

World Urban Forum Report



Gender, Local Governance and
Violence Prevention

Gender Local Governance and Violence Prevention

- 3 year linkage project funded by the Australian Research Council and VicHealth (May 2006 – April 2009)
- Led by Dr Carolyn Whitzman, Senior Lecturer in Urban Planning, University of Melbourne
- 4 LGAs in Victoria – Casey, Loddon, Bendigo and Maribyrnong

Gender Local Governance and Violence Prevention

- To develop local and state 'gendered' policies and programs that prevent violence
- To critically investigate the divide in research and public policy between reducing violence in the public and the private realms

Gender Local Governance and Violence Prevention

- **Gender** – “violence and fear of violence is seen as a major factor preventing the full participating of citizens, particularly women, in public life” (Whitzman, 2006)



Gender Local Governance and Violence Prevention

- **Local Government** – Together with the World Health Organisation, many international bodies have begun to recognize the value of understanding interpersonal violence as inextricably connected to the social, political and economic structures in which individuals live and that any successful violence prevention initiatives must address these structural factors as the key to solutions. (Hayes, 2006)

World Urban Forum Learnings

- Coordinated action led by Local Government
- “Bottom up” approach – listen to the women
- Integrate violence prevention into existing structures – make it a priority, not an “add on”
- Make use of key champions within the community and within Council



World Urban Forum Challenges

- How to turn experiences into public policy so they become acknowledged as rights
- Strong support for a “bottom up” approach to public policy – participatory actions
- Need full support across local government (including Councillors) and community agencies for responses to be sustainable
- Multi-faceted approaches



Where are we now in Maribyrnong?

- Identified in Council's Safer Communities Policy and Action Plan 2003-2006
- Family Violence Working Group established in August 2005 as a subcommittee of the Maribyrnong Safety Taskforce
- Action Plan developed for coordinated action
- New Western Region integrated family violence partnership established in July 06

What's next for Maribyrnong?

- Participation in the advisory committee
- Mapping / audit of policies and programs
- Workshop with key stakeholders to develop local initiatives in relation to violence prevention
- Commence re labeling policies and programs to include a focus on violence prevention
- Develop a local evaluation based on the state wide evaluation framework