

MEDIA RELEASE

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AUSTRALIA-FIRST GUIDE FOR WORKING WITH FATHERS WHO USE VIOLENCE AGAINST THEIR FAMILIES

Research released today provides practitioners and organisations working with fathers who use domestic and family violence (DFV) against their families with new insight into what works.

The *Invisible Practices: Intervention with fathers who use violence* project, funded by Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), has delivered a Practice guide for workers. The project also highlights the need for organisations to undertake systemic change to embed new practice approaches.

University of Melbourne's Professor Cathy Humphreys, who led the project, says that structured interventions with men who use violence mostly occur through the criminal justice system and specialist men's behaviour change programs, but other services also have a role to play.

"Significant intervention with fathers who use violence occurs across child protection and family support services but, until now, this work has not been documented or formalised. In other words, it has been 'invisible'," Professor Humphreys said.

ANROWS CEO Dr Heather Nancarrow is optimistic about the potential for the research to make a difference in the lives of women and children living with DFV.

"Now, for the first time, we have an evidence-informed picture of how to work with fathers who use violence—and, importantly, how to keep women, children and practitioners safe while we do it," Dr Nancarrow said.

The project commenced in early 2017 and builds upon ANROWS's PATRICIA (PATHways and Research Into Collaborative Inter-Agency practice) project, which investigated fostering greater collaboration between child protection services and specialist DFV services.

The *Invisible Practices* project also draws on the expertise of practitioners in four states and US-based Safe & Together Institute consultants David Mandel and Kyle Pinto.

The report was launched today at a National Symposium, in collaboration with the NSW Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Honourable Pru Goward, as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. It is the first research released from ANROWS's Perpetrator Interventions Research stream.

The full Research report, Research to policy and practice paper and Practice guide can be found on the ANROWS website (<https://www.anrows.org.au/node/1307>).

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