



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

What Your Parish Can Do

Educating for the prevention of violence against women and children

Anglican clergy and lay leaders have a powerful impact on people's attitudes and beliefs about violence.

Here are some specific ways clergy and lay leaders can help prevent violence against women and children before it occurs.

- **EDUCATE THE CONGREGATION.** Regularly preach a message of non-violence and participate in White Ribbon Day as a church community. Include instructional information in monthly newsletters, on church bulletin boards and in parish magazines. Inform the congregation of the Anglican policies that outline responses to victims and perpetrators of violence.
- **MARRIAGE PREPARATION.** Include themes of equality, the division of labor, non-violent conflict/resolution and gender stereotypes in pre-marriage and marriage classes.
- **OFFER COURSES AND SUPPORT GROUPS.** Offer parenting classes, weekly support groups for men/women, programs for young people and children and sponsor educational seminars. Provide the use of venues and resources for male involvement efforts – rooms for meetings, walls for murals etc.
- **USE THE PULPIT.** Commit to making the problem of violence against women and children a critical concern. Use teachings and practices that support equality and respect for women and girls. Emphasise a woman's right to be free from violence.
- **INVITE A SPEAKER** from a recognised agency such as the Victorian Women's Trust to talk to members of the church community (Resource list 3 & 7, *Promoting Equal and Respectful Relationship in Faith Communities a Manual and Tool Kit 2012*)

- **DISPLAY** posters, leaflets and local information about where help is available and keep this up to date. Online resources will be made available in due course from the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne website www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/.
- **PARTNER WITH EXISTING RESOURCES.** Engage with the materials and resources offered by domestic violence services (Resource list 49 *Promoting Equal and Respectful Relationship in Faith Communities a Manual and Tool Kit 2012*) to help educate your congregation.
- **BECOME A RESOURCE.** Do the theological and scriptural homework necessary to better understand and respond to violence. Share this information and encourage others to do the same (Resource list 2, 4 & 9 *Promoting Equal and Respectful Relationship in Faith Communities a Manual and Tool Kit 2012*)
- **INTERPRETATION OF BIBLICAL TEXTS.** Consider a workshop examining different interpretations of religious texts, principles and doctrines. Look at texts that can be misinterpreted or manipulated to justify the abuse of women and children. Counter negative interpretations with principles and doctrines that promote non-violence and the sanctity and dignity of every human life.
- **SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING.** Encourage training and education for pastoral care workers to increase their prevention awareness (Resource list 1 and the Peer mentoring program for leaders, *Promoting Equal and Respectful Relationship in Faith Communities a Manual and Tool Kit 2012*).
- **ADDRESS INTERNAL ISSUES.** Encourage continued efforts by the Anglican Church to address allegations of abuse by Christian leaders to ensure that clergy and pastoral care workers are a safe resource for victims and their children.