

History and Achievements of “AISV Taskforce on Prevention of Domestic Violence”

A meeting was organized by AISV on 4 November 2009. The aim of the meeting was to explore collaboration possibilities between NGOs and Structural organizations in order to address the issues and nature of the problem of Domestic Violence, and preventive strategies in the Indian Community of Victoria.

The meeting was moderated by Dr Manjula O'Connor, Vice President AISV. Venue- The Lyceum Club, Melbourne.

Two Indian community organizations namely AISV, DISHA were represented. FAIV sent apologies. Ethnic Radio 3zzz, The University of Melbourne's The Centre For International Mental Health, -. Immigrant Women Domestic Violence Service- CEO and Chair of the Board .Indian Health Professionals-general practitioner and a Psychiatrist.

An apology from FIAV was received. And Western Legal Aid service for International Students (ISLAC).

The chief guest of the evening was the Indian Consul General Ms Anita Nayyar.

After a 4 hour of intensive discussion on

- Why do so few women utilise current services for domestic violence in Melbourne
- Do women know what constitutes emotional violence, whether they are victims?
- Is there a high suicide rate or sexual violence, or dowry deaths as happens in India?
- Preventive Strategies

Following Recommendations were formulated.

It was proposed that a taskforce on 'domestic violence in the Indian community be formed

The taskforce would come up with the following

1) We Need research as there is no scientifically based sound information to guide the health systems on the Indian community.

AND To explore funding options for such research.

2) To explore current models of service for victims in crisis means and ways to improve utilization rates, remove barriers to using the services,

3) To create programs to change attitudes for prevention of violence

4) To create plans to utilize community members- men and women to build capacity within the community to help cope and prevent the problem

The TASKFORCE meets quarterly and has had 5 meetings,

Following summary of the Last meeting highlights the extent of the achievement by the TASKFORCE.

1) Congratulations to two Successful Funding grants on DV in The Indian Community

- a) AISV, Melbourne Uni and Drummond Street Project on Qualitative study on "Cultural determinants of barriers to seeking help and understanding the nature, prevalence of DV in the Indian community." - \$50,000 From the Legal services Board, \$7,000 from the Court Fund, \$19,000 from AISV. The collaborative RESEARCH project between AISV, University of Melbourne and Drummond St DV service will start in February 2011. This project uses theatre as a tool for uncovering hidden attitudes and hidden issues that the members of community do not like to discuss openly.
- b) In Touch (previously called Immigrant Women's DV Service) have received \$50,000 for "Understanding Barriers to Law and Justice by CALD communities."

2) Community Education Sessions

In Touch Multicultural centre against FV planned an information session on DV with the Indian Community organisation DISHA "on Saturday 11 December in Surrey Hills Restaurant called Chef's Tandoor. Called "ENOUGH CAMPAIGN

3) White Ribbons Day- was held on 25 November 2010.

- a) Dr Manjula O'Connor has been made "White Ribbon Champion" by Immigrant Women's DV Service, (now called "In Touch). Congratulations. Mr. Arum Sharma has been made the White Ribbon Ambassador for the Indian community- first in the South Asian Communities.
- b) Next year White Ribbons Day- 25 Nov 2011, **The Jewish Taskforce on DV** and The Indian Community represented by AISV, DISHA FIAV and others will join hands in inviting the men folk to mark the day.

4) International Women's Day 8 march 2011

The Taskforce decided to celebrate the **International Women's Day** in the Western Suburbs. We chose Western Suburbs as a large proportion of the new Indian migrants are living in western suburbs. The day will be celebrated between 6 30 pm to 8 30 pm. The day will be open to all nationalities. The Jewish Taskforce will join hands and send us their celebrated, visiting Israeli DV expert Ms Debbie Gross.

It was decided to supply free entertainment and free food and dancing. Funding will be sought for the same. KAPS Management School has offered to help.