

LITERATURE HIGHLIGHTS

COMPILED BY JOAN KELLEHER, LIBRARIAN

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Adult survivors of child abuse

Exploring the relationship between poverty, childhood adversity and child abuse from the perspective of adulthood. (2007). Frederick, J., & Goddard, C. *Child Abuse Review*, 16(5), 323–341.

This article discusses the relationship between early childhood abuse or other adversity and later poverty in adulthood. It reviews risk and protective factors, and family poverty as a risk factor for child abuse, and features results from a study of emergency relief recipients in regional Victoria on their life circumstances, including experience of child abuse, bereavement, family breakdown, foster care, and mental health. The study findings support the ideas of negative chain effects, or pathways into poverty caused by accumulated adversity.

Behaviour change programs

Men's behaviour change programs in a regional and rural context. (2007). Laming, C., & Fontana, M. *New Community Quarterly*, 5(4), 36–39.

Drawing on the operations and practices of two Gippsland men's behaviour change programs (MBCPs), this article discusses the role MBCPs can play in a rural context, including aspects of community development. It covers the establishment of MBCPs and the importance of integration with the aims of other family violence programs, safety of victims, links to the justice system, components and process of the MBCP.

Child sexual abuse

It's my body: Calls to ChildLine Scotland about sexual health and wellbeing. (2007). Newall, E., & Lewis, R. (Research Briefing, No. 34). Edinburgh: Centre for Research on Families and Relationships. Online only. <http://www.cfr.ac.uk/Reports/rb34.pdf>

ChildLine Scotland is an anonymous support hotline for children aged 5–18 years. This paper summarises findings from a research study on sexual health and wellbeing calls to the hotline, including the nature, range, and content of caller concerns, and support strategies the callers may have employed. A wide range of concerns were reported, including "facts of life", sexual abuse, pregnancy, sexual and romantic relationships, and sexuality.

Costs of violence

Why assess the health impacts of domestic violence policy? Making the case for the application of health impact assessment to domestic violence policy development. (2008). Potter, J. L. *Just Policy*, 47, 46–52.

Recent Australian research has highlighted the extensive health costs of domestic violence; in Victoria, domestic violence has been identified as having a greater impact on the health of women under the age of 45 than any other risk factor. Policy decision-making in non-health sectors is clearly influential in determining health outcomes of pervasive social problems such as domestic violence. Health impact assessment (HIA) is a tool that can be used to assess how a specified policy or practice might affect the health of a population. This paper draws on examples of domestic violence policy development where potential and actual impacts on health have been identified, and on case studies where HIA has been applied within the domestic violence policy context. The discussion of the role of HIA does not suggest that domestic violence should be viewed only as a health issue; rather, it seeks to show that HIA can contribute to addressing the issue of domestic violence by providing a consistent focus on the health of the women and families experiencing the violence across all relevant policy sectors.

Counselling

Becoming respectful: Approaches to relationship counselling in situations of domestic violence and abuse. (2007). Jenkins, A. In E. Shaw & J. Crawley (Eds.), *Couple therapy in Australia: Issues emerging from practice*. (pp. 231–263). Kew, Vic: PsychOz Publications.

The use of couple counselling approaches in situations of abuse and domestic violence is controversial because of concern about the abused partner's safety. This chapter argues that relationship counselling can be conducted in ways that are safe and respectful to women. It explains how this can be achieved, discussing invitational practice, assessing readiness for engagement in a couple context, preparation for couple counselling, individual information forums, couple information forums, couple counselling meetings, clarification of readiness in a couple meeting, reflecting on individual responsibilities, acknowledging the effects of abuse, establishing a relationship focus, challenging interactional restraints and becoming respectful of difference.

Cultural issues

Adult sexual violence in Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia. (2007). Taylor, N., & Putt, J. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology. Available at: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi345t.html>

Knowledge about sexual violence against women from Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is scant. While many of the reasons for not reporting sexual violence to police are likely to be similar to those for mainstream women, women from diverse backgrounds can face additional cultural and related factors affecting their ability and/or willingness to report violence. This paper reports on findings from a multi dimensional study investigating these issues. Participants indicated the need for appropriate interpreters when reporting sexual violence, a preference for female police officers to handle the case, protection of complainants, and more effective dissemination of information on how the criminal justice system processes sexual assault cases. There is a clear need to address fundamental attitudes and beliefs within particular communities about sexual violence and this will require strong community leadership and the support of local community members. (Author abstract, edited)

Date rape

Victim credibility in acquaintance rape cases: The influence of complainant intoxication and expectations about alcohol-involved sexual behaviour. (2007). O'Brien, K., & Goodman-Delahunty, J. Melbourne, Vic: Australian Psychological Society.

Victim credibility is the most influential factor in police and prosecutorial decisions to litigate a sexual assault claim. Perceived credibility is influenced by situational factors and social perceptions about what constitutes "real rape". Victim intoxication influences perceptions of sexual assault through general expectations about one's own behaviour and that of others. This study investigated the influence of complainant intoxication (sober v moderately intoxicated) on attributions of blame, responsibility, credibility, likelihood of charging and conviction in an acquaintance rape case. Participants were 197 university students and community volunteers who read controverted "he said, she said" police statements about an alleged sexual assault. The complainant was perceived as more credible and less responsible and blameworthy than the defendant. However, complainant intoxication did not directly influence perceptions of complainant or defendant credibility, responsibility or blame. (Author abstract, edited)

Dating violence

Making meaning of relationships: Young women's experiences and understandings of dating violence. (2007). Chung, D. *Violence Against Women*, 13(12), 1274–1295.

This article explores young women's attitudes towards dating violence, based on a survey of 14–18 year old teenagers in Adelaide, South Australia. The survey investigated dating behaviour, social pressures, power,

sense of equality, dating expectations, and the young women's understandings and experiences of dating violence. The participants describe the positive and negative aspects of dating, and the pressure to be in a dating relationship. Most had experienced harassment, coercion, violence, or abuse. Concepts of equality, identity, and peer relations influence the women's understandings of dating violence, and are particularly important for prevention strategies.

Disabled women

WWDA violence against women with disabilities resource manual. (2007). Women with Disabilities Australia. Rosny Park, Tasmania: Author (4 booklets, 1 CD-ROM).

This resource kit brings together 4 booklets on understanding and preventing violence against women with disabilities, and supporting women who have experienced violence.

1. *A life like mine! Narratives from women with disabilities who experience violence*, features stories and poetry of resilience and hope by women who have experienced violence.
2. *Forgotten sisters: A global review of violence against women with disabilities*, examines the incidence and prevalence of violence against women with disabilities, and advocacy and policy issues. It includes an annotated bibliography of resources.
3. *It's not ok, it's violence: Information about domestic violence and women with disabilities*, is written for women with disabilities and provides information on domestic violence and support services in Australia.
4. *More than just a ramp: A guide for women's refuges to develop Disability Discrimination Act action plans*, is a guide for women's refuges and services on how to develop and implement a *Disability Discrimination Act* Action Plan.

Domestic violence

The scale and nature of family violence in New Zealand: A review and evaluation of knowledge. (2007). Lievore, D., & Mayhew, P. Wellington, NZ: Ministry of Social Development. Online only. <http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/work-areas/families-whanau/scale-and-nature.doc>

Research data about the nature and scale of family violence in New Zealand are collected in this report. The quality of the evidence is assessed and a need for more research into areas such as elder abuse and neglect, and violence in same sex relationships is identified. The report covers five main types of family violence: intimate partner violence, dating violence, child abuse and neglect, elder abuse and neglect, and sibling abuse. A separate section covers family violence among Maori and Pacific peoples.

Evaluating services

Evaluating domestic and family violence programs and services. (2008). Braaf, R. *Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse Newsletter*, 31, 5–8.

The evaluation of domestic and family violence interventions is essential to ensure that relevant and effective programs and services are offered. This article focuses on key issues for good practice in evaluating domestic and family violence programs and services. It discusses: the need for evaluators to have an understanding of domestic and family violence; conducting participatory evaluation; adopting an action research approach; timing the evaluation; identifying performance measures; collecting baseline data; promoting data quality; making use of findings; ethical practice and safety of participants.

Intimate partner abuse

Intimate partner abuse among Australian students: Prevalence and attitudes. (2007). Grant, C., Xenos, S., Smith, D., et al. In K. Moore (Ed.), *Psychology making an impact: Proceedings of the Australian Psychological Society 42nd Annual Conference, 25–29 September 2007, Brisbane, Qld.* (pp. 169–174). Melbourne, Vic: Australian Psychological Society.

Intimate partner abuse (IPA) may be defined as a pattern of deliberate physical, sexual or psychological abuse within a married, de facto, dating or courting relationship. Previous research demonstrates that such abuse is a significant problem in dating relationships among young people. The aim of this paper was to investigate IPA attitudes and behaviours in an Australian university and TAFE student sample. Findings about the prevalence of IPA and levels of victim blaming attitudes among Australian students are presented. The importance of attitudes towards women for understanding IPA attitudes was demonstrated. There were no significant relationships found between attitudinal variables and behavioural variables. The implications of these findings for the development of IPA prevention programs are discussed. (Author abstract)

Juror attitudes

Juror attitudes and biases in sexual assault cases. (2007). Taylor, N. Canberra, ACT: Australian Institute of Criminology. Available at: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi344.html>

A large majority of sexual assaults are not reported to police and only about 10% of reported incidents result in a guilty finding. This article examines findings from two recent studies that show that judgements in rape trials are influenced more by jurors' attitudes, beliefs and biases about rape than by the facts presented. It discusses the existence of stereotypical beliefs within the community about rape and victims of rape, and what needs to be done if conviction rates are to improve.

Law reform

Understandings of the criminal justice system and domestic violence. (2007). Felus, J., Kaye, P., & Lloyd, E. Elizabeth South, SA: Northern Domestic Violence Service. Online only. http://www.courts.sa.gov.au/courts/magistrates/Documents/CJS_Manual.pdf

This manual is a resource for domestic violence workers and organisations that interact with the criminal justice

system in South Australia. It covers: documenting a domestic violence incident, domestic violence legislation, risk assessment and safety planning framework, risk and safety reports and updates, victims of crime compensation, accessing court outcomes, bail and bond conditions, the parole board, victim register, promoting criminal justice system intervention, and statistics.

Code of practice for family violence court based (applicant) programs. (2007). Plunkett, C. Carlton South, Vic: Federation of Community Legal Centres (Vic). Online only. http://www.communitylaw.org.au/fedclc/cb_pages/casework_family_violence.php

The code of practice is intended for lawyers and other program staff in community legal centres who provide court-based duty lawyer services in family violence intervention order matters. It is solely concerned with court-based practice for intervention order matters, providing guidelines to legal practitioners for the provision of assistance in family violence matters. It includes a set of tools to inform practice and the management and operation of court-based family violence programs, and outlines the approach, processes and procedures used by staff to provide high quality services.

Mental health

Women, catastrophe and mental health. (2008). Raphael, B., Taylor, M., & McAndrew, V. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 42(1), 13–23.

This paper examines the concept of catastrophic experience, its relationship to the range of acute and prolonged stressors to which women may be exposed and the broad impacts on their mental health and wellbeing. Catastrophic experiences include intimate partner abuse, sexual assault and child physical and sexual abuse. Women's experiences of loss through the violent deaths of children and loved ones may also have such enduring impacts. The catastrophes of war, conflict, genocide, sexual exploitation and refugee status differentially affect large numbers of women, directly and through their concerns for the care of their children and loved ones. There is recognition of the large numbers of women currently experiencing catastrophe in ongoing ways that may be silent and unacknowledged. This is significant for clinical care and population impacts, and in the losses for women across such contexts. (Journal abstract, edited)

Mother–child relationship

Tackling domestic and family violence: Strengthening the mother–child relationship as a key intervention strategy. (2007). Humphreys, C. In *CROCCS International Conference: Overcoming violence and poverty, August 2007*. Mackay, Qld: Mackay Centre for Research on Community and Children's Services. Online only. <http://www.croccs.org.au>

The need to attend to both the adult and child victim where there is family violence provides challenging territory for child protection workers and services providing support for families with vulnerable children. Traditionally, the focus on the child, particularly in statutory child protection intervention, has created a practice that has had a tendency towards "mother

blaming” where there is family violence. This paper argues that family violence needs to be reconceptualised to acknowledge that perpetrator violence and abuse is also an attack on the mother–child relationship when the adult victim is the child’s mother. Intervention therefore needs to acknowledge this dynamic and explore the potential to strengthen this relationship in the aftermath of violence. A project, “Talking to My Mum”, is discussed to illustrate the potential to intervene to strengthen this relationship and the requirement of workers to understand this dynamic in work where children are living with family violence. (Author abstract)

“Talking to My Mum”: Strengthening relationships between mothers and children in the aftermath of family violence. (2007). Humphreys, C. *Social Work Now*, 37, 9–11. Online only. http://www.cyf.govt.nz/SocialWorkNow_4616.htm

The article reports on an action research project that worked with women, children and refuge workers, developed from collaboration between researchers at the University of Warwick and Tendering Women’s Aid in the UK. The 3-year project developed activities that could address the attack represented by domestic violence on the relationship between children and mothers through strengthening this relationship.

Out-of-home care

Out-of-home care as a response to family violence: Some lessons from a cross-national study. (2007). Thobun, J. In *CROCCS International Conference: Overcoming violence and poverty, August 2007*. Mackay, Qld: Mackay Centre for Research on Community and Children’s Services. Online only. <http://www.croccs.org.au>

There are some circumstances in which it is necessary for children to be removed from the damaging effects of family violence, either temporarily or permanently. However, in recent years there has been increasing concern about the inability of care systems in English speaking countries to meet the needs of these children. Although data sets collated from national administrative sources can be useful in providing a context for effective policies and practice interventions, comparisons between successful interventions in different countries may result in misleading conclusions. This paper discusses a research project that analysed similarities and differences between in care statistics in apparently similar countries, and offers possible explanations for the differences. The countries included in the research represented a range of different approaches to child welfare. The countries and states were: New South Wales, Queensland, Alberta, Ontario, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Illinois, North Carolina and Washington.

Police role

Arresting practices: Exploring issues of dual arrest for domestic violence. (2007). Braaf, R., & Sneddon, C. Sydney, NSW: Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse. Available at: http://www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au/PDF%20files/Stakeholder%20paper_%203.pdf

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Since the 1980s, western nations have sought to improve police response to the crime of domestic violence. One strategy is the immediate arrest of perpetrators, which protects victims and deters future violence. However, pro-arrest policies have led to a rise in the number of dual arrests, due to such factors as gender neutral arrest policies, lack of training, and difficulty in determining who the primary aggressor is. Drawing largely upon American and Australian research, this article discusses the use of violence in relationships; the impact of arrest on a victim’s safety, wellbeing, and legal opportunities; pro-arrest and mandatory arrest policies; and situational factors in arrest decision making, such as credibility and alcohol. The article concludes with recommendations on police protocols and training, and integrated policing and prosecution, that could reduce dual arrests.

Power and violence

Power and control in family violence. (2007). Hann, S. *Social Work Now*, 37, 17–25. Online only. http://www.cyf.govt.nz/SocialWorkNow_4616.htm

This article seeks to assist conversations and learning about one aspect of family violence, by outlining the power and control analysis of partner abuse that is used by the National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges in New Zealand. The “power and control wheel” is the main practice tool used, and it is described. Both analysis and the wheel have been adapted by those considering the intersections of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and disability in the lives of women, and the overlap of partner and child abuse.

Prevention programs

Domestic and dating violence peer education program: A pilot project. Final report. (2007). Davies, D. Perth, WA: Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA). Available at: <http://womenscouncil.vividcluster.crox.net.au/getfile.aspx?Type=document&ID=274&ObjectType=3&ObjectID=257>

A pilot peer education program designed to raise awareness about domestic and dating violence among teachers and students was conducted in two Western Australian secondary schools during 2007. This evaluation report provides information about the background of the project and what it achieved. The report comments on understandings of family and domestic violence and dating violence before the project, increased knowledge and awareness about domestic and dating violence, improved attitudes about domestic and dating violence and healthy relationships, increased help seeking behaviours, peer educator and peer educator support, links and partnerships between schools and service providers, and feedback from school staff.

Youth “at risk”? Young people, sexual health and consent. (2007). Powell, A. *Youth Studies Australia*, 26(4), 21–28.

In Australia, there is a growing expectation that sexuality education should reduce the risks associated with youth sex by providing young people with information on protecting their sexual health. However, this information may be insufficient to ensure that young people make choices that support their sexual safety and autonomy. This paper considers the adverse implications of the problematisation of youth sexuality for young people's sexual health and autonomy. It draws on interviews and focus group data from 117 young people to explore the varying degrees of opportunity that youth have to actively negotiate and promote safe and consensual sex. Finally, implications for sexuality education and violence prevention are briefly considered. (Journal abstract)

Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria. (2007). Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. Carlton South, Vic: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. Available at: <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/preventingviolence/>

In 2004, VicHealth research showed that violence was the most significant risk factor for the health of Australian women aged 15–45 years. This report, commissioned by the Victorian Government in 2006, reviews international evidence regarding the factors causing violence against women, and models of good practice designed to prevent it. The report is particularly concerned with building the evidence and knowledge base for primary prevention. Evidence suggests that most violence against women is perpetrated by men known to them; the primary focus of the report is therefore on preventing, or reducing the impact of, relationship violence. However, elements of the

framework developed in the report may be transferable to prevention activity that addresses other forms of interpersonal violence against women.

Sex offenders

The shaming of sexual offenders: Risk, retribution and reintegration. (2007). McAlinden, A. M. Oxford: Hart.

Sex offenders, particularly those who offend against children, feature prominently in contemporary law and order debates. This book argues that retributive responses have failed and that the justice system needs to explore alternative forms of justice in order to improve the outcome for victims, offenders and communities affected by sexual offences.

Sexual offences

Investigating and detecting recorded offences of rape. (2007). Feist, A., Ashe, J., Lawrence, J., et al. London: Home Office. Online only. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs07/rdsolr1807.pdf>

This report summarises the findings of a study of attrition in reported offences of rape of a female in England and Wales in 2003–04. It was designed to explore several aspects around the detection and conviction of rape cases. The report examines the reasons behind the decline in recorded detection rates for rape since 1997 and why marked variations in detection rates exist in different forces. It also explores what factors best predict whether a recorded offence gets to court and results in a conviction.



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Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault

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