

Children's messages for fathers who use violence: How can we embed their perspectives in Men's Behavioural Change Programs?

The perspectives of children and young people who have experienced family violence have only fairly recently been considered important and the subject of research attention. Within programs for fathers who use violence, children and young people's perspectives are seldom heard. The literature we have is limited but indicates that many children do not know that their father is attending a program to address his violence. For the small number of children who are informed about their father's attendance at a program, most have no further involvement. Although there is some evidence that children can act as an effective motivator for change for fathers, recent work in Australia and internationally suggests that the content of programs for fathers who use violence often do not contain any reference to children's perspectives on their father's violence. This presentation will outline the findings of research which was undertaken to ask;

- What are the perspectives of young people on fathering in the context of family violence?
- What are the key messages young people who have experienced family violence have for fathers who attend a Men's Behavioural Change program?

The research also explored ways to embed the voices of children within programs for fathers who use violence and the likely impact on program design, delivery and participants. By combining the use of traditional research methods such as focus groups and interviews with newer technologies such as Digital Storytelling, the researchers have been able to work alongside non-government organisations to support children and young people who have experienced family violence have their views heard and acted upon.