



One in Three Campaign

PO Box 1292
Bondi Junction NSW 1355
T 02 8006 1IN3
E info@oneinthree.com.au

One in Three Campaign

5 Year Report
March 2015

ABOUT ONE IN THREE

The Campaign

One in Three is a [diverse group](#) of male and female professionals – academics, researchers, social workers, psychologists, counsellors and trainers. The Campaign aims to raise public awareness of the existence and needs of male victims of family violence and abuse; to work with government and nongovernment services alike to provide assistance to male victims; and to reduce the incidence and impacts of family violence on Australian men, women and children.

History

In 2009, the founders of One in Three felt that we could no longer retain our moral or intellectual integrity by ignoring the authoritative and growing body of [data](#) that indicates males are a substantial proportion of victims of family violence and abuse.

While welcoming the advances that have taken place over recent decades to support women and children suffering from violence, we acknowledge that there is a complete lack of programs, services and support to help men in the same situation. We feel that it is unjust and inequitable to abhor only that violence done to women and children while ignoring violence done to men.

You can get involved in a number of ways. [Add your name](#) to the growing list of [supporters](#) of the campaign. Send an [email](#) to our political leaders, asking them to provide services and support for male victims. Spread the word about the Campaign and website. [Contribute financially](#) - even a small amount - so that the campaign can continue to grow. If you are a male victim yourself, please have the courage to [tell your story](#) so that this issue can emerge from the shadows.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ACTIVITIES SINCE FOUNDATION IN 2009

Public Information:

Our website oneinthree.com.au provides:

- [information](#) on the experiences of male victims and their children and barriers to disclosing
- [research and statistics](#) about male victims
- opportunities for men to [tell their story](#) and read over 100 stories from other men
- [news](#) from around the globe
- a comprehensive list of national and international [resources](#).

Our website is included in many other support websites as the main resource for male victims.

We have produced [YouTube videos](#) of men telling their personal stories.

We give regular conference presentations, e.g.:

- *Australian Institute of Criminology's* [Meeting the Need of Victims of Crime](#) conference, May 2011
- Victims & Witnesses of Crime Court Support [annual volunteer training event](#), February 2013
- [National Men's Health Gathering](#), October 2013
- [Illawarra & South Coast Youth Services Conference](#), November 2013

We provide personal research assistance to secondary and tertiary students.

Collaborations:

Date	Collaboration
November 2009 to present	Established an online network of almost 50 supporters of One in Three – clinicians (psychologists, counsellors, social workers), academics, researchers, victim/survivors and activists.
November 2009 to May 2010	Worked with <i>Men's Advocacy Network (now MAN - Healthier Directions for Males Inc)</i> in WA to develop the groundbreaking 2010 Intimate Partner Abuse of Men report by researchers at Edith Cowan University.
February 2011	Worked with the <i>Hawkesbury District Health Service</i> call-back program for male victims to establish a data collection mechanism. Since 2011, Windsor police have been referring men who are victims of family violence to HDHS for counselling.
May to September 2011	Worked with the <i>Global Good Foundation</i> on their Minute of Noise campaign.
July 2012 to February 2013	Worked with Victims & Witnesses of Crime Court Support , NSW Police and Women's DVCAS to develop the <i>Insight</i> trial court support scheme at Downing Centre (Inner City Sydney) and Parramatta Courthouses.
July 2013 to present	Preliminary discussions with colleagues across the Tasman to launch One in Three in NZ.

Lobbying:

Lodged submissions, attended consultations and appeared before many government inquiries into family violence, e.g.:

Date	Lobbying effort
November 2009 to present	Regular lobbying of State & Federal Governments and NGOs on behalf of male victims of family violence
May 2010	ALRC Family Violence: Improving Legal Frameworks inquiry
May 2010	Organised roundtable with major stakeholders representing men's interests at the <i>ALRC Family Violence: Improving Legal Frameworks inquiry</i>
December 2010	ACT Whole of Government Statement on Family Violence
January 2011	Family Violence Exposure Draft 2010
April 2011	Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011
September 2011	NSW Legislative Council Social Affairs Committee's Domestic violence trends and issues in NSW Inquiry
November 2011	NSW Statutory Review of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 Inquiry
February to December 2013	Input into Preventing and Responding to Sexual and Domestic Violence against Men: A Guidance Note for Security Sector Institutions , prepared by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
July to November 2014	Federal Finance & Public Administration References Committee Inquiry into Domestic violence in Australia

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE FOUNDATION IN 2009

General public:

Overwhelmingly positive response:

- Received many emails of support via our website (the statistics to the right don't include any emails we received directly)
- 3,885 Facebook 'likes'
- 273 Twitter 'followers'
- over 350,000 unique visitors to the website
- 188 YouTube subscribers and 32,987 YouTube views
- Many high-profile supporters (see quotes below).

Email topic	No.
Support	151
Criticism	8
General inquiries	106
Student inquiries	36
Media inquiries	19
Male victim inquiries	18
Requests to start support groups	65
Personal stories	129

Media:

Broad media coverage online, in print press and on radio.

Regularly connected journalists with male victims/survivors of family violence for interviews.

Issued eleven media releases and had five letters to the editor published.

Efforts by One in Three were responsible for the removal and/or correction of false and/or misleading 'statistics' on family violence published by Governments, NGOs and media outlets that omitted, downplayed and/or denied male victimisation. Some examples include:



Government:

\$750,000 in funding for [Mensline Australia](#) to support male victims of family violence (the first government funding ever for male victims that we are aware of).

Page for male victims on NSW Government domestic violence [website](#) (first time ever).

[Start Safely](#) housing subsidy scheme (NSW) opened to male victims.

Groundbreaking NSW Government [report](#):

- “There was broad recognition... that women offenders and male victims do exist... Of [reported] victims of domestic assault in 2010, 69.2% were female, while 30.8% were male”
- “Male victims have been much less visible and able to access supports than should be the case”
- “The experience of [males]... is equally as bad as that of other victims”
- “[We recognise] the gap in services for male victims and [encourage] the government to examine how services can most appropriately be provided to male victims of domestic violence”
- Males are “in need of special consideration with regard to domestic violence,” along with Aboriginal people, older people, people with disability, and several other population groups.

Between the 2005 and 2012 ABS Personal Safety Surveys there was a 175% increase in the number of males reporting current partner violence since the age of 15. The rate of men reporting current partner violence in the 12 months prior to interview quadrupled (a rise of 394%), however these estimates are considered too unreliable for general use because of the small number of men interviewed. We believe men are becoming more comfortable disclosing their abuse because of awareness raising by initiatives such as One in Three.

NGOs:

Development of Mensline Australia online tip sheets for [men experiencing violence or abuse in their relationship](#), and [professionals working with men experiencing violence or abuse in their intimate relationship](#).

Despite the gendered nature of the terms of reference given to the ALRC, the recommendations of their [Family Violence: Improving Legal Frameworks](#) inquiry had the aim of improving the safety of all victims of family violence – whether male or female.

EXAMPLES OF EMAIL RESPONSES FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Anonymous:

Thank you. I had started to think NOBODY in Australia was being an advocate for men in domestic violence relationships. I have been in contact with Mensline and through many links, I found your information, which I am about to sit down and digest.

I have two men in my life who are or have been victims of domestic violence, both just as valid but both differing in intensity. My partner's former half used verbal ways to break him and on two occasions tried to take him out. She continues her abuse from afar now using the children as missiles of destruction. The second is my son, whose relationship with me has but a thread left because i dared to speak up and try and protect him. His relationship however is violent, he is physically beaten, bitten, threatened with knives, isolated from friends and family, verbally berated to the point of crying and begging her to stop, mentally and emotionally tortured with threats of sex with others, accusations of rape publicly, promiscuity(?) and suicide, you name it she has thrown it all out there. My son has told me he is broken. I have in the

past had him call me different hours of the night crying and I could hear the torment in his voice as he scrambled to appease, negotiate and beg her to stop the verbal abuse. And yet he is a very gifted man both musically and academically, and right at this moment he is preparing his wedding to his abuser - as a mother my heart breaks. He is only 23.

He would not report her - he respected women, thought he could help her, feared it would get turned on him by the police and her. His own words to me one night, 'Mum I simply lay on the floor curled up protecting my man parts and wait for it to stop' It seems at the moment 'she' behaves herself - but how do I know, he no longer communicates with me after I confronted her, called her out and threatened to call the police.



22 OCT 2014 - 12:01PM

'I'm going to stab you': Calls for more support for male domestic violence victims

Women outnumber men as targets of intimate partner violence in the reported statistics, but it's the minority of cases of male victims that appear in the collected data, and in the courts, that shine light on what those affected believe is a social taboo that needs to be broken.

SBS News, 22nd October 2014

Trying to help my son only revealed how there is NO help for men in these situations. They fear mockery, reprisals of the violence, misunderstanding and then there is the stigma that an Aussie man could not get beaten up by a girl - he must always be the perpetrator. How absolutely heart breaking for these men. Where is the voice the advocate that identifies these men and sets the record straight. Where is the voice that says, it's okay we have your back for these men. Women seem to be well represented, and rightly so, but it is a major blight on a society that allows the abuse of any individual simply because it doesn't fit the criteria of society and gender.

Kerrie:

Congratulations on forming the Campaign and best wishes for success. My son in Denver Colorado has an extremely verbally abusing, accusing and intimidating wife. Is there a similar organization for men in America? Thanking you in anticipation of a reply.

Zena:

Found your very informative website when looking for means to help my son who is a victim and has not had any contact with his children for many months. I want to pass this information on to my son so he can realise and accept he is not the blame. He has no internet or computer access. Many thanks in expectation.

Alex:

I have experienced domestic violence myself, but that's not how I found your website - I work in the community sector, and have worked with many women who have experienced domestic violence. Whilst we know that men experience it too, nine times out of ten, conversations around violence against men are used to counter arguments about violence against women. The reality, of course, is that we need to have both conversations - and they are not in competition with each other.

Lawrence:

Fantastic website! Congratulations on placing data on the Internet that tells part of the story of domestic violence in which men are the victims. Keep up the great work, and I hope that your organisation is able to get some media exposure in the main stream media... so as to assist in balancing the books.

Margot:

I was really touched by your campaign when I heard about it two years ago. For a university project I have just started a social media campaign on domestic violence directed towards men. My campaign being inspired by One In Three.

Darnè:

How can I help? I can't give you money as I am a very hard working single Mum of 3 children including 2 teenage boys, but I have qualifications in Business Admin and I would like to help how I can. I have been posting daily reminders on Facebook that domestic violence happens to men too, but want to do more. Please tell me how I can help you help wonderful men like my current partner who has and is suffering just like the men on your website.



The screenshot shows the Australian Women Online website. At the top left is a black banner with the text "Australian Women Online" in red and "the hub of home grown inspirational women" in white. To the right is a pink banner for "TRILOGY Entire Range" with an offer valid from 15/01/15 to 27/01/15, featuring images of various TRIOLOGY products. Below the banners is a navigation menu with links for HOME, BOOKS, BUSINESS, CAREER, HEALTH, INNOVATIVE WOMEN, and LIFESTYLE. The main content area features a blog post titled "No Support for Male Victims of Domestic Violence" dated June 12, 2010, by Deborah Robinson, with 8 comments. Below the title are social sharing buttons for Facebook (18 likes), Twitter (1 tweet), Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, and a "More" button. The article text begins with: "According to those who work in the area of men's health, the current approach to domestic violence ignores the one in three victims of family violence who are male. While not wanting to undermine the decades of effort that have gone into establishing services for female victims of domestic violence, they want the government to do more to raise awareness about the plight of male victims, many of whom find they have nowhere to turn when a female partner becomes violent or abusive." The article continues with a personal anecdote: "Gary's ex-wife had punched him in the face with a closed fist on several occasions. But it wasn't until she punched the couple's 16 month old daughter while he was holding her, that the father of two decided enough was enough. 'She walked over and punched my baby daughter in the middle of the back, sending us both flying. It was a terrific blow. I fled the house with my daughter and looked for somewhere to stay, but all my friends were at work or on holidays. So I phoned an emergency refuge who literally laughed at my request for help and proceeded to tell me that the service was only for women,' Gary told the One in Three campaign website."

Australian Women Online, 12th June 2010

Simon:

Thank you for creating this content and campaigning against violence and abuse against men. I have just ended a very abusive 3 year marriage and have found your organisation very helpful and healing. I will be sharing my story. I think much needs to be done on changing the profile of abuse in the eyes of the public, and your one in 3 message. Anyway, well done and THANKYOU!

EXAMPLES OF OF QUOTES FROM OUR SUPPORTERS

The Australasian Men's Health Forum (AMHF)

"The AMHF is the peak body for men's and boys' health and wellbeing in Australia. The Executive of AMHF all applaud the aims of the One In Three Campaign. We are often asked to endorse the notion of "No to violence against women" and we do so, wholeheartedly. But we also find that men as victims of intimate partner abuse get ignored. It seems that our society often prefers to take an easy and over simplistic ideological approach to domestic violence: men are perpetrators, women are victims. This website invites us to have a national debate so as to consider in a more balanced way the whole issue of violence with a view to helping us end it.

The [World Health Organisation's publication on Violence and health](#) says:

The public health approach to violence is based on the rigorous requirements of the scientific method. In moving from problem to solution, it has four key steps:

- Uncovering as much basic knowledge as possible about all the aspects of violence - through systematically collecting data on the magnitude, scope, characteristics and consequences of violence at local, national and international levels. [emphasis added]
- Investigating why violence occurs – that is, conducting research to determine:
 - the causes and correlates of violence;
 - the factors that increase or decrease the risk for violence;
 - the factors that might be modifiable through interventions.

The Executive of AMHF totally supports this approach. We feel that the One In Three campaign will disseminate research on this important topic and therefore facilitate a national dialogue based on evidence. This can only be in the interest of families as a whole and all victims and perpetrators."

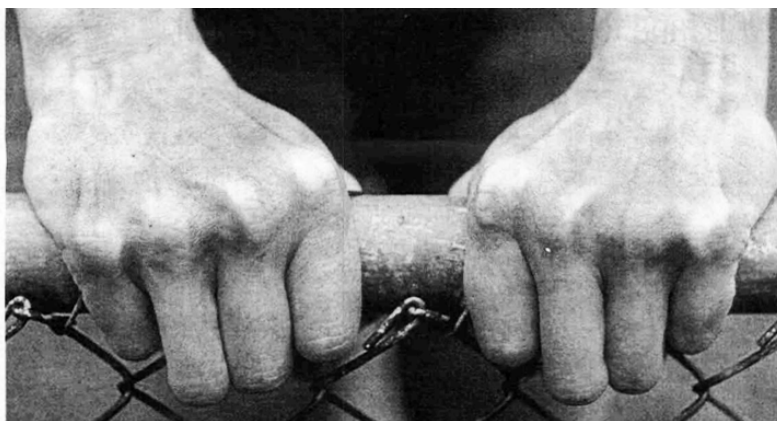
Maggie Hamilton,

author of *What Men Don't Talk About and What's Happening to Our Boys*:

"Until researching What Men Don't Talk About I'd no idea about domestic violence towards men. In speaking about it with friends I was then shocked to discover this had touched the lives of several close friends. These were men of all backgrounds - from manual laborers to professional men. In some cases the violence was inter-generational. While we remain silent on this issue, men continue to be hurt, to be ignored. Once we believed only little girls were subject to sexual abuse, and so countless boys were abused. The same is now true of men. It's important we say no to all violence."

Dr. Elizabeth Celi, psychologist and author in men's mental health:

"Throughout the journey of releasing my book on men's mental health and advocating for public awareness, I was alarmed to learn of a hidden social problem: male victims of abusive women. The more I researched the topic, the more aware I became of a conundrum faced by many men. Women may not be able to pack a punch like a man might, but some women's sugar-coated viper tongue can maim and damage a man's identity and self-worth. A man's health is wrapped up in his identity. Therefore the woman who insults his manhood, his sexuality and sensuality, his fathering role, his opinions and contributions, sexually manipulates him or uses various forms of intimidation and manipulation to 'corner him' (including using the children as negotiating tools) does terrible damage to a man's self-esteem. It's a form of social and domestic abuse that's difficult to detect and even more difficult to defend against. The battered man not only reaches a point of holding on to his identity by his fingertips, he also runs the risk of being ridiculed or misunderstood when he finds the courage to seek help. The silent phenomenon that plagued many women decades ago is now a silent phenomenon for many men. In the brilliant way we've rightfully assisted female victims, male victims deserve the same unbiased and supportive assistance."



Men also victims

KIM QUINLAN

WHEN most people think about family violence and abuse victims, they think of women and children.

However, one in three victims of sexual assault – and at least the same figure for victims of family violence and abuse – are males.

In an effort to highlight the forgotten victims of family violence – men – the One In Three campaign was established several years ago.

And one Ballarat man, himself a victim of spousal abuse, has made it his mission to heighten awareness about the issue and the national campaign.

The Ballarat man, who cannot be identified for legal reasons, had been in a happy relationship for more than 10 years, but things changed when he discovered his partner was having an affair and had hidden bank accounts containing an estimated \$200,000.

The father of two – one being a stepchild – said his partner had a hidden life, even from her own parents.

"This is when the abuse really



younger child. My stepchild is now safe with me, but I fear for (his own child)."

The Ballarat father said for a man to admit to being the victim of family violence seemed, at first, "unmanly", but after joining One in Three he realised he wasn't the only one suffering.

The One In Three campaign aims to raise awareness of the existence and needs of male victims of family violence and abuse.

Members of the campaign include a diverse group of male and female professionals like academics, researchers, social workers, psychologists, counsellors and trainers. Campaign members work with government and non-government services to provide assistance to male victims and to reduce the incidence and impacts of family violence on men, women and children.

Because of barriers such as feeling shame and embarrassment, the social stigma of not being able to protect themselves, One in Three believes men are much less likely to report being a victim of family violence than women

Abuse of men, says One in Three, takes many of the same forms as it does against women, including physical violence, intimidation and threats, sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal and financial abuse, property damage and social isolation.

According to One in Three, there are few tailored services and resources available for male victims of family violence and abuse. Services that are available include:

- Police - 000
- Lifeline - 131 114
- Mensline Australia - 1300 789 978

People can learn more about One in Three by going to www.oneinthree.com.au.

The Courier's It's Up To Us campaign, which has the support of the White Ribbon Foundation and local and national welfare agencies, is helping to highlight the many issues around family violence. During the campaign, which culminates in White Ribbon Day on November 25, readers can go online to pledge an oath to stop violence against women. To make that oath go to www.thecourier.com.au

KEY FACTS AND STATISTICS

- At least one in three victims of family violence is male.
- More than one male a week is a victim of domestic homicide.
- Almost one in four young people are aware of their mum/step mother hitting their dad/step dad.
- Male and female victims of reported domestic assault receive very similar numbers and types of injuries.
- Males are almost three times less likely to report being a victim of domestic violence to police.
- Post-separation, similar proportions of men and women report experiencing physical violence, including threats by their former spouse.

THE Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey (2006), the largest and most recent survey of violence in the nation, found that:

- 29.8 per cent (almost one in three) victims of current partner violence since the age of 15 were male;
- 24.4 per cent (almost one in four) victims of previous partner violence since the age of 15 were male;
- 29.4 per cent (almost one in three) victims of sexual assault during the past 12 months were male;
- 26.1 per cent (more than one in four) victims of sexual abuse before the age of 15 were male.

THE Crime Prevention Survey (2001) surveyed young people aged 12 to 20 years and found that:

- while 23 per cent of young people were aware of domestic violence against their mothers or step mother by their fathers or step fathers, an almost identical proportion (22 per cent) of young people were aware of domestic violence against their fathers or step fathers by their mothers or step mothers;
- an almost identical proportion of young females (16 per cent) and young males (15 per cent) answered "yes" to the statement "I've experienced domestic violence";
- an almost identical proportion of young females (6 per cent) and young males (5 per cent) answered "yes" to the statement "my boyfriend/girlfriend physically forced me to have sex";
- the Australian Institute of Criminology (2013) found that 39 per cent (two in five) victims of domestic homicide and 27 per cent (almost one in three) of victims of intimate partner homicide between 2008-09 were male.

One third of victims male

MEANWHILE, the Victorian Victims Support Agency (2012) found that in 2009-10, 36 per cent (more than one in three) people admitted to Victorian public hospitals for family violence injuries were male.

And the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2012) found that 45.4 per cent (almost one in two) victims of hospitalised family violence from a spouse or domestic partner, parent or other family member in Australia from 2002-03 to 2004-05 were male.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (1999) observed that, post-separation, similar proportions of men (65 per cent) and women (62 per cent) reported experiencing physical violence, including threats by their former spouse. Emotional abuse was reported by 84 per cent of women and 75 per cent of men.

An evaluation by the Australian Institute of Family Studies of the family law reforms found that 39 per cent (more than one in three) victims of physical hurt before separation were male and 48 per cent (almost one in two) victims of emotional abuse before or during separation were male.

The Courier, Ballarat, 7th September 2013

Rob Koch, Founding Director, Better Men Australia:

"I have been an advocate for many years for women who have been victims of family violence and have supported the necessary 'Say NO' campaigns and led the way in challenging men to treat women with the respect they deserve. But since specialising in men's work eight years ago there have been several men who have quietly disclosed to me that their female partner has been the perpetrator of violence; physical, emotional, financial, even sexual. Dare I believe them, as we would normally do if they were female victims? Some partners even admitted the abuse and came up with the same justifications as male perpetrators normally do.

I began to suggest to my professional colleagues that if we are going to be fair and comprehensive in our response to family violence we also need to acknowledge that male victims do exist; they need support; that perpetrators need to be brought to justice; that women also need programs and supports to address and overcome their anger, power and control issues. Sadly, this plea was often met with lip service at best, or more often - counter claims, suspicion and labelling.

Just recently I felt a measure of vindication with similar calls coming from the sector in the USA, and now through this website. I enthusiastically support the One in Three Campaign as a much-needed balance to those of us attempting to prevent or address family violence. It is time for the movement to mature, and this can only happen if we look at the facts objectively, and hear the silent cries of all human victims, regardless of gender."

Micheal Woods, Senior Lecturer, School of Biomedical & Health Sciences, University of Western Sydney:

"Policies, legislation and services for family violence in Australia are based on the assumption that nearly all victims are women, and all perpetrators men. This is contrary to the overwhelming body of research findings in Australia and internationally - as reported on this site. Gender is one small factor amongst many in the dynamics of family violence. Yet Government at State and Federal level continues to inflict damage on men, women and particularly children by subscribing to outmoded and simplistic concepts based in ideology – not evidence. As the former Governor General of Australia, Bill Hayden, noted in his opening speech to the Second National Conference on Violence of 1993:

'to see violence in the home ... as a war against women is to distort reality. Men too are victims. Women too are perpetrators... Neither sex has a monopoly of vice or virtue'

The One in Three campaign is a welcome and substantial contribution to the development of an evidence-based approach to reducing family violence in Australia."

Toni McLean, domestic violence counsellor and Ph.D researcher:

“The feminist movement has done the community a great service in raising public awareness of, and campaigning for legislation to address, violence in families, in particular partner violence at the hands of dangerous men. However, if we continue to focus only on abuse and violence by men, and in so doing ignore the use of abuse and violence by women towards their partners, we are actually colluding in the violence by our silence. The fact that men are statistically less likely than women to be assaulted by their partners doesn't mean that men are any less entitled to be free from abuse.

And the children of these relationships are equally affected, regardless of which parent is using violence. It is time to have a genuine focus on ending all violence in families, regardless of the sex of the perpetrator and the sex of the victim. All people are entitled to live without violence.”

Greg Millan, Director, Men's Health Services:

“As an educator, trainer and researcher with 17 years experience in the men's health area I am very pleased to support the One in Three Campaign. I have taken an active role in the area of education and raising awareness about men as victims of domestic violence since 1999. I am concerned that we do not address the needs of male victims of domestic violence by providing services and support for them, health promotion programs to halt violence against men and women and appropriate education programs for perpetrators of violence.”

Lee Heather, domestic violence counsellor and group facilitator, Kinnections (Wool-angabba, Brisbane)

“In my work I meet many men both in groups and individual counselling who tell me that their female partners have also engaged in family violence but nothing is done about this. Sometimes this is simply the individual denying or minimising their own abuse, but many times we check this out to find it is true. Presumably women do not have to be responsible for the part they played in the abuse cycle. This has to end if we are do to anything concrete about lowering rates of family violence.”

Paddy Murray, buddhist prison chaplain and psychotherapist:

“I fully support a more honest government policy around intimate partner or family violence. For too long official policies have focused on men as the problem. The truth is that at least one in three victims are male. An honest policy would focus on decreasing all intimate partner and family violence regardless of the gender of perpetrators or victims. To continue with campaigns and policies that seem to have as their main aim the pathologising of men is bad and ineffective policy as well as dishonest. Not good Karma either.”

Agenda

thewest.com.au

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'I was hit, I was punched, I was head-butted, I was bruised. I felt trapped, physically and emotionally, and isolated from my friends and family. I felt such a sense of shame that this was happening to me.'



ANDREA MAYES

This quote from a victim of domestic violence is sadly typical of those suffering at the hands of abusive partners — except in one crucial respect. The victim in this instance is male.

Alan Edwards (not his real name) spent three years in an abusive relationship with the mother of his young son before seeking help.

He was verbally and physically abused in front of his son, had his front door kicked down and felt pushed to his emotional limit.

"I'm six foot one and I weigh 90kg, and I would rather be punched in the face by a man than be shamed in this way by a woman," he said.

"You can get over the physical damage but the emotional abuse is so much harder. People don't even recognise that it's there for a start."

"The shame comes from a lack of support. If people are supporting and validating me, the shame doesn't land. Nobody told me that I was right and she was wrong. The shame can't be relieved, so it doesn't go away."

Think domestic violence and chances are you'll picture a woman with a black eye or bruising, one of the graphic images used in government media campaigns of recent years.

What these very successful campaigns fail to mention, however, is that the victims of such violence can be men, too.

It's difficult to get a true understanding of the prevalence of domestic violence against men in Australia, partly because of the extreme reluctance of men to report it. However, it's estimated that about one in three victims of domestic violence in Australia is male, and the effects of such abuse on men can be just as devastating as on women. The experience of male victims is the subject of a groundbreaking new study by researchers at Edith Cowan University that will be released next week.

Believed to be the first report in Australia to look in depth at men's experiences of domestic violence, the Intimate Partner Abuse of Men study was commissioned by the Men's Advisory Network and interviewed male victims, family members who had witnessed the effect of the abuse, and service providers.

It found that men suffered from a similar range of abuse as women, from physical, verbal and sexual to psychological, financial and social isolation.

"Abuse against the person ranged from punching, biting, scratching, spitting and the throwing of objects at men, to the spiking of their drinks," the report found.

Men reported being repeatedly



Men can be victims too

put down and humiliated, being forced to submit to sex against their will, having their financial affairs controlled and being cut off from their family and friends. The report also identified the new category of legal administrative abuse, where women use things such as violence restraining orders inappropriately to deliberately hurt their partners.

Psychologist Elizabeth Celi, who specialises in men's health, says domestic violence against men often takes the form of emotional abuse, making it harder to detect than physical abuse.

She says people often assume that men don't feel hurt by emotional abuse because they don't talk about it, yet their sense of shame, failure and self-doubt can be more acute than that of female victims.

"Men's health is intricately wrapped up in men's identity," she says. "Female perpetrators can attack him physically, and worse yet, attack his role as a father, a worker and a man in his own right. So the emotional impact on a man's self-confidence and subsequent mental health problems can be grossly underestimated."

"Just because he doesn't verbalise it doesn't mean he doesn't feel it."

Greg Andresen, a spokesman for the One in Three campaign, which aims to raise public awareness of family violence against men, says the popular belief that men are tough and can look after themselves physically was backed up by statistics that showed more women than men suffered from physical abuse in relationships.

"But often the worse damage to men comes from the emotional and psychological abuse," he says.

"Having your life controlled in such a way that you're utterly powerless, not being allowed to see your friends and family and not having money to spend — these sort of impacts are the same whether you're a burly six-foot bloke or a petite woman."

Dr Celi says men can become suicidal when the abuse is at its most severe.

'The emotional impact on a man's self-confidence and subsequent mental health problems can be grossly underestimated.'

PSYCHOLOGIST
ELIZABETH CELI



"There was nowhere for me to go and that was one of the biggest problems."

"Not only was I isolated on a country farm with this violent person, when I went to seek services there was very little that they could do for me and, even if they wanted to, there was very little understanding of how it is for men. And it's different for men than it is for women."

ECU researcher Alfred Allan said there were no services specifically for men as victims of domestic violence.

"We found that when men finally did pluck up the courage to report their abuse, there was nowhere for them to turn or they felt they simply were not believed," Professor Allan said.

"A lot of the service providers we interviewed felt really sorry for the men and wanted to help them but simply could not because they didn't have the facilities or experience."

Community Services Minister Robyn McSweeney says the support services offered to domestic violence victims "are not gender specific and can therefore be accessed by anyone presenting as a victim or perpetrator of family and domestic violence".

She says women and children experience violence at much greater rates than men do and although male victims could use crisis care and helplines, "the majority of male callers present as perpetrators of violence seeking help to change their behaviour".

Similarly, government and media campaigns targeting women and children as victims of domestic violence "are most often designed to help reduce the high rates at which the most vulnerable within our community experience violence within an intimate or family relationship".

Ironically, the success of such media campaigns may have contributed to the problems men face getting help.

Dr Celi believes these campaigns have helped create the impression that only men can be perpetrators and only women can be victims.

"The much needed work in recent decades in raising awareness for female victims has created the unfortunate and ridiculous side-effect of making all men out to be potential perpetrators and erroneously viewing them with caution," Dr Celi says.

"Male victims are then approached with negative judgments and far less compassion and empathy than female victims which is simply inequitable. We need to remember that any forms of abuse and violence against anyone, regardless of gender, are simply unacceptable."

Men's Advisory Network executive officer Gary Bryant backs the report's recommendations for government-funded public awareness campaigns, for publicly-funded services for male victims, and for training for people working in health and welfare to help them assist male victims.

"We're not trying to say that men are not the perpetrators of domestic violence, but what we are saying is that men can be victims too and that they need appropriate support services and systems," he says.

Mr Edwards was one of the lucky ones.

Having had previous professional experience in the area of men's health, he was eventually able to get some support from former colleagues.

"They ended up validating me, which was at least enough for me to hold my own, and helped me see that I had to get out," he says.

For three years he lost the hands-on parenting role he had previously enjoyed with his son, but eventually won a Family Court order giving him shared custody.

"Now I've got a court order she seems to understand and things have got better," he says.

Agenda

Western Australian, 22nd May 2010

Brian Mier, Men's Health Educator & Advocate:

"One of the early managers of a community health service in Victoria (1977-1980), I was appalled at the way things had skewed to victimise men in the system when I returned to the field of health education and promotion three years ago. The One in Three Campaign evidences and highlights the fact that men can be victims of violence, too. Psychological, sexual and emotional violence are no less powerful and destructive than physical violence. I believe in Equity in community health and services, and that actions speak louder than words. I am glad to be able to contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of men and boys in my State and community. Supporting the One in Three Campaign is an important part of my work and adds to my knowledge base."

Roger Smith, former National Research Officer at Relationships Australia

"I was the National Research Officer at Relationships Australia from 2005 to 2007, so I have a perspective on this issue both as a researcher, and incidentally, as a victim of severe emotional abuse during a turbulent 4 year marriage. I heard about the message of respectful relationships during my time at RA. Certainly, they treated me with respect. But at the same time, there were no tools available to me to deal with the abuse I was getting when I returned home each night.

The abuse was emotional and economic in that I was expected to provide financially for the household, but then my wife would refuse to get a job and refused to even do housework as a way, I believe, to humiliate me. It was tantamount to slavery coupled with constant abusive words and put-downs. I was also cut off from friends if she thought they could be a source of emotional support for me.

I therefore fully support the campaign which also has a human rights component. Article 23 (4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees equal rights in marriage and at its dissolution for both men and women. But if we say that only women have protection from DV in marriage we are violating Australia's international human rights obligations."

Jeremy Smith, male health worker, Alice Springs (NT)

"We have high rates of family violence, a term we use here as we accept that it impacts on all family members. In July 2008 in the Inteyerrkwe statement 400 Aboriginal males from all over Australia acknowledged and apologised for the hurt caused to women and children by men after a lengthy meeting of 2-3 days. The statement was presented and read to the Australian government and the UN.

Unfortunately significant amounts of violence here are caused by women against men and the 'helping' agencies favour females over men, as does the judicial system. The 'intervention' has compounded this bias by portraying Aboriginal men as child sexual abusers, ignoring the fact that most men here

struggle very hard to care for their female partners and children. Women are thus almost guaranteed a sympathetic response and can use that to bully and hurt men, who are even less likely to report it to the authorities than their non-Indigenous counterparts due to the shame involved. Daily we see men who have been hurt by women without any chance of recourse yet the newspapers daily portray violence caused by men to woman.

It is great to see that the One in Three campaign acknowledges all people affected by violence.”

Dr Attila Danko, GP

“We need to expose the truth that family violence is often towards men and boys. They are usually very ashamed to admit it and are scared they will not be believed, or even worse, assumed to be the perpetrator. We need to make sure that all victims have the support they need no matter what their gender. Having my eyes opened to the truth has helped me to help others.”

Ree Pritchard, Gestalt and ACT therapist, AOD Counsellor

“Domestic abuse knows no age, gender, nationality or religion. It is a crime against another human being and all victims from any assault deserve services that are educated to handle respectfully, competently and with up-to-date knowledge about this silent experience that some families are facing alone.”

Dr Bernard Glennon, Barrister-at-law

Bernard Glennon, Barrister-at-law “Thank you for your good work. More needs to be done in this area for male victims of female crimes. Best wishes.”

Noel Segismundo Cabigting, Pastoral Practitioner & Counsellor

“Violence against men is still a taboo and thus under reported but the consequences are real and costly. Thanks to One in Three, men who suffered abuse of any form have an advocate. I wholeheartedly lend my support to One in Three and want to honour their valuable contribution to improving men’s lives.”

Rodney Lovell, Melbn Pty Ltd, Strategy Director and Presenter, White Ribbon Ambassador

“I am an Ambassador for White Ribbon. I certainly understand and support the eradication of domestic violence against men. I will definitely be adding the 1IN3 message to my talks on DV, and my men’s depression workshops. Keep up the great work.”

Are men victims of domestic violence too?

By Joseph Thomsen (ABC Local)

How prevalent is domestic abuse against men?



The issue of domestic violence has a higher profile than it once did.

Most of the discussion, and virtually all of the funding, centres around violence towards women.

But men can be victims of abuse in relationships as well.

It's an issue promoted by advocacy groups like the One-In-Three Campaign, and which has been echoed by male and female listeners to ABC Goulburn Murray.

Greg Andresen is a senior researcher with the One-In-Three Campaign, and he explained why his group had that name.

"We set up the campaign in 2009 to raise awareness of the fact that in Australia, at least one in three victims of family violence and abuse are male.

And that may surprise you and your listeners because it's not a statistic that we hear very much about."

We asked how credible those statistics were.

"They're based on a broad range of statistics, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures, where they fill out a survey, a random sample of the population, so that captures everyone in the population hopefully, not just those who turn up to the police."

Several local men called in to share their stories anonymously, with one caller describing the abuse in his marriage as a mix of physical and emotional.

"I've been hit probably a dozen times over that 10 to 15 years I guess... It's more the words and the screaming that really hurts more than anything."

Another caller said there were a number of times he had to fend off knife attacks from his former partner.

"I was attacked with weapons and stuff like that, you know knives, the only time I'd ever put my hands on her was to restrain her, otherwise you'd just take the hits."

Related Photos



(ABC)

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Greg Andresen

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Greg Andresen

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Robert Brockway, former Police Officer

“As a former police officer I was already aware that a significant proportion of domestic violence was against men and that in many cases the male and female domestic partners perpetrated domestic violence against each other. I also often observed the lack of regard shown by police officers for male victims of domestic violence. I was looking for hard data on rates of domestic violence against men for research I am doing and was pleased to find your site. I full support the prevention of domestic violence (and indeed all forms of violence) against all humans regardless of the gender of the perpetrator or the victim. I am troubled by how often problems that impact both genders are painted in the mass media and public consciousness as gender issues, impacting only one gender.”

Mark Rosenthal, RADAR (Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting), USA:

“The first serious research into family violence was the 1975 U.S. National Family Violence Survey funded by the U.S. National Institute of Health and conducted by sociologists Murray Straus, Suzanne Steinmetz, and Richard Gelles. The researchers expected to find that partner violence was overwhelmingly male-on-female violence, but their data showed that assumption to be wrong. When they presented their research findings at a conference, the data was so unwelcome that [they were nearly hooted and booed from the stage](#). In the three decades since then, the media has kept the public ignorant of objective research into family violence, and instead presented a biased portrayal of the issue. Domestic violence is a human problem, not a gendered problem. A fair and just society would see to it that all victims are treated with compassion. R.A.D.A.R. - Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting - is a non-profit, non-partisan organisation of men and women working to improve the effectiveness of the approach to solving domestic violence.”

Harry Crouch, National Coalition For Men, USA:

“There is a large body of research from Westernised countries that show more than one in three victims of intimate partner violence are men. Emerging research is beginning to establish that in some countries men are substantially more likely to be abused by a woman than a woman by a man. Regardless, the number of men abused by women is huge. Such abuse is not gender-specific. Why then are there so few or no related services for men? Why do so few fathers and mothers defend their sons? Why do civilised societies punish men for things they have not done while at the same time send them to die or be seriously injured in war? How is it we so easily abuse, shame, and accuse our sons and then disenfranchise them as adults for being violent? How convoluted is it then that we blame female violence on men and grant women excuse after excuse for their violence?”

Gordon E. Finley, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Florida International University, USA:

“‘Silent Victims No More’ easily could be one theme for the One in Three Campaign. There is nothing inherent to being a boy or man that requires us silently to accept violence (physical, sexual, or emotional) from girls and women. The data in the United States clearly indicate that males and females initiate domestic violence at approximately equal rates with a very disturbing trend in some recent studies suggesting increasing initiation rates by girls and women. A Campaign whose time has come.”

Thomas Golden, author, *Swallowed by a Snake: The Gift of the Masculine Side of Healing*, USA:

"I have worked as a psychotherapist with traumatised men for over 30 years. About 10 years ago I became aware that men were indeed victims of domestic violence and were often put into very difficult positions of having to protect themselves and their children from harm. I was shocked at the time to realize that there was no place for these men to go to get help. I started contacting legislators, domestic violence agencies and anyone else who might listen. I was amazed at the lack of concern for these men. The domestic violence treatment centers were obviously built for female victims and it didn't take much investigation to find that they also held men accountable for the origins of domestic violence. Not 'some men' who are out of control for some reason or another but rather 'men in general' or even masculinity itself. This sort of assumption has short-circuited men from getting help in the present system. How can one have compassion for those who, according to the theoretical model, deserve the blame for the problem itself? You can't. Our system of domestic violence is long overdue to be completely re-organised to have compassion for both male and female victims. Thank you for your web site and your concern for male victims of domestic violence."

**Bernard Smith, Family Violence Response Coordinator,
Work and Income New Zealand:**

"As a society we will never eliminate family violence until we include men's experience of violence alongside women's and children's"

ONE IN THREE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IS MALE

oneinthree.com.au

1IN3 is a diverse group of male and female professionals working to raise public awareness of the existence and needs of male victims of family violence and abuse.

Go to oneinthree.com.au/supporters for more information.
