.4. The Importance of Parents in the Whole-of-School Approach

During the first phase of the Project, the SMPCP agreed to extend the program design to incorporate parents' workshops, in line with best practice principles, which outline a whole-of-school approach as the most effective strategy (Gleeson et. al., 2015).

'It was a really good session...the parents were really interested...' (Teacher present at one parent session).

'We were surprised at how many parents came... It's a good sign' (Teacher at parent session).

The Project manager also gave feedback in relation the facilitation of this session:

'There was great energy in the parent session. Parents in community are starting to talk about this and talk about how their practice of parents and members of the community is important... The content was really relevant, presented in a nice engaging and calming way. Facilitators took [their] time in letting the audience meet where they were at... When there was that difficult question at the end "When does it become an offence?" asked with so much emotion, I found that [facilitators] responded really well- trickiest thing to do... [Facilitators] talking about [their] own experiences was really important' (Project manager who attended one parent session).

These are just a few comments that illustrate the receptiveness of the parents to the information session. These sessions were introduced to include the parent's response to sexism and violence against women. In both sessions, the parents showed interest and concern about this topic in relation to their children's experiences, and spoke of *'the importance of the session and the school taking this issue seriously'*. In both sessions, parents did not dispute the family violence statistics and stories, instead they added their accounts about sexism, bullying, harassment etc. The parents were interested in ways of talking to their children and many examples were shared by the facilitators and there were some collective solution focussed conversations.

The parent session again was adapted from the teacher and student content material. This session is a critical component of any respectful relationship program. It needs to be supported by the school staff, otherwise dominant conflicting attitudes and ideas will isolate this learning to the sessions, potentially rendering it ineffective.

A key focus of the session was connecting to the importance of the parents in their teenagers' lives. There was discussion by facilitators about:

'One of the hardest parts of being a parent is seeing your children feeling hurt in their friendships and relationships. Yet we cannot shield them from every insult and argument, every painful experience; it's an important part of growing up. However, it's vital to be aware of the difference between behaviour that can be thought of as 'rites of passage' and behaviour which has more serious implications, behaviour and attitudes that are purposeful, hurtful, controlling and take away from your child's hopes and dreams and safety and wellbeing. We want young people to have relationships that are free from abuse. Educating young people and teenagers about violence in relationships is one of the most effective ways of preventing abuse in future relationships' (Facilitators discussion notes for Project parent session).

4.5. Project Constraints and Limitations

Project constraints and limitations created issues for meeting the overall aims of the Project. Time management and commitment issues impacted on the number of sessions held with participants, the ability to complete evaluative tasks and reduced the whole-of-school impact. This section of the report discusses these issues, how they were addressed and brings forward key learnings.

4.5.1. Time Management

Time management was a critical limitation for this Project and it is a common struggle in community family violence prevention projects to have enough time to cover the content and process with due care. The Project was planned to finish in July 2016 but was extended until November 2016 due to schedule and planning conflicts within each school. Several issues were raised as causes of the delays:

- Schools having difficulty fitting another program into their already very busy curriculum.
- Project managers frequently spoke of difficulties in contacting school staff to arrange sessions.
- Changes in both school and Project management staff that led to further delays.

In developing school projects such as this, it is important to recognise that school curriculum requirements can make it difficult for teachers/staff to find the time, not only to organise sessions, but also to make space in the students' class schedule. Added to this limit are student concerns about adding to or missing other classes to accommodate this extra-curricular session.

4.5.2. The Problems with Shortened Sessions

Time and scheduling constraints meant that all sessions were shortened considerably. ShantiWorks' original program and session structure was: student groups to be allocated 2 hour sessions, once a week for 3 weeks (as a pilot). Teacher groups were to be allocated two 1 hour sessions, and parent groups to be allocated one 1.5-hour session. This was not always possible. To create further learning opportunities, the Project utilised these limitations to pilot three different structures with students: 3 X 2-hour sessions with 13 year 8 students, one week apart; 1 X 5-hour session with 26 year 10 students and 1 X 60-minute session with 200 year 10 students.

Another repercussion of the timing/scheduling issue was the inability to complete as many focus groups and interviews as was hoped. It was disappointing that problematic scheduling reduced the opportunities for program participants to reflect on their learnings, their achievements and their

changing attitudes and behaviours in focus group sessions. To obtain further evaluative data ShantiWorks altered the program evaluation element, ensured observers were present at every session and attended a student presentation. This was indeed a Project highlight and eventuated because of the commitment of an individual teacher and students at Brighton Secondary College.

Any opportunity to grow awareness about sexism, domestic violence and respectful relationships in schools is important to consider. This Project finding underscores the serious consideration, planning and management that is required for any session length. ShantiWorks would recommend embracing every opportunity to raise awareness and support school communities to challenge violence supportive attitudes and behaviours. However, one size and program plan does not fit all situations, schools, year levels and communities. Content and process need to be reviewed and adapted accordingly.

4.5.3. Issues of Commitment & Responsibility

As noted in the time issues above, schools are busy and constrained by external and internal curriculum scheduling and term requirements. These constraints matter, as good intention and initial commitment to reduce sexism and violence supportive attitudes and behaviours in their school communities, is not sufficient to carry a project to completion. Teachers and the WHISE project manager struggled to sustain the commitment across the lifespan of the Project. Each time ShantiWorks attended a school, there was interest, engagement, questions and then hope for further work and action. However, there was limited extension of this interest beyond the presence of the ShantiWorks team's sessions. There seemed to be interest but little sense of ownership of the Project by the schools (beyond an individual active teacher). Community development (Weeks, 1994) efforts have taught us that project ownership is critical for ongoing commitment, sustaining the theme passed the lifespan of the Project and for inspiring and innovative practice. It would be helpful to consider a different program model that engaged schools as central to the Project rather than as selected to test out an opportunity.

4.6. Summary of Project Outcomes and Themes

In summary, the Project was most successful in achieving the aim of increasing the knowledge and skills of the school community to recognise and challenge gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes. Students, in particular, appeared to respond well to the content and process of the Project, in terms of raising their awareness of gender stereotyping, sexism and gendered violence in society and in their community. In addition, they developed ways to challenge attitudes and behaviours underpinning gendered violence, and to impart their learning to other students. These learnings were more evident in schools where the entirety of the training package could be delivered to students, over an extended timeframe. This compared to schools in which the training time was significantly reduced.

In more time-limited contexts, the capacity of the Project to support the participants' learning and to draw links between gender inequity and gendered violence was significantly limited, and concerns for their responses to and understanding of, the issue was raised. In addition, participants who experienced a reduced number of session or session length (i.e., parents, teachers, and students of Mentone Girls' Secondary College) seemed to experience strong emotional responses to the content, and there was limited time available to facilitators to support these participants processing of the content.

The Project seemed to elicit disclosures from participants of their direct or vicarious experiences of gender stereotyping, sexism and/or gendered violence, and this highlighted the importance of responding to disclosures in the training package.

The use of media and exploratory activities was identified as critical in facilitating participants' learning, and participants noted the impact of these on their understanding of the issue. In addition, the inclusion of parents was recognised as important in the whole-of-school approach. Parents recognised the importance of the issue of family/gendered violence, and voiced their approval that the school was addressing this concern. They also spoke of their concerns in being able to support and guide their children around the issues of gendered/family violence.

The Project was less successful in achieving the aims associated with the whole-of-school approach, in terms of influencing school policy and practice concerning gender equity and responses to family violence, and fostering stronger connections to family violence service providers. This seemed to be due to issues in the implementation of the Project, with respect to time management and the commitment and responsibilities assumed by the schools and the management team.

5. Recommendations for Future Programs

The following recommendations are offered to future violence prevention projects, not solely but particularly, for those in school communities. These recommendations are based on the experiences of the current Project and are influenced by best practice principles guiding respectful relationships programs in schools.

5.1. The Importance of a Whole-of-School Approach

A whole of school approach means more than all key stakeholders attending a one-off session. This Project highlights the importance of all members of the school community being actively involved in the session. The most successful implementation of this Project was in the school that included every element of the Project design. One parent, two teachers and three consecutive student sessions were held with an interested, and self-selecting cohort, school support to extend the peer leadership role and follow up evaluation.

Single sessions raise awareness, provide information and education, and with skilled facilitators can offer a supportive reflective conversation. One off brief sessions are not usually enough to sustain interest and activate participants to respond to any form of violence against women. In fact, ShantiWorks contend that one off sessions, without due care, consideration and management, can leave participants, unsettled, increase their worry, and decrease their confidence in engaging with young people on issues of violence. As noted in the findings, content had to be adapted to the audience and the session type. Facilitators had to set up safety structures and support public processing of difficult experiences, which appeared more likely in on off sessions. Alternatively, if ShantiWorks altered the content to take care of brief sessions (such as the 1-hour session with 200 students) to remove the emphasis on violence, audience responses were less likely to engage with the issue and were more likely to be sceptical about the issues of sexism and their links to violence.

It is important to acknowledge that a whole of school approach also works to take inappropriate responsibility away from girls and young women to 'manage' their safety. It asks the whole community

to take care and responsibility for this, both in the prevention arena as well as responding to concerns or disclosures related to family and intimate partner violence. This approach of course requires a gendered political understanding of the issue and to recognising that these politics are present in project spaces.

5.2. Gender Politics in the Project

Projects such as the Equal, Safe and Strong Project occur within the very structures and cultures that privilege men and disadvantage women and this must be considered when facilitating such sessions. There is often discomfort when the gendered nature of violence is brought forward. Developing a clear statement of the reasons behind a gendered approach is necessary, with statistics in relation to the issue useful but often not enough to quell concerns. Everyday common media articles that depict gendered sexism are useful in this regard, including humorous examples. It is important as a facilitation team to develop clear strategies to address this issue, which may include:

- naming from the beginning the rationale behind a gendered approach.
- providing media resources to support this claim.
- preparing an appropriate response to the common claim of the high prevalence of women's violence against men.

It is important to remember in such projects that gender is not the only social identity impacting on the relationships and process occurring in the sessions. Theorists of intersectionality outline the limitations of separating gender from other forms of power and oppression (Samuels & Ross-Sheriff, 2008).

It is imperative for projects to develop an ethical framework that is designed to underpin their content and facilitation processes to avoid:

- further marginalising particular groups.
- reinforcing the power of people in positions of power.
- missing opportunities to deepen and broaden the learnings that will work to eradicate violence across the community.

This ethical framework development and process should be considered for each project. This evaluation offers the following suggestions that were embedded (as outlined previously) in this brief pilot Project:

- Facilitators endeavour to be aware of their social identities and how their beliefs, experiences and assumptions may influence the way in which they understand the content, their facilitation approach, as well as the dynamic between facilitators and the participants.
- Work on and become comfortable in locating themselves in terms of privilege experienced and then naming that social identity as impacting on the experience of gender (such as white privilege and heteronormativity) in project activities.
- Bringing the words and voices of people representing marginalised social identities (such as words written by Australian indigenous women as an acknowledgement to country or slam poets speaking about experiences of racism/ableism/heteronormativity/classism).
- Being mindful of the gender of team members when allocating tasks/roles and the implications of this.
- Considering gender and other social identities in the content development process.

5.3. The Importance of the Facilitation Approach

Projects such as the Equal, Safe and Strong Project, that hope to bring about transformational social justice in communities cannot rely solely on information provision as an approach. Communities must be actively engaged. Their ideas, insights and knowledge should be brought forward, expanded on, and challenged in appropriate and respectful ways. This process is a mutual process of sharing and learning within and between facilitators and participants.

Transformative social justice occurs when people research a deeper, richer, textured understanding of themselves, their location and power in their world and they developed a preparedness to act on these new learnings. Future projects should consider developing approaches that:

- make visible the dominant norms and structures.
- critically reflect on ethics and standards for living.
- develop technical skills in order to enact the new knowledge.
- ensure the participants are active in their learning (Freire, 1993).

This process may not be as easy to predict in terms of participant responses, including discussions and questions. It requires facilitators with a broad and complex understanding of the issues to unearth productive, relevant and meaningful material.

5.4. Research and Discover a Rich Variety of Media Resources

Media resources are a constructive and dynamic way to bring the issues of sexism, violence supportive attitudes and behaviours and family violence to life. This should be planned carefully and meaningfully for specific participant cohorts (as discussed previously in section 7.1.1). Utilising a diverse range of mediums, from humorous to serious and emotive pieces, it is possible to foreground the everyday discourses that influence people. More specifically, influencing people's ideas, experiences, expectations and emotional responses to the gendered violence and respectful relationship constructions.

Time must be taken to unpack the messages and bring forward any issues, dilemmas and contradictions in the media piece in order to deepen the conversation. It is then important, in a participatory action research framework, to monitor and examine responses to each item and refine each session based on the usefulness, impact and responses received.

5.5. Taking the Time to Develop Relationships

Any school project must manage and contend with the huge expectation on school and student resources, time and learning requirements. This will be inevitable in an already stretched system. What cannot be underestimated here is the importance of relationship development to assist with these time and resource dilemmas. ShantiWorks, with the input of the Project manager and school staff feedback, offer the following suggestions to future projects:

- Spend time in the initial phases of the project developing relationships with key stakeholders in the school and ensuring they are on board and motivated.
- Build the project design with key school staff as ownership and commitment are essential to ongoing connection, support in responding to unforeseen issues and program sustainability.

- Ensure a process of commitment is named and signed at the beginning of the project, including a commitment to the involvement of key staff, hours required in the format preferred by all stakeholders and for key staff to attend regular updates and project development meetings.
- Ensure regular project meetings are factored in to allow for relationship and resource development.
- Ensure schools have the times for these sessions and the sessions are booked in from the outset, to suit schools.
- To ensure the appropriate people are trained to support students prior to student involvement, including school staff and parents.
- Negotiate up front optimal student engagement processes (such as two hour sessions once a week) prior to finalising material to be presented.

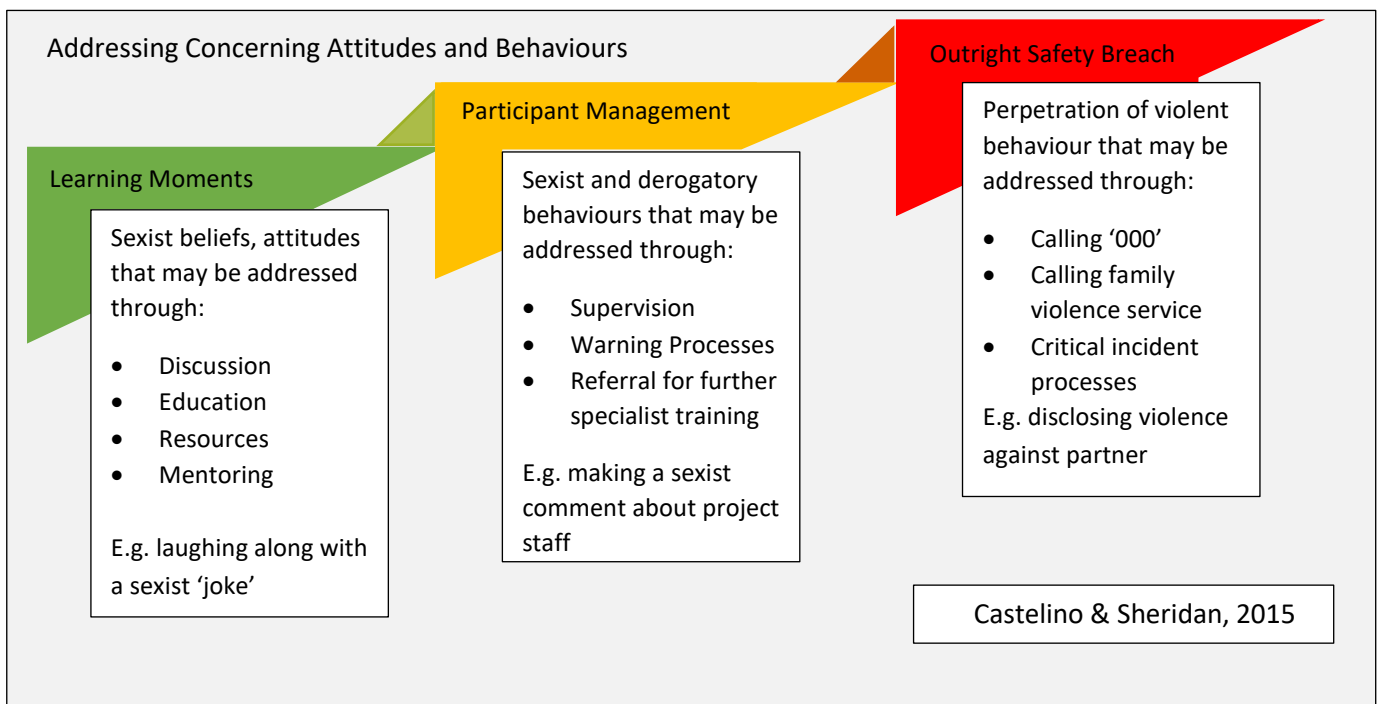
5.6. Do No Harm

Gender violence prevention work and respectful relationships programs are being recognised as core curriculum components. This is an important acknowledgement of schools as critical sites for change, however, there needs to be significant consideration of the safety, risk and wellbeing issues when sessions are provided on sexism, domestic violence, dating violence etc. This is vital because, in ShantiWorks' experience, there is inevitably a disclosure of some form, from an experience of sexism, sexual harassment or intimate violence. This could be 'I have experienced domestic violence in a previous relationship', 'my daughter mentioned that she is uncomfortable with her boyfriend', 'I feel a bit scared of my boyfriend because....', or 'in sports class, these boys always hassle me.... flick my bra strap...'.

It is incumbent on the Program managers and facilitators/trainers to prepare for each session with preparation on:

- safety procedures.
- the local context and the local rules and policies.
- legal implications.
- audience demographics (age, community role etc.).
- a range of possible responses to match the issue, the context, and the experience of the participants.

The following model is designed to consider all aspects of risk within the context of a violence prevention project, without limiting the opportunity for participants to learn and grow in the space (Sheridan & Castelino, 2015). Whether a person makes a sexist joke that can be discussed or a derogatory comment that requires follow up or an outright disclosure of violence, how the team responds is key for participant safety, facilitator accountability and project success.



This model is provided to depict the array of possible inappropriate to outright unsafe occurrences that may occur in a project and appropriate responses that should be considered.

These recommendations are based on the learnings of this Project, developed from focus groups, interviews and facilitator feedback and observations. The report will now conclude with an overview of the key learnings and outcomes of the Project.

5.7. Summary of Recommendations

In summary, based on the experiences of this Project, it is recommended that any training program on family violence or gendered violence dedicate time to the program, in which the program can be implemented over several sessions. Brief, single sessions provide insufficient time to support and facilitate participants' understanding of the topic. It can have negative impacts on participants, in which they appear less likely to assume the learning.

It is recommended that a feminist framework is implemented, which not only recognises the gendered nature of family violence, but identifies other aspects of a person's identity (e.g., race, class, sexuality) that can be subject to discrimination, oppression and violence. Such a framework broadens participants' understanding of structural or cultural issues underpinning family violence.

It is recommended that the facilitation approach emphasise the need to facilitate participants' processing of information, and not just focus on the delivery of content on the topic. In addition, the facilitation approach should incorporate the use of an array of media as a teaching strategy.

It is further recommended that any program implemented in a school community seeks to establish collaborative working relationships between the stakeholders, to ensure effective delivery of the program and to increase the capacity to influence the entire community. Finally, it is recommended that program providers anticipate participant disclosures of family violence/gendered violence, and develop strategies to respond to these effectively in advance.

6. Conclusion

Family violence has gained prominence as a significant social concern that affects the safety and wellbeing of women and children, with an estimated 1 in 3 women affected by family violence (VicHealth, 2007). Implementing primary prevention strategies within the school environment is considered particularly effective due to accessibility, affordability and broad community reach (Waldren & Wall, 2014). Moreover, such a strategy targets young people, who are believed to be in the early stages of developing gendered ideas about intimate relationships, and may benefit from opportunities to examine and challenge these ideas.

The Equal, Safe and Strong Project was a small pilot venture to work with three school communities to learn about, and respond to, men's violence against women across the continuum from sexism to family violence. The Project developed a respectful relationships curriculum based on existing primary prevention strategies within schools, which are guided by best practice principles (Carmody, 2015; Gleeson et al., 2015; Ollis, 2011; VicHealth, 2012). These principles, among other things, emphasise an overtly feminist framework and a whole of school approach (Ollis, 2011).

The Project training package was implemented in the nominated schools between March and September of 2016, and there was some variability in the implementation of the Project across schools due to issues of school availability and commitment. The Project was evaluated throughout and at the end of the implementation process, using focus groups, individual interviews, observation notes and verbal feedback.

The Project was most successful in achieving the aim of increasing the knowledge and skills of the school community to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes, and to challenge these. These learnings were more evident in schools where the entirety of the training package could be delivered to students, over an extended timeframe, compared to schools in which the training time was significantly reduced. The Project was less successful in achieving the aims associated with the whole-of-school approach, in terms of influencing school policy and practice concerning gender equity and responses to family violence, and fostering stronger connections to family violence service providers. This seemed to be due to issues in the implementation of the Project, with respect to time management and the commitment and responsibilities assumed by the schools and the management team.

Several recommendations were derived from the experiences of this Project, which recognised the following:

- The need to dedicate sufficient time to delivering the training curriculum, as single sessions were insufficient in facilitating participant's understanding of the topic and had some negative impacts upon the participants.
- The importance of an overtly feminist framework, which recognises gender and other aspects of a person's identity (e.g., race, class, sexuality, etc.) that can inform a structural understanding of violence.
- The importance of a facilitation approach that emphasises opportunities for participants to process information on this sensitive topic, and not just deliver content.
- The efficacy of media as a learning tool.
- The importance of developing close, collaborative working relationships amongst the stakeholders, to ensure the timely and effective implementation of a community project.

- The reality that such programs elicit disclosures from participants and the need to anticipate and develop effective responses to such disclosures in the program implementation.

“Why do so many men and boys think it’s clever, funny, amusing and somehow satisfying to put sexist, mindless or even violent comments on social media? Why do other men not see these views as a collective problem? We need to ask serious questions about the way our society socialises boys and men that makes too many of them feel inadequate and aggressive towards females.” (Cox, 2015: 1)

To hold the words of Eva Cox, this is a ‘collective problem’ and therefore a collective solution is critical. A whole of school approach that is devised as a mutual learning process can support participants to critically reflect on their everyday assumptions, actions and experiences of sexism and violence against women. The Equal, Safe and Strong Project was a small pilot project that highlights what is possible when a collective engagement is achieved: participants become capable, and indeed committed, to changing their lives and the community in which they live.

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8. Appendices

8.1 Equal, Safe and Strong Project Pilot Training Package

EQUAL, SAFE AND STRONG PROJECT

Pilot Training Package



Developed by ShantiWorks

i. Primary Prevention Strategies within School Communities

Family violence has gained prominence as a significant social concern that affects the safety and wellbeing of women and children, with an estimated 1 in 3 women affected by family violence (Gleeson et al, 2015). Over three-quarters (78%) of women who experience family violence report that their children have been exposed to family violence, either directly and indirectly (Cox, 2015). Increasingly, efforts to address family violence in the community have highlighted the need to develop primary prevention strategies which seek to reduce the future risk of family violence via early intervention in the underlying causes (Gleeson et al, 2015).

A primary prevention approach understands the underlying causes of men's violence against women as unequal power relations between women and men, adherence to rigid gender stereotypes and broader violence-supportive cultures (VicHealth, 2012). The approach then addresses the underlying causes by promoting protective factors. Protective factors are actions or cultural changes that guard against the occurrence of men's violence against women. Protective factors include:

- creating healthy and respectful communities and interactions.
- providing alternative models of masculinity and relationship possibilities.
- calling on bystander responses and actions to sexism.
- calling on men's leadership to challenge violence-supportive attitudes (VicHealth, 2007; Flood, 2010; Wells et al., 2013).

Implementing primary prevention strategies within the school environment is considered particularly effective due to accessibility, affordability and broad community reach (Waldren & Wall, 2014). Moreover, such a strategy targets young people, who are believed to be in the early stages of developing gendered ideas about intimate relationships and may benefit from opportunities to examine and challenge these ideas. After all, such attitudes are socially constructed and learnt and therefore, they can change and be unlearnt (Gleeson et. al, 2015).

To understand and challenge violence supportive notions, Ollis suggests that best practice principles addressing gendered violence in schools "starts from the assumption that sexuality is positive and links information and critical thinking with empowerment, choice and an acceptance of diversity" (2011:3). These principles include the following:

1. An approach that is overtly feminist, recognising individual agency as well as broader social structures such as gender, class, race and power in gender and sexuality construction.
2. Relevant, inclusive and culturally sensitive practice and reflection.
3. A common program framework and logic that clearly articulates the link between gender, power and violence and a theory of change that will outline how the program will achieve its intended outcomes.
4. Effective curriculum delivery.
5. A whole-school approach, including staff, parents/guardians, students and community (Carmody, 2015).
6. Conducting impact evaluation of the strategy on the whole school. (Ollis, 2011; Flood, Fergus & Heenan, 2009; VicHealth, 2009; Partners In Prevention [PIP], 2015).

Two common approaches that centre these best practice principles are the *respectful relationships* and *bystander action* approaches. These approaches bring forward the importance of challenging

attitudes and behaviours that are disrespectful and oppressive, with an emphasis on gender, to eradicate family violence.

Respectful Relationships

Respectful relationship programs with children and young people are a key primary prevention approach within the current 'National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children' (Sutherland et al., 2015). These programs have been the focus of several state initiatives (Carmody, 2015; VicHealth, 2007). Addressing behaviours, attitudes and school cultures that may condone or perpetrate violent supportive attitudes is important for program success. Carmody suggests that this requires a focus on ethics and, more specifically, sexual ethics. She states that 'ethics is concerned with what is 'right', 'fair', 'just', or 'good' (however) the point of ethics is not to moralise or dictate what is to be done' (2015: 112-113).

Crabbe and Corlett (2010) suggest that, within a respectful relationships program, it is important for young people to develop good critiquing abilities, alongside emotional literacy and self-care. They emphasise the need to address young people's high degree of exposure to pornography. This exposure tends to portray images that are highly patriarchal and to include acts of sexualised aggression performed on women by men that are portrayed as 'desirable' and 'sexy'. As such, age-appropriate opportunities should be provided for young people to develop an understanding of the violence-supportive design of the pornography industry and of other mainstream media (e.g., popular music, fashion cultures) that promote sexist and violence-supportive ideas of intimate relationships.

Bystander Action

Over the last 5 years, the bystander action approach has become a standard strategy to support respectful relationships training and other prevention efforts (VicHealth, 2012; Gleeson et al., 2015).

The Australian approach to bystander action has taken on a different focus to its overseas counterparts. Projects in the USA have focussed on men (and women) intervening in potential incidents of sexual assault and rape, particularly on university campuses (Banyard & Moynihan, 2005). In comparison, Australia's approach has been to motivate bystanders to take action in addressing gender inequality, sexism and violence supportive attitudes. This locates the approach within the prevention framework (Powell, 2014).

ii. Why This Package was Developed

The Equal, Safe and Strong Project (the Project) was a high school based respectful relationships program funded by the Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership Family Violence Working Group (SMPCP FVWG). This group is a voluntary alliance between 15 active local governments, health and welfare agencies and community organisations, who are committed to contributing to primary prevention of family violence in the communities of Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, and Stonnington.

The Project was a pilot family violence prevention project working with three different secondary schools, including Brighton Secondary College, East Bentleigh Secondary College, and Mentone Girls Secondary College. Women's Health in the South East (WHISE), who managed this Project, were responsible for recruitment of, and engagement with, the three school communities. This responsibility included: briefing key school staff, supporting the implementation of the Project schedule and managing communications between schools and the Project designers and evaluators.

ShantiWorks³ were commissioned to develop the program content, facilitate family violence prevention sessions with teachers, parents and students, and then evaluate the Project.

The Project aims were:

- to increase the knowledge and skills by those in the school community to practice respectful relationships, and to recognise gender stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes.
- to build the school's capacity to embed gender equitable and inclusive policies, practices through leadership, knowledge and behaviours.
- to build the capacity of school communities to identify and respond effectively to those affected by violence.
- to foster stronger and more integrated relationships between schools and local service providers to ensure strong support for young people experiencing violence.

The Project began in August 2015 and was completed in November, 2016. This package is a compendium of many of the learnings and activities developed and piloted as part of this Project.

iii. Navigating this Training Package

The Project Package provides an overview of the Equal, Safe and Strong Project (the Project) program content, which includes the following:

- 1) An introduction that outlines basic details of the Project, the reasons for its development and a brief discussion on the theoretical framework it is based on.
- 2) An outline of the Project aims as set out in the Project plan.
- 3) A Theory of Change model developed in line with Project expectations and requirements.
- 4) An outline of the Feminist Participatory Action Research and Evaluation approach.
- 5) An outline of the key aspects of the facilitation process.
- 6) An implementation guide, including a section that considers safety ('Do No Harm').
- 7) An activities section, which outlines each of the activities in line with Project aims and expectations.
- 8) References for this document that double as a resource library for those interested.

This package includes detailed information in relation to training session activities as utilised in the Project. For students, the training sessions are designed to be carried out weekly for 1-2 hours with students. It would be ideal to have as many sessions with teachers and parents, however considering time pressures for teachers at least 1-2 sessions should occur. Additional activity suggestions are provided in the package if more time is available. Ideally, training sessions are spaced weekly to allow time for participants to absorb, reflect on and consolidate their learning in subsequent sessions. It also allows them to further reflect on their learnings outside of the sessions (while watching television for example).

Each activity can be undertaken on its own, with educational and awareness raising value. However, completion of the series of activities allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the prevalence and every day nature of the issue of gendered violence.

³ ShantiWorks is a feminist organisation specialising in violence prevention projects, working with victim-survivors of family violence and providing supervision services and training to organisations working in family violence related areas.

Within each training session, facilitators should work to:

- facilitate information and critical reflection exercises.
- provide space for participants to discuss and practise new ideas and homework to stretch individual learning between training sessions.
- support the explorations, reflections, tensions and learning moments, as well as to provide referrals and resources to participants.

Different components can be modified during each training session, considering:

- the time available at each session.
- the number of sessions to be held with the group.
- the audience (teachers/parents/students).
- age, in the student sessions.
- school demographics (such as co-educational or same-sex schools).
- previous session responses and feedback leading to further activity development and improvement.

iv. Theory of Change

An overtly feminist framework is a critical best practice principle in the development and implementation of prevention programs aimed at addressing family violence, and gendered violence in general (Castelino, 2011; Ollis, 2011). A feminist framework views gender as socially constructed and holds gender violence prevention programs accountable to naming, exploring and dismantling rigid gender stereotypes to challenge sexist and violence-supportive norms. A feminist framework provides a gendered lens by recognising that we live in a culture where patriarchy informs, defines and shapes how we see ourselves, our ways of relating, and our organisations and community spaces.

A theory of change (TOC) with a feminist framework in gender violence prevention supports us all to learn how to be and relate differently within current violence supportive and sexist norms, cultures and institutions. A TOC articulates the underlying assumptions of a project and then maps the actions and events that are linked to impacts and outcomes to explain how change has happened. With a feminist Theory of Change there is a focus on a structural perspective, rather than problematising individuals and their behaviours.

Key ethical and practical considerations that underlie a feminist framework include the following elements:

- Personal and political stories and contexts matter: we are doing this work in a sexist culture, a culture that values male power and leadership over women.
- Seeking gender justice through identifying issues of oppression at a personal, group, or institutional level.
- Advocating for women and others who are marginalised, and attending to injustices.
- Gender inequality and inequity are an everyday issue for women and therefore require work at the individual, community and institutional levels.
- Re-imagining and helping re-construct the social order.

- The further empowerment of women, not side-lining them, in the mission for gender equality and justice.

Freire (2001) provides a philosophy about mutual learning and the socio-cultural influences on the educational environment, which should inform the development of a prevention program in schools. Critically, Freire notes that the school is a community within a community and, as such, is shaped by the same social norms on violence and respectful relationships. Therefore, schools are micro communities and as such have potential to be a site for change and a support for young people to develop into ethical and engaged citizens.

v. The Importance of a Whole-of-School Approach

A whole-of-school approach means more than all key stakeholders attending a one-off session. It is important for as many members of the school community to be actively involved in the session as possible. The most successful implementation of the pilot phase of this package was in the school that included every element of the Project design.

Single sessions raise awareness, provide information and education, and with skilled facilitators can offer a supportive reflective conversation. One off brief sessions are not usually enough to sustain interest and activate participants to respond to any form of violence against women. In fact, one off sessions, without due care, consideration and management, can leave participants, unsettled, increase their worry, and decrease their confidence in engaging with young people on issues of violence.

It is important to acknowledge that a whole-of-school approach also works to take inappropriate responsibility away from girls and young women to 'manage' their safety. It asks the whole community to take care and responsibility for this, both in the prevention arena as well as responding to concerns or disclosures related to family and intimate partner violence. This approach of course requires a gendered political understanding of the issue and to recognising that these politics are present in project spaces.

In a whole-of school approach, the following considerations should be factored in:

- Each school's individual characteristics, goals and schedules.
- Management and care of multiple project participants including teachers, students and parents.
- The age of the student cohort.
- Varying content depending on the participant group, the number of sessions and the allocated timeframe.
- Risk and safety management and response plans for identifying domestic violence, dating violence, sexism and harassment.

Further, the need to incorporate responses to family violence was considered in the development of the package to: (1) equip participants with strategies to respond to potential disclosures of family violence, and; (2) to encourage participants to draw the link between gender inequality, sexism and gendered violence. The development of appropriate strategies to respond to violence is viewed as necessary to foster a culture of respect and non-violence, and to ensuring the safety and well-being of victims/survivors who may disclose to participants.

vi. Facilitation Philosophy

The facilitation approach presented in this package was significantly influenced by Carmody's (2015) work, which places an emphasis on bringing forward and exploring individual ethics in relation to respectful relationships. How a person's ethics reflect, accept or challenge dominant social discourses of gender and sexuality, and men's violence against women is brought forward. In addition, the approach was influenced by the work of Freire (2001), who recognises the training or learning space as a microcosm of society, and acknowledges the influence of socio-cultural norms, attitudes and behaviours on individuals in the space.

Facilitators should seek to allow space for participants to make sense of new knowledge and reflect on their own ethics concerning gender and social justice. Facilitators should then seek to utilise participants' personal and shared experiences to develop a deeper understanding of their learning, or new knowledge. This requires facilitators to begin to know and understand their audience. For this to occur, 'we must be speaking with and not just speaking to' (hooks, 2015: 31) participants. This enables transformative learning to occur.

Transformative learning occurs when people develop a deeper, richer, textured understanding of themselves, their location and power and their world. For this to occur, education must include:

- making visible the dominant norms and structures.
- critical reflection of ethics and standards for living.
- technical skills to enact the new knowledge.
- the students-participants as active in their learning (Freire, 1993).

Transformative learning is about (re-)discovering personal and political power, and supporting critical awareness for learners, who are then inspired to act upon their world and the injustices. Facilitators seek to invite participants (often using media as prompts) into discussions about the messages conveyed relating gender and intimate relationships and their experience of such messages in their daily lives.

Facilitators hoping to bring about transformational social justice in communities, cannot rely solely on information provision as an approach. Communities must be actively engaged. Their ideas, insights and knowledge should be brought forward, expanded on, and challenged in appropriate and respectful ways. This process is a mutual process of sharing and learning within and between facilitators and participants.

This process may not be as easy to predict in terms of participant responses, including discussions and questions. It requires facilitators with a broad and complex understanding of the issues to unearth productive, relevant and meaningful material.

vii. Gender Politics in the Project

Facilitating a project such as this occurs within the very structures and cultures that privilege men and disadvantage women and this must be considered when facilitating such sessions. There is often discomfort when the gendered nature of violence is overt. Developing a clear statement of the reasons behind a gendered approach is necessary, with statistics in relation to the issue useful but often not enough to quell concerns. Everyday common media articles that depict gendered sexism are

useful in this regard, including humorous examples. It is important as a facilitation team to develop clear strategies to address this issue, which may include:

- naming from the beginning the rationale behind a gendered approach.
- providing media resources to support this claim.
- preparing an appropriate response to the common claim of the high prevalence of women's violence against men.

It is important to remember in such projects that gender is not the only social identity impacting on the relationships and process occurring in the sessions. Theorists of intersectionality outline the limitations of separating gender from other forms of power and oppression (Samuels & Ross-Sheriff, 2008). Other aspects of our identity that experience privilege and oppression include race, ethnicity, sexuality, socioeconomic status, ability/disability just as some examples.

It is imperative for projects to develop an ethical framework that is designed to underpin their content and facilitation processes to avoid:

- further marginalising groups.
- reinforcing the power of people in positions of power.
- missing opportunities to deepen and broaden the learnings that will work to eradicate violence across the community.

This ethical framework development and process should be considered. The following recommendations are offered as guidelines:

- Facilitators should endeavour to be aware of their social identities and how their beliefs, experiences and assumptions may influence the way in which they understand the content, their facilitation approach, as well as the dynamic between facilitators and the participants.
- Facilitators should work on and become comfortable in locating themselves in terms of privilege experienced and then naming that social identity as impacting on the experience of gender (such as white privilege and heteronormativity) in project activities.
- Bring forward words and voices of people representing marginalised social identities (such as words written by Australian indigenous women as an acknowledgement to country or slam poets speaking about experiences of racism/ableism/heteronormativity/classism).
- Be mindful of the gender of team members when allocating tasks/roles and the implications of this.
- Consider gender and other social identities in the content development process.

It is hoped that these ethical considerations will allow for a rich and vibrant learning environment for all participants and avoid further marginalisation of people of identities who often experience discrimination.

viii. Taking the Time to Develop Relationships

Any school project must manage and contend with the huge expectation on school and student resources, time and learning requirements. This will be inevitable in an already stretched system. What cannot be underestimated here is the importance of relationship development to assist with these time and resource dilemmas. The following suggestions were derived from the pilot process:

- Spend time in the initial phases of the project developing relationships with key stakeholders in the school and ensuring they are on board and motivated.
- Build the project design with key school staff as ownership and commitment are essential to ongoing connection, support in responding to unforeseen issues and program sustainability.
- Ensure a process of commitment is named and signed at the beginning of the project. They should include a commitment to the involvement of key staff, hours required in the format preferred by all stakeholders and for key staff to attend regular updates and project development meetings.
- Ensure regular project meetings are factored in to allow for relationship and resource development.
- Ensure schools have the times for these sessions and the sessions are booked in from the outset, to suit schools.
- To ensure the appropriate people are trained to support students prior to student involvement, including school staff and parents.
- Negotiate up front optimal student engagement processes (such as two hour sessions once a week) prior to finalising material to be presented.

Developing these relationships may assist in overcoming times and resource constraints.

ix. Consideration of School Policies and Procedures

It is important that the school room activities do not stand alone. Embedding policies and procedures into the school community to challenge sexism and violence supportive attitudes is imperative. This would also provide for an appropriate process for responding to disclosures of violence that may occur during the sessions.

It is important that any gender equality policy is read as a companion document to the wider school mission. An understanding of the construction of gender and violence and its implications for policy and practice, as well as curriculum developments, is necessary to create a respectful, non-violent foundation for the school community. A gender equality policy is based on a framework that notes:

- an understanding of the construction of gender.
- the impact of gender social construction on curriculum, teaching and learning.
- the taken for granted sexism and violence supportive cultures and attitudes.
- support for change at the individual, relational and community levels.
- engagement with the leadership team and then the teaching staff.

The pilot process for this package brought forward the importance, in such processes, of:

- creating a picture of all staffs' understandings of gender and equality in their school community.
- examining the extent to which policies and processes are gender sensitive.
- providing a forum for the discussion of the key issues.
- developing an action plan/policy for gender equality and violence prevention review and development.

x. Use of Media

The use of media as a teaching tool is incorporated into program content, with a view to demonstrate the prevalence of gender stereotypes and violence-supportive narratives in our society. Media is an effective means of ‘unpacking’ ideas of masculinity and femininity, and developing an understanding of how this relates to men’s violence against women. A range of advertisements, song clips, movie/TV examples, and awareness campaigns can be accessed online and should be researched to fit the aims of the activity and the demographics of the group.

Media resources are a constructive and dynamic way to bring the issues of sexism, violence supportive attitudes and behaviours and family violence to life. This should be planned carefully and meaningfully for specific participant cohorts. Utilising a diverse range of mediums, from humorous to serious and emotive pieces, it is possible to foreground the everyday discourses that influence people. More specifically, influencing people’s ideas, experiences, expectations and emotional responses to the gendered violence and respectful relationship constructions.

Time must be taken to unpack the messages and bring forward any issues, dilemmas and contradictions in the media piece to deepen the conversation. It is then important, in a participatory action research framework, to monitor and examine responses to each item and refine each session based on the usefulness, impact and responses received.

xi. Anticipated Issues/Risks

Gender violence prevention work and respectful relationships programs are being recognised as core curriculum components. This is an important acknowledgement of schools as critical sites for change. However, there needs to be significant consideration of the safety, risk and wellbeing issues when sessions are provided on sexism, domestic violence, dating violence etc. This is vital because disclosures in some form will occur. This may involve an experience of sexism, sexual harassment to intimate violence. This could be ‘I have experienced domestic violence in a previous relationship’, ‘my daughter mentioned that she is uncomfortable with her boyfriend’, ‘I feel a bit scared of my boyfriend because....’, or ‘in sports class, these boys always hassle me.... flick my bra strap...’.

It is recommended that a professional with experience in facilitation of violence related material and responding to disclosures in present during activities. It is also important to plan for:

- the potential for participants to disclose experiences of violence (usually as victims but also as a perpetrator of violence).
- the possibility of participants experiencing disclosures by peers in their communities.
- the possibility of participants displaying problematic behaviours in the training sessions, behaviours which contradict the aims of the Project.

To address each of these risks, it is important to:

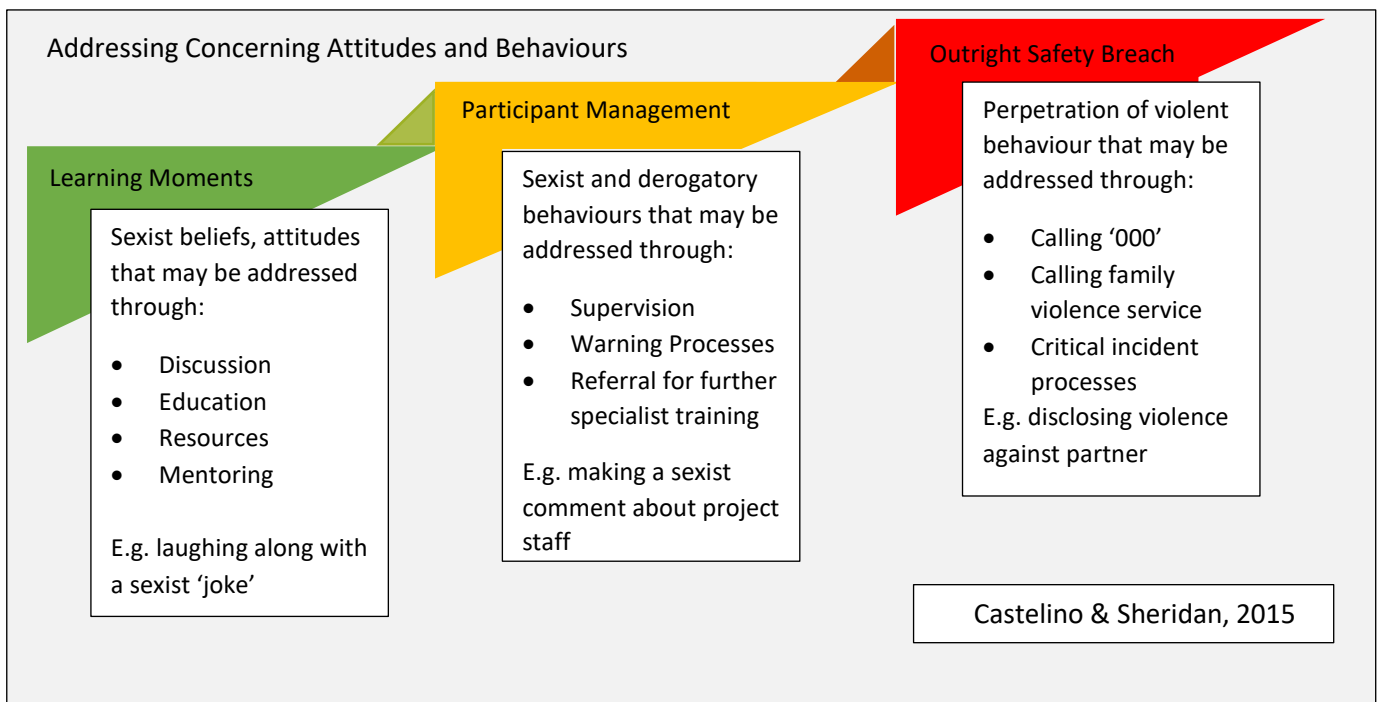
- provide age appropriate training in how to respond to disclosures to teachers, staff and students.
- discuss these issues and risks regularly with the Project Manager and inform her if any such risks were realised.
- ensure facilitators are trained and experienced in responding to disclosures.

- embed strategies within the program facilitation that set up respectful communication practices (and these were explicit and regularly updated throughout training sessions).
- consider these risks in the development of school policies and practices training conducted with the Project management team.

It is incumbent on the Program managers and facilitators/trainers to prepare for each session with preparation on:

- safety procedures.
- the local context and the local rules and policies.
- legal implications.
- audience demographics (age, community role etc.).
- a range of possible responses to match the issue, the context, and the experience of the participants.

The following model is designed to consider all aspects of risk within the context of a violence prevention project, without limiting the opportunity for participants to learn and grow in the space (Sheridan & Castelino, 2015). Whether a person makes a sexist joke that can be discussed or a derogatory comment that requires follow up or an outright disclosure of violence, how the team responds is key for participant safety, facilitator accountability and project success.



xii. Evaluation Processes

Feminist participatory action research is a process in which researchers engage program participants as partners in evaluation design and process, question development and data analysis. Feminist participatory action evaluation is designed to:

- explore and respond to the social issues at the local level.
- be embedded in feminist values and principles.
- be based on complexity.
- manage both quantitative and qualitative research.
- work within appropriate and differentiated time frames and resources.
- be adapted to the level and nature of work and strategies of each organisation/ partnership/ school.
- ensure participants inform, co-design and participate in the monitoring and evaluation of change processes.
- prioritise learning in the evaluation goals.
- capture, analyse and address negative as well as positive changes.
- abandon, revise and/or recast our frameworks to respond to the local changing environment and needs.

The 'focus group' is a key tool used to extract and validate learning from the project. Such group processes are more conversational in style and suit the participatory and action-oriented approach, as both the process and the content of the Project are valued. Focus groups concentrate on what matters to the participants. They seek to understand and validate participants' wisdoms and current experiences. This process brings forward and centralises the participants' priorities, insights, changes and learnings. In the circumstance where an individual is unable to attend a focus group or has particularly important/personal offering to the project, individual interviews are also suggested.

Further to focus groups and interviews, the pilot phase brought forward the value of employing observers, to collect and collate notes from each session. Noting participant responses can allow facilitators to reflect on the responses from the session and develop and adapt activities and content as required. Participants' words and insights can then inform evaluation processes. Further, the observers can provide insight, feedback and support which can be instrumental to the refining of workshop materials and training content as well as providing further support to participants if required.

This overview is only an introduction to the issue of violence against women and how to address it utilising a primary prevention, respectful relationship approach in schools. It is strongly recommended that those individuals tasked with carry out the following activities utilise the readings outlined in the reference section of this package and take any opportunity to access training in each of the areas covered here.

xiii. Activities

This section of the package outlines suggested activities with teachers (and other staff, welfare coordinators, principals etc.).

These activities are designed to provide participants the opportunity:

1. to develop an awareness of their own understandings and ethics in relation to gender, relationships, gender equality/sexism and men's violence against women.
2. to assist participants to develop an understanding of the links that exist between gender, gendered norms and stereotypes, and power and violence.
3. to understand what constitutes violence and the nature of family including intimate partner violence.
4. to develop their skills in responding to a disclosure of violence and linking in with the appropriate services.
5. to develop individual and community strategies in addressing sexism and violence supportive attitudes in their school community.

Each activity is allocated an amount of time that is considered necessary for the task. This should remain somewhat flexible and if more time is available then extending discussion time in each activity would be considered valuable. Included are optional activities (outlined in boxes) to account for possible extended time allotments.

As previously discussed (see 'Introduction') the facilitation of these activities requires an understanding of gender, gendered violence, how to respond safely and appropriately to disclosure of violence as well as a broader understanding of the political, structural and institutional sites of power and oppression based on various aspects of individual and community characteristics (race, sexuality, class, gender, disability as examples). Applying a feminist PAR approach requires an understanding of the ethical framework that is the basis of this approach.

Further, it is important that appropriate safety structures are in place to support participants, considering the likelihood of both victims of violence being present in the room as well as the possibility that those involved in the training receiving disclosures from the community once they begin to share their learnings and involvement in the Project (See 'Do No Harm' section).

Each activity can be facilitated as a separate activity; however, they have been placed in this order so that each activity builds on the knowledge and understanding developed in the previous. This should be considered during implementation.

SAFETY: End of Session Discussion

At the end of each session the facilitators are required to offer to stay back for 15 minutes to meet with any participants who wish to discuss a concern and then offer to refer them to the appropriate support service. The facilitators will also provide contact details to all participants in case of disclosures or their own personal support needs. Support service pamphlets will be handed out and then remain available for people to collect at any time during the session.

A. Introductory Session (10 mins)

Acknowledgements: This activity is based on an activity developed and utilised by ShantiWorks.

Overview: This activity has four key purposes:

- A warm up activity that provides the opportunity for participants to meet and begin to engage with the participants and facilitators.
- To recognise and bring forward the participant's knowledge, awareness and ethics in relation to their role in the school community.
- It is an aspirational activity that centres the participants' hopes and expectations of their role in the community and how this may influence their involvement in the Project, including their role with students.
- To assist participants to develop an understanding of the Project, its hopes, expectations and the potential of their involvement.

Objectives:

Participants will:

- consider and share their hopes and expectations of themselves as teachers/parents/students and members of the school community
- be introduced to the idea that their knowledges, ethics and practices are important and relevant in the context of the training
- begin to develop an understanding of their role in the Project and the importance of this.

Activity:

(a) Large Group:

Parent/Teacher:

- 1) Please tell us what is important to you about young people and their learning.
- 2) Please tell us what you think is the most important issue with young people and violence.

(b) Students

Students:

- 1) What are your ideas or hopes about this session today?
- 2) Please tell us why you think it is important for us to speak about young people and violence.

Final Comments:

'This was just a brief introduction to connect with each other and why we are here for this training. There is power in critical collective reflection as it opens up space for new perspectives and choices about our ways of being.'

B. Group Agreement

Resources: Butchers paper with group agreement list (see below), a permanent marker, blue tac.

Acknowledgement: The suggested Group agreement has been provided by ShantiWorks.

Overview:

This activity is designed to create a respectful environment where engaged learning is possible. Given the personal and sensitive nature of the content as well as the potential for safety concerns (in relation to the discussion of violence) the group agreement/guidelines need to be collaboratively developed, clear and meaningful.

Objectives:

- Participants and facilitators develop a shared understanding of what is expected of them during the session.
- Facilitators make a commitment to support participants through the process and centre their dignity and wellbeing.

Activity

Important note:

Considering the rate of violence in our community, it is likely that at least one participant has experienced violence. This should be considered throughout the Program and the facilitators role is to outline support options available to all participants during and after the session.

1. Facilitator places the sheet on the board/wall, perhaps with some pre-prepared points if preferred.
2. Read through and briefly discuss each point.
3. Ask participants if they have any questions or would like to add any points.

Suggestions:

- The facilitators/trainers make a commitment to take care of this space and be available. Their role to manage discussions and the sharing of perspectives and tensions and disagreements.
- Have challenging conversations and create space to reflect and explore issues.
- Radically listen – compassionately respond to each other.
- Right to move on: Recognise that this is a pilot with very limited timelines and so you may have to move conversation on, with care as managing time constraints.
- What's confidential? What's shared? With whom?
- Reflect on and locate your position before you speak.
- Institutionalised inequalities in power mean that not all voices carry the same weight.
- *Other considerations?*

Final Comments:

'Anything further you wish to add before we begin the next activity?'

C. Respect and Disrespect (15-20 mins)

Resources: Butchers Paper, markers.

Topic: Developing an understanding of what constitutes a respectful relationship and introduce the ideas of relationship power.

Acknowledgements: ShantiWorks

Overview: This exercise provides an opportunity for participants to consider their ethical and theoretical understanding of what constitutes 'respect' and 'disrespect' in various relationships and then more specifically in intimate relationships. Further, this activity also introduces the concept of power in the context of relationships in preparation for the following activity ('Flower Power').

Objectives:

- To develop an understanding of 'respect' and 'disrespect' in a variety of relationships.
- To name the ethics and behaviours the participants believe constitute 'respect' and 'disrespect'.
- To consider context and power in relationships.

Opening Comments:

'Respect means different things to different people. Sometimes we may have a sense of feeling respected or disrespected but struggle to know what it is that creates this feeling. Developing an awareness of this assists us to understand how we want to be in our relationships and what we expect from others. We are going to explore our ideas of respect and disrespect in this activity.'

Activity:

(a) Large Group:

Ask the whole group to name different relationships in their lives...

e.g. parents, hairdresser, boss, employee, babysitter, children, student, colleague, lawyer.

(b) Small Group:

Allocate a relationship from the list to groups of 3-4 people and ask them to note down their responses to the following questions:

- A. What do you hope and expect of yourself in this relationship?
(these may be attitudes, behaviours, ethics/principles)
- B. What do you hope and expect of the other person in this relationship?
(again, these may be attitude's, behaviours, ethics/principles)

(c) Large Group:

Ask participants for feedback and note their ideas on the board- Under the headings of 'Respect' and 'Disrespect'. The following diagram gives examples:

Respect	Disrespect
e.g. smile, eye contact, manners, please/thank you, professional speaking politely, honesty...	frowns, no greeting, no eye contact, no manners, no follow up, speaking loudly, yelling dishonesty...

C. Let's consider this in the context of the school:

- a. Is there anything else you would add to the list if you consider the relationships between students at the school? Between teachers and students? Between parents and teachers?
- b. Who do you imagine holds power in these relationships? Teacher/student, teacher/parent, between different teaching roles?
- c. How would you imagine that this power may influence a moment when you experience respect or disrespect by these groups? E.g. If a principal is disrespectful to a student? A student is disrespectful to a teacher? One student is disrespectful to another?

Closing comments:

As discussed, there are different understandings and ideas of respect and disrespect. We have also considered how power changes the impact of respect and disrespect. Now we want to further unpack this idea of power, where it comes from and how different aspects of our identity influence it.

D. What is Family/Domestic/Dating Violence (30 mins)

Topic: Understanding what constitutes violence (in line with Victorian legal definition)

Resources: Statistics handout

Overview: This activity is designed to give teachers a clear understanding of what constitutes violence and how it may present in a secondary school context. This shared understanding is an important step in ensuring the school community responds appropriately and as safely as possible to disclosures or suspicions of family/domestic/dating violence.

Opening Comments:

To improve how we respond to victim/survivors and perpetrators of violence, we must first develop an understanding of what constitutes violence.

Definitions (to be provided as handouts and Power Points after discussion) (Appendix 3)

Student Extension.

Large Group:

1. Hand out Statistics and Types of Violence (appendix 3).
2. Ask a member of the group to read the statistics and acknowledge that these statistics can be shocking for people who have not heard them before.
3. After the statistics have been read ask the group if there is anything that shocks or surprises them about the statistics.
4. Now move into the types of behaviour that constitutes violence.

Emotional Abuse: emotional or psychological abuse means behaviour by a person towards another person that torments, intimidates, harasses or is offensive to the other person.

What are some common behaviours in the school environment that may be considered emotional abuse? (putting down partner, sending intimidating messages, making offensive comments to humiliate their partner).

Spiritual abuse: Specific emotional abuse related to not allowing someone to practice their religious or spiritual traditions or forcing them to practice traditions against their will.

Social Abuse: Within emotional abuse are the behaviours that we sometimes refer to as social abuses. These include preventing a person from seeing their friends and family, trying to make them feel guilty about going to work and out with friends and constantly checking on their whereabouts.

Economic Abuse: behaviour by a person that is coercive, deceptive or unreasonably controls another person without consent. This is often perpetrated in a way that denies the second person the economic or financial autonomy the second person would have had but for that behaviour. Also by withholding or threatening to withhold the financial support necessary for meeting the reasonable living expenses of the second person or the second person's child, if the second person is entirely or predominantly dependent on the first person for financial support to meet those living expenses.

Can you as a group think of examples of how this may occur between young people in the school. What might a boyfriend do to control his girlfriend's money? (Pressuring partner into spending their money on him, using the credit on their phone without consent).

Physical Assault: Using force on the body, clothing worn by or equipment of the victim with the intention to inflict pain, discomfort, damage, insult or depriving someone of their freedom.

This can include hitting, holding a person and refusing to let them go or deliberately damaging something that they are wearing or holding (a phone for example).

Sexual Assault: Includes penetration of a sexualised nature without consent (including if a person changes their mind), touching or 'kissing' without consent, but also includes 'non-touching' offences such as forcing someone to watch a sexual act (including pornography). Remember that if a person says 'yes' because they so 'no' feels unsafe, then this is not true consent.

'There is a lot of discussion at present about violation using technology. This might include distributing nude and sexualised images of a person without consent. At this stage the law has not kept up with this issue but women who have experienced this speak of it as a violation and often causes significant harm and trauma after the act.'

Closing comments:

'Before we move on to considering some of the key myths and misconceptions about violence we would like to check in. Was there anything we mentioned in the definitions that you are struggling with... perhaps you hadn't thought of it in the context of abuse or a crime before? When you consider this information in the context of the young people in the school, could you imagine what their responses might be when hearing this information?'

(a) Now for the myths

Student Extension.

Large group:

Ask group to call out all the reasons, excuses, myths and beliefs given to explain the use of violence...

Write these on a white board/butcher's paper

Note any examples below that are not mentioned by the room.

This section of the session will be run by the facilitator and participants will be given a chance to respond at the end.

Important note:

This activity is always a little interesting for people because we know that institutions like the media and some aspects of the political and legal system are very good at reinforcing these myths. When acts of violence are reported in the media you will notice that the factor that is reported as the cause is often one of the following:

- **Family Violence is rare:** Even though there is a belief that there is an under-reporting of family/domestic violence, it is estimated that 1 in 3 women are abused by male partners or former-partners.
- **Rape is perpetrated by strangers:** 39% of the rapes reported to Vic Police from 1987 to 1990 were committed by strangers. If you consider that women who are raped by someone they know are less likely to report each crime, this statistic is shocking.
- **Alcohol or drugs cause someone to become violent:** Because men who use violence often also abuse alcohol and drugs, it's easy to conclude that the substance is the problem. This is not the case and a good way to debunk this is to think about how many of us drink and do not become violent. Further, men that use violence while drunk or drug effected rarely stop using the substance. We do know that if a man uses violence while he is drunk it can alter the nature of the violence and women report that he may be less predictable or the violence may be more severe. It also increases the likelihood of lethality.
- **Family/Domestic violence is a lower-class issue:** Police records show that domestic/family violence occurs in every social class, regardless of race or culture. It is often easier for people in positions of privilege to hide their actions or be excused, but it occurs none the less.
- **Women who are abused must like it or they would leave:** Leaving is often the most unsafe time for women and if she has children there is a significant chance that by leaving her children will then have contact with the abuser without her supervision. Women also receive very negative responses from people who could assist (services, family and friends) and this leaves her in a position with little access to accommodation, income and other basic needs if she leaves. This is worsened for women who experience other forms of discrimination. For example, Aboriginal women are more likely to have their children removed from their care if government services become aware of his violence.

- **Women are weak, passive and helpless:** These are attitudes that increase the negative responses women receive when disclosing violence. Women who experience violence are finding ways to survive, uphold their dignity and protect their children in many ways on a daily basis. When we as a society don't acknowledge this, we reinforce those stereotypes and cause further pain to victims. We often think that leaving is the only positive action but this is not the case.
- **The perpetrator or victim was mentally ill:** This myth is often used to excuse men's violence: that the man was mentally ill or that the woman was mentally ill and difficult. We know that the clear majority of people who are diagnosed with a mental illness do not harm other people. This is often reported in the media as a possible reason for the violence, which ignores the gender of the perpetrator and victim.

Large Group discussion:

Are you surprised or challenged by any of these ideas? When you hear these myths as facts in the media, is it convincing? Are there any other 'reasons' you have heard for why violence occurs that you might now think of differently?

Closing comments:

'There are many misconceptions about violence and its causes in society and often the link to gender is either overlooked or concealed. We often hear that violence is linked to alcohol, to mental illness, to being poor or being migrant, however research and evidence shows that whilst these factors may influence the type and nature of the violence, they are not the cause. The cause is strongly linked with gender and specifically the violence accepted and expected of men and masculinity.'

Important Point:

At this stage, it is likely that someone in the group will state that women are violent too.

Suggested Response: 'Yes, some women use violence. The fact that some women use violence suggests that women also have the potential to act violently, however the clear majority do not choose to and most violence is perpetrated by men. We also know that women who use violence often do so to defend themselves from men's violence. We also know that violence perpetrated by women is less likely to lead to physical harm and that men do not report being fearful of their lives as women do⁴. Remember that we will be around after the session if you would like to discuss anything and we will provide you with phone numbers at the end of the session for further support if necessary.'

⁴ A particularly good reference for this is Ellen Pence (2006) who was well known in the sector as she developed the Duluth Model for perpetrators of violence.

E. Considering Gender: Applying a Gender Lens to the Media (20 mins)

Topic: Utilising media examples to highlight the construction of male and female genders in society and beginning to note gender stereotypes.

Acknowledgements: Jean Kilbourne (2000), who featured in the documentary 'Miss Representation', has made a significant contribution to the understanding of the representation of women and girls and men and boys in the media.

Maree Crabbe (2010), who worked with young people in secondary schools and as coordinator of Brophy's Safety and Respect programs, has provided significant insight into the current issues of pornography and young people in Victoria as well as nationally.

Overview: Facilitators support participants to reflect on and critique the advertisements they may witness and consume daily. This activity provides a sense of the construction of gender and the stereotypes that are applied to media production.

This activity often leads to disagreements. It is important to remember that the idea of the activity is to support participants in considering and exploring gender stereotypes and there may not be a consensus.

Objectives:

- Highlighting the plethora of gender stereotypes that often go unnoticed.
- Considering the nature of gender stereotypes: What is the nature of the characteristics applied to men and to women?
- Preparing participants with responses for the following activity ('Understanding the gender boxes').

Opening Comments:

In the last activity, we began to consider the gendered nature of violence. This is not to say that all men use violence. We know this is not true. However, if we consider the statistics, we know that boys and men are given very different messages about who they are and how they are to behave than girls and women.

Examining the media is a great way to consider the messages given.

(We intend to explore this more thoroughly with the students, but for the purposes of today will briefly consider a few examples).

Student Extension.

Large group:

- Display a series of adverts, pausing after each and asking the participants (if struggling to speak in large group ask them to consider in pairs first):
 - How are the girls/women portrayed in the ad?
 - How are the boys/men portrayed in the ad?
 - What messages may be received by viewers of the advertisement based on the way they are portrayed?
 - What is suggested about the behaviour of the girls/women and/or boys/men in the advertisement?

When showing an advertisement that depicts acts of violence as positive or desirable it is important to mention pornography.

Suggestion: 'This advertisement is considered appropriate mainstream media. Pornography is also now mainstream and makes up a significant amount of internet traffic. Maree Crabbe states that it is now the most prominent sexuality educators for young people. Often pornography depicts aggressive and violent acts, usually perpetrated by men against women, as not only acceptable but desirable. It is important to consider this as teachers, parents and community members, because a significant number of boys who are learning how they wish to be in the world; what ethics, attitudes and behaviours are acceptable and encouraged, are influenced by the messages in pornography. For those of us who do not partake in watching pornography, and perhaps even some who do, we may be of the mistaken belief that it is 'just sex', but in fact, what people watch and learn is much more complex than this. Rape is depicted as 'sex', women as objects who exist for men's pleasure and men are given all sorts of messages about what is 'normal' in terms of body image, sex, relationships and violence. It is also important to remember that many of these messages, while possibly less explicit, are also present in ads, movies and TV shows.'

(May be useful to include an example here. E.g. Dolce and Gabbana perfume ad of 'gang rape' or consider messages in the Twilight series; messages that the best experience of sex is one in which the male character has to try really hard not to let himself kill the female character during sex—and he does harm her—and he has absolutely no control over this violent behaviour when he is having sex. This is a 'romantic young adult fiction').

Final Comments:

'These advertisements were just a small selection but they provide an opportunity to consider the stereotypes and norms that exist in society and are condoned and supported in some aspects of the media. I have noted down your responses on the white board as to the way women and men are depicted.

Parent/Teacher extension:

This activity is a much shorter version than that which the students will complete. It is hoped that developing this lens will enable them to not only become more aware of and critical about the portrayal of gender in the media, but also the gender stereotypes that exist and are reinforced every day... and their link to violence.

Student Extension

Large group:

I would like to utilise your insights for the next activity, exploring further these stereotypes and norms.'

A. Homework Activity: Stereotypes (5 mins)

Topic: This homework activity is designed to follow on from Activity 5 and relates to noticing stereotypes in the lives of the participants.

Overview: Participants are asked to take note of the stereotypes they are witness to in the days between each Project session. They will then be asked to feedback on this in the next session.

Objectives:

- Encouraging the participants to further process the content of the session.
- Providing an opportunity for participants to apply aspects of their learning to their everyday lives, at work and at home, in order to further understand its relevance and importance.
- Further developing a gendered lens in relation to institutions such as media and unpacking the stereotypes they may be unaware or accepting of.

Activity:

At the end of the first session ask the participants to:

'Take notice of any gender stereotypes you notice in your everyday lives. These may include ads in your favourite TV shows, your favourite TV shows, signs around the school, comments by others, your own thoughts! This is not supposed to be time consuming or too taxing but if you can attempt to notice one or two and then report back on these in the next session it will assist in our learning process. It is really important that this learning makes sense in your own lives and environment and this activity may help to achieve this. It will also provide further information for the first activity next session.'

F. Understanding the Gender Boxes (25-30 mins)

Topic: This activity brings forward gendered attitudes, norms and expectations that lead to the acceptance and condoning of men's disrespect, abuse and violence against women.

Acknowledgements: This activity has been adapted and expanded by ShantiWorks from the activity originally developed by Paul Kivel (1992).

Overview: This activity outlines gender stereotypes and then links them firstly to structures and institutions that construct and reinforce them and then introduces the idea that this leads to gendered violence, specifically men's violence against women. This activity is intended to expose cultural norms and create possibilities for new and alternative, caring and respectful ways of being. For women and girls, this activity is designed to bring forward the negative, passive, objectifying traits placed on women by social norms and systems, and that whilst these traits are not valued, women are also policed and forced to adhere to them as men are masculine traits.

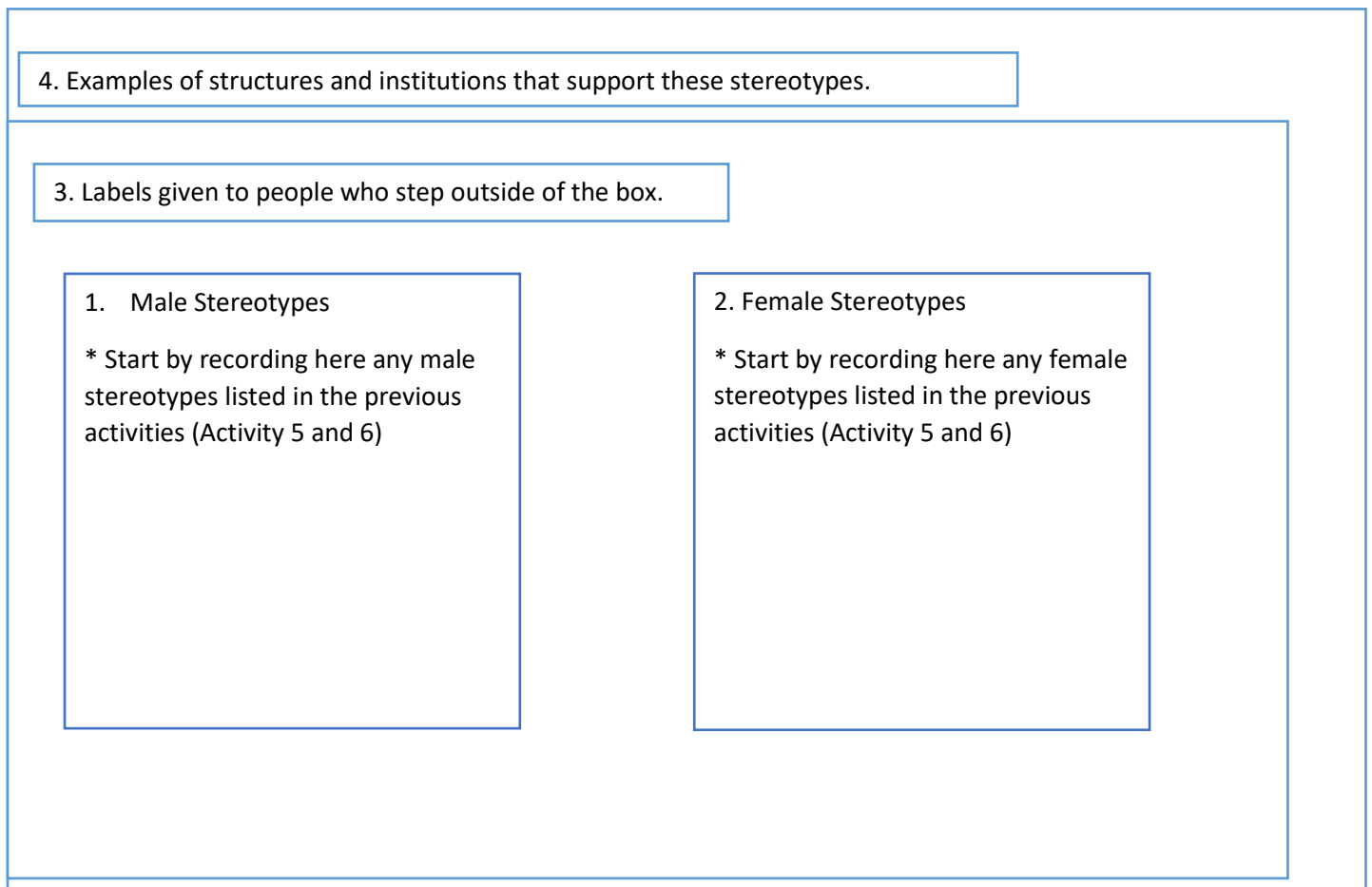
Objectives:

This activity is designed to:

- further develop the gendered lens of participants.
- assist participants to recognise gender stereotypes as constructs that drive violence against women (understanding the link between gender and violence).
- acknowledge that these stereotypes are not created by individuals but are designed and reinforced by broader structures and institutions with power.
- further consider the nature of gendered power and violence.

Activity:

The diagram below outlines the stages of running this activity on the whiteboard.



Opening comment:

During the media activity, we began to list the stereotypes that are portrayed in the media in relation to men and women. Remember this is not necessarily what you believe, but what you have learnt or heard from others. This is also not about individually blaming men or naming bad traits and qualities about masculinity. This activity is to explore how our society and its systems makes specific demands of men and women to be and do, and perform etc.

The following questions and discussion points align with the box diagram above (diagram 2).

Box 1: What other stereotypes exist in relation to men and masculinity? What attitudes and behaviours do we encourage, support and reward in boys and men?

Box 2: What other stereotypes exist in relation to women and femininity? What attitudes and behaviours do we encourage, support and reward in girls and women?

Box 3a: What labels are given to boys/men if they do not stay inside the box?

Box 3b: What labels are given to girls/women if they do not stay inside the box?

Discuss these stereotypes (3a and 3b), drawing attention to the fact that many of the labels attributed to men are feminised and use feminine terms as put downs. Notice that when women behave in ways expected of men they are not attributed the terms that are valued in men but are given other labels as put downs. The behaviour is interpreted differently based on sex and gender expectations. It is also important to note that a key difference is that many of the expectations/stereotypes of women listed inside the box are not valued either.

Box 4: Let's consider which structures and institutions may support and condone these ideas? An obvious example is the media as previously discussed but as people often say the media is only one institution that perpetuates the beliefs, let's think of others.... (e.g. religion/spiritual groups, legal systems, workplaces, schools, military, government).

It is important to remember that these beliefs are not made up by individuals, they are developed and reinforced through the various systems and institutions in society.

Optional Activity Extension

If time is available, the following discussion may be included:

We are now going to consider what it means for people who attempt to exist within these boxes

- 1) What is it like for people to attempt to adhere to these ideas of who they are supposed to be, based on their sex?
- 2) Are there positive attributes listed in the boxes? Are there attributes that are always negative? Discuss.
- 3) What if these boxes were erased? What would it mean if people weren't expected to act a particular way purely based on their sex? What might it mean for men? What might it mean for women? If we consider the school context, what might it mean for students at the school... in the school environment regarding their education, social life, relationships?

Final Comments:

'This activity is not to suggest that the attributes listed in the gender boxes are inherently good or bad. It is to reinforce that being policed or forced to behave in particular ways, based on sex, leads to serious and significant issues (link to examples given in the room).'

CHECK IN: How is everyone feeling at this stage? Any worries/concerns? Anything you would like to add briefly before we go onto next activity?

G. Exploring Personal Power (20 mins)

Topic: Exploring personal power from a political and structural context.

Acknowledgements: This activity is widely developed and used in social justice circles. The original source is unknown. Two sources that have assisted in the development of this activity include: 1. Bishop A. (2002) *Becoming an ally: Breaking the cycle of oppression in people* (p. 129-130). Halifax: Fernwood Publishing and 2. Doris Marshall Institute for Education and Action and *Between the Lines* Press, 1991.

Overview: Participants explore their personal sites of possible privilege and power based on an intersectional feminist approach. This approach recognises that any individual is more than one identity and exploring this brings forward multiple sites of power and oppression. This activity is designed to move beyond the individual, highlighting the structural and cultural influences on attitudes and behaviours and begins to build the link to men's violence against women. It also asks participants to consider and acknowledge their own sites of power and privilege, which is important when developing an awareness of respectful relationships.

Objectives:

- Individuals to explore their own sites of privilege and oppression to develop a structural understanding of power and to introduce gender as a site of power and oppression.

Activity:**Opening comments:**

'Working with groups, it is helpful to identify who we are (and who we aren't) as individuals and as a group in relation to power in our society, in our systems etc. This activity reveals aspects of our social identity that we are often not aware of, sometimes the unveiling can cause pain, anger, or even denial. It is useful in gender violence prevention efforts as it allows us all to get to know our own identities in relation to power and powerlessness.... And locates them within a system and culture.'

Important note: It is important to assure participants that they will not be required to discuss their responses to this activity unless they choose to. They are also free to respond as honestly as they feel comfortable to do in the space. This is not about blame and shame but about developing an awareness and understanding of ourselves in a personal and political and social context.

(a) Large Group:

Hand out the flower power (appendix 2) activity sheet.

Ask participants to consider each category and to record in the outer petals which group within that category they think have the power position (e.g. gender: men). Encourage the group to consider this and agree to this as a group. Discuss each petal individually but be aware of and maintain timelines.

(b) Individual:

Ask people to consider their own identity in relation to each category and name these in the inner petal. Remember, participants can answer as they feel comfortable and will not be expected to share these unless they choose to do so.

(c) Large Group:

Ask the group the following questions:

1. What is it like to consider your own personal sites of power and oppression? Any surprises? Is this a comfortable activity? Does it raise further questions? (Allow time for participants to discuss).
2. What might be the benefits of having an awareness of these sites of power when attempting to develop respectful relationships?
3. If you were to consider these sites of power and oppression in a school context, what might this mean for the students at school? What might it mean for their experience in the classroom? What might it mean for their experiences in intimate relationships?
4. Given your sites of identity, what might you think about or do differently when discussing power and respect?

Possible responses or examples that the facilitator can use to foster discussions of the complexities of power:

- Principal at the top of the hierarchy.
- A new teacher from Afghanistan with a predominantly Anglo-Australian group of students.
- A new young female vice/deputy principal with older male staff who have taught at the school for decades.
- A male teacher who is described as ‘feminine’ or ‘not masculine’ by the school community.
- A student with an obvious disability.
- A student who is into sports and music as opposed to another student who performs poorly or is uninterested in these areas. Would it make a difference if this student was male or female?

Closing comments:

‘This activity is designed to bring forward the different structural and cultural sites of power and oppression that can have a significant influence on relationships and power. We are now going to focus on one of these sites, or petals: specifically, gender. This does not mean that the other sites are irrelevant, simply that our focus here today is gender because of its impact on relationships and links to the prevalence of violence.’

H. Developing ways to Respond to Violence and Other Forms of Sexism: Bystander Action (40 mins)

Topic: This section aims to support teachers with various responses to disclosures of domestic violence/family violence and sexism. It covers actively responding to violence and bystander responses. Training will be locally based and thus work within state government guidelines for responding to family violence and abuse and mandatory reporting, however, this session hopes to provide teachers with an understanding and tools for use in their role and within their context. This activity is designed to provide participants with tools to improve their skills and confidence in responding to disclosures of violence and other sexist acts. Participants are not expected to be counsellors or experts in engaging in family violence responses. This training component aims to offer participants some ideas and strategies to respectfully and effectively respond to a disclosure or concern of domestic/family violence and then practice opportunities.

Acknowledgements: This activity and resource were initially designed by ShantiWorks in collaboration with Link Health and Community (formerly called MonashLink). Link Health and Community and ShantiWorks agreed to share this activity and resource with other organisations.

I. Responding to Disclosures of Violence

Overview: This activity acknowledges the probability of teachers becoming concerned about or aware of acts of violence being perpetrated by other community members through for example disclosures from students and parents. This activity allows them time to consider what issues may arise and what further information or school policies and processes may be required to support them. It also provides an opportunity to rehearse responding to a disclosure.

Activity:

- (a) Small Groups:

Please note your responses to the questions to discuss in the larger group.

- 1) What do you imagine—or have experienced—are some of the challenges, dilemmas and safety concerns of young people disclosing violence to you? For you? For the students?

- 2) If we return to the flower power activity (refer to session and make sure people remember this) how might these aspects of your identity, the student's identity, impact on this comfort and safety? (Create an example, which considers different intersections, perhaps an example used previously by a participant if possible).
- 3) What support would you require from the school community to make this process more comfortable for you and the students and safer for the students?

(b) Large Group

- 1) Ask for their responses to the questions and note any key points on the board.

'We would like to offer you a tool that has assisted other people in organisations that do not specialise in supporting victims of violence to develop the skills and confidence to respond with confidence and refer to the appropriate service as required.'

- 2) Hand out a copy of the '4 R's' document (appendix 4) to each participant.
- 3) Work through the information on the form and highlight the key points:
 - I. **Recognise indicators of violence**
 - a. How is your home life?
 - b. How is your relationship with your partner and/or other family members? Do you feel unsafe in your relationship(s)?
 - c. Are you now or have you recently been afraid of your partner or a family member?
 - d. What happens when your partner or family member becomes angry?
 - e. You seem in a lot more pain than usual. I wonder what (symptom) is about?
 - II. **Recognise safety and privacy**
 - a. Provide a private and safe environment to speak with victim (possible victim).
 - b. Be aware that the perpetrator might be present, so consider ways of creating talking spaces.
 - c. Be aware of what is said in front of children.
 - III. **Respect the victims' story**
 - a. You are not to blame. It is never the victim's fault. It is not your fault.
 - b. You may feel alone and ashamed, but these are normal reactions.
 - c. Validate the victim, affirm her strengths.
 - d. You have survived. How have you managed to make yourself safe?
 - e. You have sought help. It takes courage to speak out.
 - f. It is important to remember that while this may be an extremely difficult time, it is possible to heal with the support of others.
 - g. It is important to remember that the offence was done TO you, not BY you.
 - IV. **Respect the integrity of the victim's choices**
 - a. You are the one who knows what happened.
 - b. Take your time. Tell me in your own words.
 - c. Your choices are important. It is OK that you deal with this at your own pace.
 - d. Identify safety plans.
 - e. How safe do you feel?
 - f. What do you need in order to feel safe?
 - V. **Resource with statistics and facts**
 - a. 1 in 3 women experience family violence. You are not alone.
 - b. Our school does not have the services to support people directly experiencing violence. We would however like to offer you some suggestions as to who you can call and we are happy to arrange a referral if you think this would be safe and useful?

VI. Refer appropriately

- a. In the case of an emergency, call triple zero 000.
- b. Safe Steps (24 hours, 7 days): (03) 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188
- c. Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS): 03 9259 4200

InTouch – Multicultural Centre against Family Violence:(03) 9413 6500 or 1800 755 988

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service: (03) 9244 3333 or 1800 105 303

National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Line (24 hours, 7 days): 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

'We would like you to consider further how you will respond to a disclosure. Please move into pairs and read these disclosures and responses to each other, imagining a female student disclosing to you.'

Disclosures:

Examples of common comments and suggested responses:

1. **Disclosure:** 'I know I'm an idiot, but I now realise he is never going to change.'
Response: 'Young women who are hurt by their boyfriends often feel like idiots, because they are told that. What do you think this is about?'
2. **Disclosure:** 'I just want to know what services are available.'
Response: I can provide you with a list of services. If you would like support in contacting them I can support you to do that.
3. **Disclosure:** 'I'm not sure if he is violent, my Mum told me to call.'
Response: 'I am really glad you called. Would you like to share with me what has you thinking that he might be violent?' 'From what you have shared with me I am very concerned about his behaviour and am wondering if you would like me to support you in contacting a family violence services for further support?'
4. **Disclosure:** 'I know he is violent, but he's a great Dad.'
Response: 'It's so difficult isn't it to think that he can in one moment be a great Dad and in another he chooses to use violence. How do you make sense of this?'
5. **Disclosure:** 'I heard you talk at assembly about violence and I thought you could help.'
Response: 'I am so glad you contacted me. Would you like to hear about the sort of help I might be able to provide then you can decide if you would like to share your concerns with me?'
6. **Disclosure:** 'People have tried to help me before, but they just didn't get it.'
Response: 'Would you mind explaining to me what they didn't get? It is important that my help is useful to you.'
7. **Disclosure:** 'I really think he might kill me one day.'
Response: 'You are the best person to understand him and his use of violence. Would you like to speak with me more about this or I can link you in with a service that is equipped to support women who experience violence?'
8. **Disclosure:** (Man) 'I learnt as a kid...that's the way men are...I think I want to do it differently...I didn't see it as violence...I'm going to lose my kids if I don't do something.'
Response: 'Your family's safety is the most important thing here and you doing things differently is important for their safety. Are you willing to contact a service that assists men

(c) Large Group

1. What was it like to sit in these roles?
2. What did you notice about the responses? (believed the person, trusted their understanding, acknowledged their understanding and feelings, offered more specialised support, attempted to allow them to control the process).
3. Do you have any questions?

Also, discuss: Mandatory Reporting regulations and school's policies in relation to this: this is to be developed further in line with individual school policies and processes.

Final Comments:

'This is a lot of information condensed into a short time period but we hope the 4R's sheet is a useful tool for your school. If you have any suggestions on how you would like it refined or improved, we would be happy to do this and would appreciate the feedback for the final package that will be developed from these pilot sessions.

If you have any questions or concerns, we will stay around for 15 minutes after the session.'

J. Taking Action as a Bystander

a) Large Group

'Bystander action is when a person witnesses a sexist action but is not the receiver of this action, makes a commitment to respond in way that challenges the behaviour and supports those people who are the targets of the behaviour (Provide a picture of three people in a space with one stating a sexist comment against another while a bystander looks on).

This Project is asking this community to develop the skills and step up when there is an issue: issues that reinforce the cultural and social structures, attitudes and behaviours that support and condone violence against women.

- 1) What do you think about this expectation? What would this mean for you?
- 2) Can you think of examples of things you already do to attempt to challenge these issues? (note these on board).

Optional Activity: Considering Bystander a broader perspective

If we were to consider the different sites of power and privilege—as outlined in the flower power diagram— I wonder if we could make a list of the actions you are already taking to attempt to address the issues of power in relation to each site?

Move around the flower and ask participants to consider and write just outside the flower the types of actions they take to challenge problematic norms, stereotypes and attitudes in relation to each site. This can be done privately or the group may wish to discuss in pairs and then discuss any interesting conversations or ideas in the larger group...

- 3) What might be some of the reasons a person may not be able to speak up?

The following is a list of examples for assistance with discussions (one or two would be sufficient and examples gleaned from group discussions would be preferable):

- A trans student that was identified at birth as male but identifies as female having to use the male toilets.
- A female student wishing to participate in a subject that is stereotypically considered a male subject and she is aware that she will experience othering and sexism in the class by classmates and possibly by a teacher.
- A female student is being sexually harassed by a group of male students and fears she will be further harassed or assaulted if she tells someone.
- A student who identifies as male being separated from his group of predominantly female friends by school structures.
- A teacher who is a woman of colour who notices another staff member othering non-white students (asking young people of colour to tell the class 'where they are really from').

- 4) These ideas maybe completely new to some of you, or there may be new and innovative ideas some of you may be able to add to your list. Consider some of the conversations we have had and perhaps what you have noticed between our sessions together. Have you thought of something that may need changing or that you are passionate about wanting to change? You can share or not share this at this stage. What would you need to support you to advocate for this change?
- 5) If you have not noticed anything at this stage, we have an assessment sheet for you to consider over the coming weeks and we may ask Project workers and the young people in the Project to follow up with you to discuss your ideas, because we are not able to meet with you again...

Provide assessment sheet (may take away or do in session depending on time). (Appendix 5)

(b) Individual activity:

- 6) We have placed on the board ideas from your group about how to challenge the behaviours that condone and encourage men's violence against women. We would like you to take a moment now to write down any commitments you would make at this stage to these or other actions.

Hand out sheet of examples of actions specific to different roles and subjects in school environment.

Optional Extra Activity:

Ask participants to sit in groups of like-subjects or roles and consider how they could embed these ideas in their course content or roles in the school.

Hand out a commitment sheet (Appendix 5) for them to complete (and ask if these could be copied and returned to them as part of the evaluation process).

We will also hand out a resource sheet that provides for further examples that you may find.

(c) Whole Group:

'We are also going to ask you to consider how you will support the students who participate in this program to become active in challenging the gendered norms, roles and stereotypes that support men's violence against women.

What if a young person raised an issue in relation to this with you, how could you respond? What support might you offer?

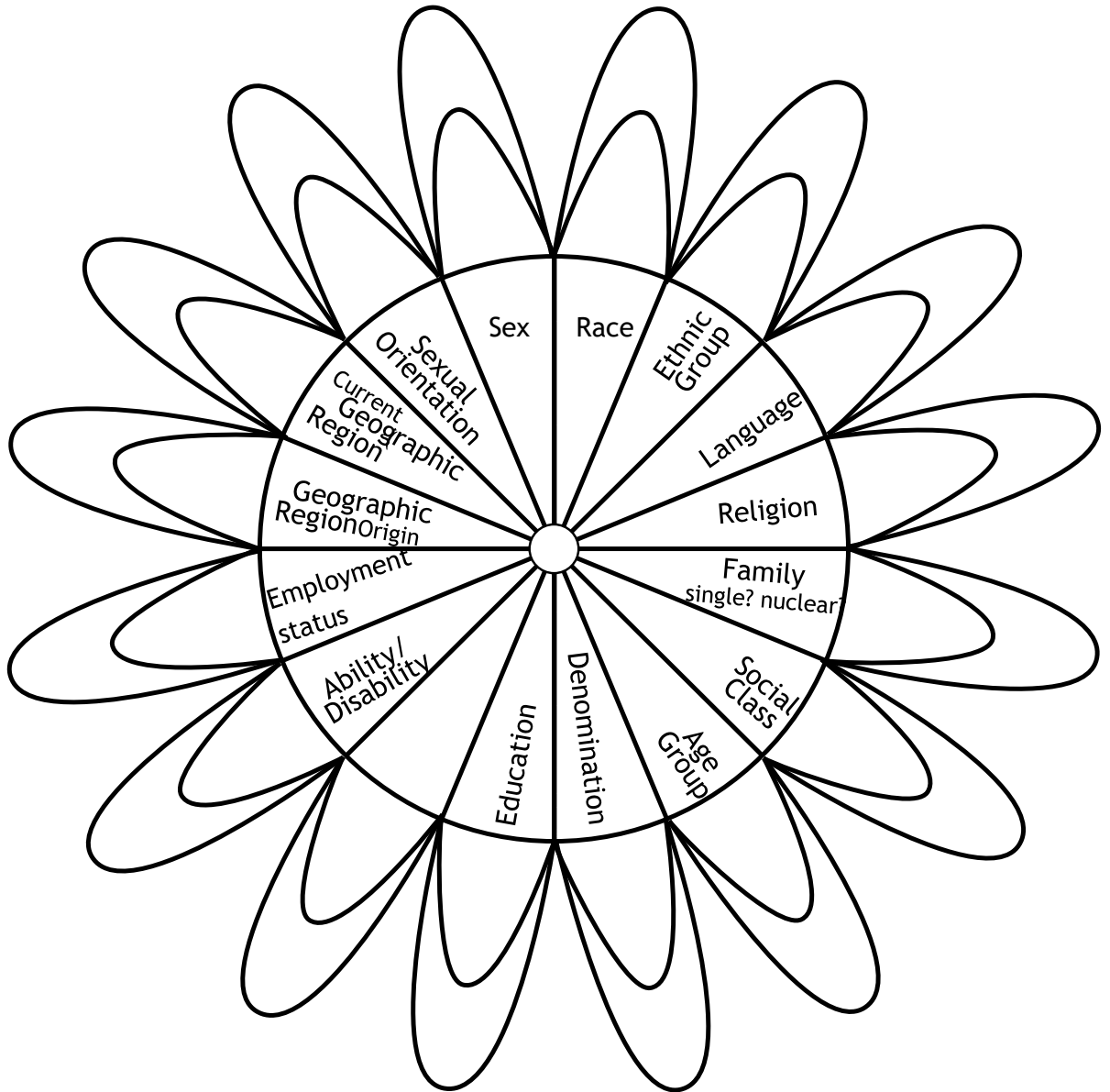
If you overhear or notice a young person challenging a teacher or student about these issues what might your role be?

If the students in our sessions come up with a strategy that requires support, time and resources what process would be required for them to carry this out?

Facilitator to note all this down and pass onto broader Project team as required.

Appendix 2: The Flower Power Activity

The Power Flower Activity



Appendix 3: Types and Prevalence of Violence

Types and Prevalence of Violence

These are the types of violence recognised in the Family Violence Protection Act 2008

‘Emotional Abuse: emotional or psychological abuse means behaviour by a person towards another person that torments, intimidates, harasses or is offensive to the other person.

What are some common behaviours in the school environment that may be considered emotional abuse? (putting down partner, sending intimidating messages, making offensive comments to humiliate their partner,).

spiritual abuse: Specific emotional abuse relating to not allowing someone to practice their religious or spiritual traditions or forcing them to practice traditions against their will.

Social Abuse: Within emotional abuse are the behaviours that we sometimes refer to as social abuses. These include preventing a person from seeing their friends and family, trying make her feel guilty about going to work and out with friends and constantly checking on her whereabouts.

Economic Abuse: behaviour by a person that is coercive, deceptive or unreasonably controls another person without consent— (a) in a way that denies the second person the economic or financial autonomy the second person would have had but for that behaviour; by withholding or threatening to withhold the financial support necessary for meeting the reasonable living expenses of the second person or the second person’s child, if the second person is entirely or predominantly dependent on the first person for financial support to meet those living expenses.

(Pressuring partner into spending her money on him, using the credit on her phone without consent)

Physical Assault: Using force on the body, clothing worn by or equipment of the victim with the intention to inflict pain, discomfort, damage, insult or depriving someone of their freedom.

This can include hitting, holding a person and refusing to let them go, deliberately damaging something that they are wearing or holding (a phone for example)

Sexual Assault: Includes penetration of a sexualised nature without consent (including if a person changes their mind), touching or ‘kissing’ without consent, but also includes ‘non-touching’ offences such as forcing someone to watch a sexual act (including pornography). Remember that if a person says ‘yes’ because to so ‘no’ feels unsafe, then this is not true consent.

Prevalence

A woman dies at the hands of a partner or former partner every week in Australia

One in three women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15

The stats are even worse for young women. Those aged 18 to 24 are more likely to experience physical or sexual violence than women across all other age groups.² Our watch

Twice as many women in the 18-24 age bracket experience sexual assault, compared to all women.

93 per cent of offenders are male (National Statistics - Crime & Safety Survey, 2002).

Girls between the ages of 10 and 14 were the greatest proportion of victim/survivors of violence of family violence.

1. More than 1 in 4 young people aged 12 to 24 years (26%) hold attitudes that put them at risk of perpetrating, excusing or tolerating violence against women.
2. These young people are comfortable with coercive and disrespectful behaviours, are more likely to justify violence, and believe that being masculine means exerting power and control over their partners.
3. These young people are less likely to understand that violence isn't always physical, and less likely than other young people to call out violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours.
4. These young people are more likely to be male, in their mid-teens, have experienced or perpetrated bullying or violence, and be consuming a high amount of sexually explicit material i.e. porn. (Our watch Stats and Facts n.d., Family Violence Protection Act, 2008).

Appendix 4: The 4 R's

The 4Rs of responding to family violence: Recognise, Respect, Resource and Refer

Recognise and Respect		Words and actions – <i>as a guide</i>
Recognise indicators of violence	1.	How is your home life?
	2.	How is your relationship with your partner and/or other family members? Do you feel unsafe in your relationship(s)?
	3.	Are you now or have you recently been afraid of your partner or a family member?
	4.	What happens when your partner or family member become angry?
	5.	You seem in a lot of pain. I wonder what that may be about? (may be useful re injury, sickness)
	6.	You seem to be struggling with school at the moment – what do you think? What might this be about?
Recognise safety and privacy	1.	Provide a private and safe environment to speak with the young person
	2.	Be aware that the perpetrator might be present, so consider ways of creating talking spaces
	3.	Be aware of what is said in front of children
Respect the person's story	1.	You are not to blame. It is never the victim's fault. It is not your fault
	2.	You may feel alone and ashamed, but these are normal reactions
Validate the person, affirm her/his strengths	1.	You have survived. How have you managed to make yourself safe?
	2.	You have sought help. It takes courage to speak out
	3.	It is important to remember that while this may be an extremely difficult time, it is possible to heal with the support of others
	4.	It is important to remember that the offence was done TO you, not BY you
Respect the integrity of the person's choices	1.	You are the one who knows what happened
	2.	Take your time. Tell me in your own words
	3.	Your choices are important. It is OK that you deal with this at your own pace
Identify safety plans	1.	How safe do you feel?
	2.	What do you need in order to feel safe? How can this school support you?
Resource and Refer		Words and actions – <i>as a guide</i>
Resource with statistics and facts	1.	It is this school's policy to support our students and their family's. It is a routine part of our work to ask people about feeling safe in their homes and violence because no one should have to live in their fear of their partners or other family members
	2.	1 in 3 women experience family violence.
	1.	In the case of an emergency, call triple zero 000
	2.	Safe Steps (24 hours, 7 days): (03) 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188
	3.	<i>Local service to be determined for each school.</i>
	Refer appropriately	4.
5.		Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service: (03) 9244 3333 or 1800 105 303
6.		National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Line (24 hours, 7 days): 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Appendix 5: Violence Prevention Leadership Commitment

Name:

Role in school community:

I believe that... (Make a statement about ethics/values/beliefs about violence prevention – respectful relationships and why they matter to you):

The following list outlines the actions I intend to take as a member of the school community to attempt to challenge sexism and other violence supportive attitudes and behaviours:

1.

2.

3.

Once the students have received the training in the Equal, Safe and Strong Project, I will commit to supporting their learnings and actions by:

If I require support and guidance from others within the community, from professional services or others with relevant experience, I will contact:

Commitment review date: 6 months 12months.....

8.2 Appendix 2: ESS Parent Booklet

SAFETY

If you or anyone you know requires support in relation to abuse and violence, or have questions about whether you/they are experiencing abuse and violence, the following services may be able to assist you:

- In the case of an emergency, call triple zero 000
- Safe Steps (24 hours, 7 days): (03) 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188
- inTouch – Multicultural Centre against Family Violence:
(03) 9413 6500 or 1800 755 988
- Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service:
(03) 9244 3333 or 1800 105 303
National Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling
Line (24 hours, 7 days): 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Contact us:

Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership
335 Nepean Hwy, Parkdale VIC 3195
Phone: 03 8587 0103 Web: www.smpcp.org.au

Important Note

Facilitators of the Equal, Safe and Strong Project have significant experience in both facilitating training programs in violence prevention as well as working with women and children who have experienced violence, crisis response and working with perpetrators, in order to provide for the safety and care of all participants.



PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

Equal, Safe and Strong Project



PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

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Evaluating the Pilot

Evaluation processes are important because they ensure that the insights, learnings and feedback of participants in the Project will be used to refine and improve future projects and work in the school to build positive and respectful programs and work to develop an equitable and safe school community.

Focus Groups

ShantiWorks will be conducting focus groups with parents/guardians, teachers/staff and students in order to develop an understanding of the experience of all involved in the Project; what was learnt, how the package can be refined and improved and to provide further opportunities for learning and connections between participants.

Interviews

individual interviews will be conducted if people have a specific offering to make, if privacy and discretion is required or if an individual has particular accessibility needs that would be better met in an individual session.

Feedback and Observation

ShantiWorks will request feedback from all who attend Project sessions. ShantiWorks will also have observers and note takers present at the sessions to record key learnings and insights.

A Whole of School Community Approach

It is important that each member of the school community has the opportunity to be involved in this Project. It is well known that involvement of students, teachers, parents and other community members is a key to the success of building a respectful community.

Role of Parents

Parents are invited to learn about the Project and to support their children in their learning and growing awareness of the issue of men's violence against women. This may include asking the students about their learning, assisting with their homework or even providing support as the students begin to question the sexism they notice on TV, in magazines and in their relationships with others.

Role of School Staff

Teachers will receive training in each of the key areas and then will be asked to develop ways in which they can challenge stereotypes and violence supportive attitudes and behaviours across the curriculum, as well as in school policies and procedures. Teachers will also be called upon to support the students who undertake the program.

Role of Students

Students will be given an opportunity to understand each of the key areas of the Project and apply this learning and understanding to their own experiences and lives. They will then be asked to develop ways to share their learnings with other students and challenge cultures of

What is the 'Equal, Safe and Strong Project'?

Background

The Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership Family Violence Working Group (SMPCP, FVWG) is a voluntary partnership of 15 active local governments, health and welfare agencies and community organisations who received funding to conduct a violence prevention pilot project in the communities of Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, and Stonnington. This Project is called 'The Equal, Safe and Strong Project'. ShantiWorks has been commissioned to develop, facilitate and evaluate the project.

Our Aims

The ESS Project aims to:

- increase understanding of primary prevention of family violence and its causes
- build the capacity of teachers to identify and support students who have experienced violence
- foster stronger and more integrated working relationships between schools and service providers to ensure young people experiencing family violence are supported.

Why is this important?

- One woman a week, at least, dies at the hands of a partner or former partner in Australia.
- One in three women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.
- Young women between the ages of 18 and 24 are twice as likely to experience sexual violence compared to other age groups.
- More than one in four young people aged 12 to 24 years hold attitudes that put them at risk of perpetrating, excusing or tolerating violence against women.
- 93% of perpetrators of violent crimes are male.

(References: National Statistics- Crime and Safety Survey, 2002; OurWatch.org, au)

Importantly, gendered violence is preventable!

The Equal, Safe and Strong Project is designed to support school communities who wish to become actively involved in the movement to eradicate violence in our community, with an emphasis on men's violence against women. The Project is designed to support communities to develop an awareness of men's violence against women, to understand the structures and cultural norms that drive this violence and to develop locally relevant strategies to prevent and respond to this significant and devastating social issue.

Your Community

An Opportunity

We have an opportunity to support young people, who are in the early stages of developing their understandings and ethics in relation to intimate relationships, gender identity, gender equality, respect, power and violence against women, to critically examine these attitudes and assumptions and develop respectful and non-violent ways of being and engaging in their relationships. This opportunity for examining attitudes, assumptions and behaviours has the potential to prevent future acts of gendered based violence, create foundational ethics and knowledges on developing respectful relationships and build safer, more respectful and more engaged communities.

What Learning Opportunities will the Project Offer?

Four key areas will be covered in the pilot training sessions with students, teachers and staff, with parents receiving a brief overview:

- **Gender Equity:** What is gender? Gender stereotypes and expectations; how gender stereotypes link to violence and; the benefits of gender equity.
- **Respect and Relationships:** Understanding what constitutes a respectful relationship and; how to build and foster respectful relationships.
- **Power and Violence:** What is violence; the gendered nature of violence and its implications.
- **Bystander Intervention:** Preventing gender based violence; how to respond appropriately to disclosures of violence.

8.3 Appendix 3: Focus Group Question Examples

8.3.1 Focus Group: Student question examples

- 1) Is there anything in particular that stood out for you in the ESS session/s- new learnings, surprises, worries?
- 2) Since attending the sessions have you noticed anything (e.g. behaviours/actions/media) that reinforced your learnings and can you share some examples (that you are comfortable sharing in this space)?
- 3) Have you taken any particular actions because of your learnings in the project (spoke up, questioned, presented, shared your learnings for example)?
- 4) How might the achievements/learnings be sustainable once this project has finished?
- 5) Since this project was created the Victoria government has committed to running projects in schools on respectful relationships and gender equality in order to attempt to reduce violence in our communities. Considering your experience with this pilot project, what suggestions would you make in terms of:
 - how these sessions are run?
 - what should be talked about, the main-essential topics to be covered?
 - who should be involved and the best ways of doing this
- 6) If this project was a great success – what would you notice in your schools?

8.3.2 Focus group: Teacher question examples

- 1) What stands out to you as key learnings in the project session/s?
- 2) What does this mean for you in your everyday work within the school?
- 3) Are you able to describe to us (with care) any particular actions you have taken in response to an incident of gender inequality/sexism within your organisation?
- 4) Are there any other actions you as individuals have taken in response to the knowledge you have gained from the project?
- 5) Did you gain support from others as you developed or participated in preventing violence against women events?
- 6) Have you developed new or reviewed existing policies in response to your increased knowledge about gender inequality within the workplace and men's violence against women?
- 7) Has your new or evolving awareness about gender inequality/gender stereotyping and violence against women led to you initiating new, or further developing any new actions or learning opportunities with the students?
- 8) Can you outline any further plans you have to initiate changes in policy, process or partnerships, or any actions you intend to take to reduce gender inequality/sexism within your organisation?
- 9) For those of you who are connected to the young people who participated in the Project, is there any specific feedback you would like to give about the sessions with the students or what came from the sessions?

- 7) If this project was a great success – what would you notice in your schools?