

CFV 93 Women's Information and Referral Exchange

Full name:

Women's Information and Referral Exchange

Proposal 3-1:

WIRE agrees with this definition of family violence.

However, we are interested in the phrasing of section (i) in that it refers to "the effects of behaviour" and not the behaviour itself. We take this to mean the immediate after-effects of a family violence incident, such as a distressed/injured mother, and not the long-term effects of family violence, such as a mother's post-traumatic stress symptoms or economic insecurity.

WIRE suggests that section (i) is rephrased as "behaviour by the person using violence that causes a child to be exposed to the behaviour, or short-term effects of that behaviour, referred to in (a)--(h) above." This way there is a distinction between the behaviour and the effects of the behaviour, as well as a distinction between the short-term effects of the behaviour and the long-term effects of the behaviour.

In addition, WIRE considers it important that a child's exposure to family violence be considered family violence itself, and that the definition of family violence functions protectively for the mother-child relationship.

Proposal 3-2 :

Agree

Proposal 3-3:

Agree

Proposal 3-4:

Agree

Proposal 3-5:

Agree

Proposal 3-6:

Agree

Proposal 3-7:

Agree

Proposal 3-8:

Agree

Proposal 3-9:

Agree.

WIRE considers this amendment to be extremely important for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

WIRE also considers that the threat to remove a woman's children from Australia should be considered a form of family violence, and that this is particularly pertinent for the Migrations 1994 (Cth).

Proposal 4–1:

Agree

Proposal 4–2:

Agree

Proposal 4–3:

It is WIRE's view that screening for family violence should occur in person, whether via a conversation with a woman in a face-to-face or telephone context; WIRE considers that the sensitive nature of family violence disclosure requires an interpersonal approach.

WIRE does not support the use of the other mediums listed above for the purpose of screening for family violence; it does, however, support the use of these mediums as educative tools regarding family violence.

Proposal 4–4:

Agree.

WIRE considers it important that all workers mentioned above receive recognised training in relation to practising cultural/cognitive sensitivity.

Question 4–1:

- * Change of Assessment (Child Support Agency)
- * Change of Income Estimate (Centrelink)
- * Change in children's care arrangements (all agencies)
- * Change of payment option (Centrelink)

Proposal 4–5:

Agree.

WIRE considers it to be vital that the process of screening for family violence is applied sensitively because women who have lived with family violence are often traumatised.

WIRE also considers it pertinent for workers to be equipped with other referral options in addition to a Centrelink social worker; for example, in Victoria, the Domestic Violence Outreach Service and WIRE-Women's Information.

Proposal 4–6:

Strongly agree.

Proposal 4–7 :

Agree

Proposal 4–8:

Agree.

As a referral agency, WIRE is interested to know what organisations/services would be included in the referral process.

Proposal 4–9 :

Agree

Proposal 4–10:

Agree.

WIRE also considers it pertinent that women are given referrals to key support service providers in addition to a Centrelink social worker.

Proposal 4–11:

Agree

Proposal 4–12:

Agree

Proposal 4–13:

Agree

Proposal 4–14 :

Agree

Proposal 4–15:

Strongly agree.

WIRE considers it to be essential that the Department of Human Services and other relevant departments and agencies develop consistent policies and statements relating to family violence and child protection.

WIRE supports the clarification of the relationship between the definition of family violence and the definition of child abuse in order to stop women receiving mixed messages across service provision areas.

Other comments:

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