

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - Key Literature

Australia

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia* (Report, 2018).

This report usefully compiles and summarises current statistics on family violence, domestic violence and sexual violence from multiple sources. Its key points are:

- > women are at greater risk of family, domestic and sexual violence;
- > some groups of women are more vulnerable to all three types of violence (in particular, women who are Indigenous, young, pregnant, separating from a partner or experiencing financial hardship and women with disability);
- > children are often exposed to the violence;
- > the three types of violence are leading causes of homelessness and adverse health consequences for women and create significant financial cost; and
- > family violence is worse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The report also identifies important gaps in the current research on family, domestic and sexual violence.

No or limited data is available on:

- > children's experiences, including attitudes, prevalence, severity, frequency, impacts and outcomes of these forms of violence;
- > specific at-risk population groups, including Indigenous Australians, people with disability, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, including those in same-sex relationships;
- > the effect of known risk factors, such as socioeconomic status, employment, income and geographical location;
- > services and responses that victims and perpetrators receive, including specialist services, mainstream services and police and justice responses;
- > pathways, impacts and outcomes for victims and perpetrators; and
- > the evaluation of programs and interventions.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*, Cat No IHW 147 (2015).

This report draws on government statistics including the ABS. It reports that most recent available statistics show that the age-standardised rate of hospitalisations for assault among Indigenous females was 31 times

as high as for non-Indigenous females (1,204 and 39 per 100,000 females, respectively) (p44). It also reports that ‘the imprisonment rate of Indigenous people was 13 times as high as the rate for non-Indigenous people (age-standardised rates of 1,857 and 144 per 100,000 adults, respectively)’ (p46).

Bagshaw, Dale et al, *Reshaping Responses to Domestic Violence* (Final Report, University of South Australia, April 2000).

Researchers reviewed Australian and overseas domestic violence literature, and then conducted a phone-in and focus groups to assess the needs of women, men and young people who have been involved in domestic violence situations. This required analysis of the primary data collected and consideration of prevention strategies used in Australia and overseas (p8). The paper’s discussion included consideration of the following:

- > While theorists acknowledge that alcohol and drug misuse is not the cause of domestic violence, research in Aboriginal situations indicates a direct correlation between the two, with between 70 and 90 per cent of all assaults being committed while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Some Aboriginal people believe that these are not two separate issues and should not be treated as such. (p126)
- > “While it is important to acknowledge that a domestic assault is an offence against a victim, the question that needs to be asked in relation to Aboriginal offenders is, how can we also recognise that their behaviours have largely been determined by the violence of the State in Aboriginal lives, while at the same time holding the offender accountable and providing programs whereby the offender is enabled to change their behaviour.” (p126)
- > Pp129-130 discusses ‘Experiences of Aboriginal men who are perpetrators of family violence’ including men’s experiences as victims of violence, drug/alcohol abuse, loss of identity and poor self esteem, lack of appropriate role models.

Bartels, Lorana, *Indigenous women’s offending patterns: A literature review* (AIC Reports, 2010).

This report is a literature review on Indigenous women’s offending patterns. Of particular note, it looks at the relevance of family violence to Indigenous women’s offending. The data indicates that ‘many Indigenous women are subject to violence and victimisation at much higher rates than non-Indigenous women and these issues are thought to be linked to their offending patterns’ (p.x). The report also notes the perception that Indigenous women were becoming more likely to retaliate against ongoing family violence than previously. For example, the 2002 ATSIJSJC report referred to ‘[a]necdotal evidence suggest[ing] increased arrest for violence is the result of Indigenous women who behave violently to protect or defend themselves, because they know that they would not receive police protection’ (ATSIJSJC 2002: 151)’. Further, in 2003, ATSIJSJC said that Indigenous women ‘may be unable or unwilling to fragment their identity by leaving the community, kin, family or partners’ as a solution to the violence’. See the findings

summarised at pp.28-29.

Bartels, Lorana, ‘Violent offending by and against indigenous women’, (2012) 8(1) *Indigenous Law Bulletin* 119-122.

This paper considers the issue of Indigenous women and violence—both the violence they perpetrate and the violence they experience. Indigenous women experience violent and sexual victimisation at much higher rates, and more seriously, than non-Indigenous women, and much of this is likely to be in a domestic context. Most Indigenous women who also offend are themselves victims, and the nexus between offending and victimisation must therefore be considered. For example, the authors quote the Australian Institute of Criminology’s national homicide monitoring program, which indicates that: Indigenous women are 14 times more likely than non-Indigenous women to commit homicide; Indigenous women accounted for 28 per cent of Indigenous homicide offenders, and in 93% of cases the offender and victim were in a domestic or family relationship; and it is likely in many of these cases the women were responding to violence against themselves.

Blagg, Harry, Emma Williams, Eileen Cummings, Vickie Hovane, Michael Torres and Jaren Nangala Woodley, *Innovative Models in Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women: Final Report* (ANROWS, 2018).

This comprehensive report responds to the deficiency in knowledge relating to Indigenous women’s experiences of violence, and highlights the importance of Indigenous women’s voices in informing innovative responses to violence against Indigenous women (p 9). It is recognised that Indigenous culture and knowledge necessitate specially tailored responses to family violence (pp 9, 19). Further, the report highlights the complex context of oppression within which violence against Indigenous women occurs, and the importance of investing in Indigenous women’s organisations (pp 53, 56-8).

The report also confronts problematic elements in mainstream approaches to family violence in the context of Indigenous culture (see p 59). Key findings include:

- > Many Indigenous victims view mainstream systems as alien and estranging (p 26);
- > The law does not distinguish between coercive control and other forms of aggression, particularly fights, which are a prominent form of conflict in Indigenous communities (pp 24, 26);
- > The approach to domestic violence as an exceptional form of harm prevents understanding from other sites of Indigenous crisis response, such as suicide, mental health, substance abuse, and intergenerational trauma (pp 26, 34, 58);
- > Criminal justice interventions do not adequately reflect layers of violence within Indigenous communities (p 58);

- > Indigenous communities seek a greater focus on prevention of the whole spectrum of aggressive behaviours (p 58); and
- > Poor housing conditions exacerbate violence and increase vulnerability (p 58).

Finally, the report highlights a number of considerations and strategies for future practice in this area:

- > Intervention and prevention in cases of family violence should be underpinned by a focus on social and emotional wellbeing (pp 61-2);
- > Courts should adopt innovative practices, such as ‘one family/one judge’ initiatives, consideration of intergenerational trauma, and appropriately adapted triage processes focussing on comprehensive screening (p 62);
- > Locally, there should be a focus on communication between relevant parties, including magistrates, court user groups, and Indigenous community leaders (p 63); and
- > To the greatest possible extent, Indigenous leaders should be at the centre of intervention processes (p 63).

Blagg, Harry, Nicole Bluett-Boyd and Emma Williams, *Innovative Models in Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women: State of Knowledge Paper* (ANROWS, 2015).

This review outlines current knowledge on responses to violence against Indigenous women in Australia. The review points out that Indigenous women must continually balance reporting violence to the police with the potential consequences for themselves and other family members that may result from approaching the police (p 13).

Further barriers to disclosure for Indigenous women can stem from geographical remoteness, and include for example (p 8):

- > Communication difficulties, including telephone access and access to transport;
- > lack of Indigenous specific shelters;
- > heightened concerns of confidentiality due to the small community size (and limited service providers);
- > lack of services;
- > the dominance of patriarchal ideologies and colonial mentalities amongst police in rural and remote locations;
- > the relative conservatism of rural towns, where family violence may be seen as a “private matter”; and
- > the risk of experiencing racism when engaging with services.

The review identified further common themes, such as:

- > a reluctance to report because of fear of the police, the perpetrator, or the perpetrator’s kin;

- > fear of “payback: by the offender’s family if he is jailed;
- > concerns the offender may become “a death in custody”;
- > reluctance to become involved with non-Indigenous justice systems, which are seen by many as an instrument of dispossession; and
- > fears that children may be removed.

Cunneen, Chris, ‘Alternative and Improved Responses to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland Indigenous Communities’ (Research Report, Department of Communities (QLD), 2010).

The aims of the research were to: determine what data are available about the use of domestic violence orders by Indigenous clients; determine whether domestic violence orders are an adequate and effective legal mechanism to respond to violence against Indigenous clients, particularly in rural and remote areas; and make recommendations. The evaluation utilised a combination of legal research, qualitative interviews and quantitative analysis. This report provides a comprehensive overview of specific issues facing Indigenous women in the context of domestic violence, and identifies a variety of barriers for Indigenous women to reporting violence and accessing protection including family and kinship issues, removal of children, and lack of community support and services (p97-110). Particular issues with access to services include lack of cultural sensitivity, failure to provide appropriate and accurate advice, lack of access to ATSI legal services, and lack of appropriate services for remote communities (p25-26). The author concludes that it is possible to identify and summarise the major issues (arising from the literature) as knowledge and decision making; cultural issues; community issues; police, legal system and associated services; geographic isolation; concerns about consequences and outcomes, and broader contextual issues of colonisation, dispossession and Indigenous law’ (see p26-32).

In relation to perpetration of domestic and family violence, section 3.2.1 ‘Protection orders and Indigenous respondents’ (from p60) is relevant. Table 3.7 on p70 shows that ‘Differences in police responses to Indigenous offenders are statistically significant, with Indigenous offenders more likely to be processed by way of arrest than non-Indigenous offenders. Conversely, Indigenous offenders are less likely to be given a notice to appear in court or not proceeded against’. Chapter Five ‘Court Responses’ (from p83) is also especially relevant for Indigenous offenders.

Day, Andrew, Robin Jones, Martin Nakata and Dennis McDermott, ‘Indigenous Family Violence: An Attempt to Understand the Problems and Inform Appropriate and Effective Responses to Criminal Justice System Intervention’ (2012) 19(1) *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 104-117.

Abstract: 'Whilst high levels of concern about the prevalence of family violence within Indigenous communities have long been expressed, progress in the development of evidence-based intervention programs for known perpetrators has been slow. This review of the literature aims to provide a resource for practitioners who work in this area, and a framework from within which culturally specific violence prevention programs can be developed and delivered. It is suggested that effective responses to Indigenous family violence need to be informed by culturally informed models of violence, and that significant work is needed to develop interventions that successfully manage the risk of perpetrators of family violence committing further offences.'

- This article provides an overview/summary of the main issues, including discussion of 'Patterns and Trends in Indigenous Violence', 'Frameworks for Understanding Indigenous Violence' and 'Connections between Intergenerational Trauma, Anger, and Indigenous Men's Violence' (e.g. inherited grief and trauma, dispossession, economic exclusion, loss of traditional Aboriginal roles and statuses etc), before analysing 'Implications for practice'.

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, [Closing the Gap: Prime Minister's Report 2018](#).

In Chapter 7, the report looks at building safety in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It notes that, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are significantly more likely than the wider community to be hospitalised as a consequence of family violence. In 2014-15, the hospitalisation rate for family violence-related assaults for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females was 32 times the rate for non-Indigenous females, and for Indigenous males the rate was 23 times the rate for non-Indigenous males (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2016b, p. 4.98)' (p 120).

Ferrante, Anna, et al, [Measuring the Extent of Domestic Violence](#) (Hawkins Press, 1996).

Drawing on crime statistics in Western Australia this report finds that Aboriginal women living in rural and remote areas are one and a half times more likely to be a victim of domestic violence than those living in metropolitan areas, and 45 times more likely to be a victim of domestic violence than the non-Aboriginal population.

Gallant, David et al '[Aboriginal men's programs tackling family violence: A scoping review](#)' (2017) 20(2) *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues* 48-68.

This study evaluates 11 studies of the effectiveness of interventions for Aboriginal men who commit domestic violence. A significant finding was that programs targeted at Aboriginal men must address multiple power constructs. Interventions should recognise that colonisation continues to have a significant impact on Aboriginal communities, but should not excuse the impact that men's violence has on female victims (p 61).

Gordon, Sue, Kay Hallahan and Darrell Henry, *Putting the Picture Together: Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities* (Department of Premier and Cabinet (WA), 2002).

This report inquires into Western Australian government agencies' responses to family violence and child abuse in Aboriginal communities. Quoting from a submission received from the Western Australian Police Service the authors report that 'Aboriginal people (overwhelmingly women) are 53 times more likely to be the victim of domestic violence than non-Aboriginal people' (p199). This report overviews the literature relating to the causes of family violence and child abuse in Aboriginal communities (p54-70) citing dispossession, oppression, loss of identity, breakdown of kinship systems, racism, unemployment, substandard housing, substance abuse, poverty and a range of other factors. On page 68 the authors provide a discussion: 'Cultural issues – facts and fallacies' which contextualises traditional culture's relationship (or lack thereof) with family violence.

Grech, Katrina and Melissa Burgess, 'Trends and Patterns in Domestic Violence Assaults: 2001 to 2010' (2011) 61 *Crimes and Justice Statistics* 1.

Descriptive analyses were conducted on all incidents of domestic assault recorded by NSW Police between 2001 and 2010. Factors associated with reporting of offences to police were examined using the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Crime Victimization Survey 2008-2009. Results included: The overrepresentation of Indigenous Australians as both victims and offenders of domestic assault has not changed over the last decade. Less than half of all respondents who had been the victim of a domestic assault in the previous 12 months reported the incident to the police. Older victims, those who were married and victims of assaults that did not involve weapons or serious injury were less likely to report to police. Conclusions: While the incidence of domestic assault has been stable across the last 10 years, it continues to be problematic at certain times, in certain places and particularly in some Indigenous communities.

'When considering perpetrators of domestic assault, both Indigenous males and females have offending rates higher than non-Indigenous persons. Indigenous male offending is more than seven times higher than non-Indigenous male offending (2,760 per 100,000 population compared to 365 per 100,000). Indigenous females are recorded as perpetrators of domestic assault at 10 times the rate of non-Indigenous women (753 and 73 per 100,000 for Indigenous and non-Indigenous women, respectively; Figure 13).' (p8)

Henry, Nicola, Asher Flynn and Anastasia Powell, *Image-based sexual abuse: Victims and perpetrators* (Australian Institute of Criminology Report No. 572 March 2019).

Report abstract:

Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA) refers to the non-consensual creation, distribution or threatened distribution of nude or sexual images. This research examines the prevalence, nature and impacts of IBSA

victimisation and perpetration in Australia. This form of abuse was found to be relatively common among respondents surveyed and to disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, homosexual and bisexual people and young people. The nature of victimisation and perpetration was found to differ by gender, with males more likely to perpetrate IBSA, and females more likely to be victimised by a partner or ex-partner.

Loh, Nini, and Anna Ferrante, 'Aboriginal Involvement in the Western Australian Criminal Justice System: A Statistical Review, 2001' (Report, Crime Research Centre, University of Western Australia, February 2003).

This Report provides statistical information about the nature and extent of Indigenous involvement in the Western Australian criminal justice system (up to 2001). It draws on government statistics and was compiled by the Crime Research Centre, University of Western Australia, on behalf of the WA Department of Indigenous Affairs. In the case of assault, Indigenous women were 12 times more likely to become victims of assault than non-Indigenous women (p4). The Indigenous rate of domestic violence far exceeds the non-Indigenous rate. In regional/rural areas, Indigenous people were 33 times more likely to be victims of domestic violence than non-Indigenous people, while in Perth, they were 17.4 times more likely to be victims than non-Indigenous people (p5).

Mitra-Kahn, Trishima, Carolyn Newbigin and Sophie Hardefeldt, *Invisible women, invisible violence: Understanding and improving data on the experiences of domestic and family violence and sexual assault for diverse groups of women: State of knowledge paper* (ANROWS, 2016).

This paper reviews the literature about the experiences of domestic and family violence and sexual assault against women from diverse groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (pp 19-21). It highlights intersections of disadvantage and marginalisation and stresses that these intersections are not adequately captured by existing survey instruments in Australia. It emphasises the importance of understanding family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within the context of colonisation and continued cultural dispossession, discrimination, and oppression. Intergenerational trauma is also key to this understanding. Research suggests that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience some types of violence more frequently than non-Indigenous women, including bi-directional violence, negative behaviours between extended family members, and lateral violence.

Mouzos, Jenny, and Toni Makkai, 'Women's Experience of Male Violence: Findings from the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS)' (Research and Public Policy Series No 56, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2004).

This paper reports on the findings of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS), which was conducted across Australia between December 2002 and June 2003. A total of 6,677 women aged

between 18 and 69 years participated in the survey, and provided information on their experiences of physical and sexual violence. 92 of the participants identified as Indigenous. In this survey 20% of indigenous participants reported experiencing physical violence (approximately three times higher than for non-Indigenous participants), 7% of whom had experienced physical violence (p. 30). Similarly about three times as many Indigenous women (12%) reported experiencing an incident of sexual violence, compared to non-Indigenous women (4%).

Olsen, Anna & Ray Lovett, *Existing knowledge, practice and responses to violence against women in Australian Indigenous communities: Key findings and future directions* (ANROWS, 2016).

This resource provides a brief summary of published literature on Indigenous women and violence. It is based on *Existing knowledge, practice and responses to violence against women in Australian Indigenous communities: State of knowledge paper*. This literature review found that “the cumulative nature of socio-economic disadvantage (such as personal, family and economic related stressors) and the lasting effects of colonisation are thought to be linked to violence against women in Indigenous communities. Any attempts to reduce violence in Indigenous communities requires a multi-faceted and holistic approach including efforts to improve the wider social, economic and health of Indigenous communities”.

Olsen, Anna and Ray Lovett, *Existing knowledge, practice and responses to violence against women in Australian Indigenous communities: State of knowledge paper* (ANROWS, 2016).

This report presents the current research available on Indigenous women and violence. It provides an overview on the existing state of knowledge in relation to: What is known about violence against Indigenous women? (p.2). How do Indigenous women and communities see and experience the issue of violence against women (including definitions of family violence)? (see pp.18-22). What are the current responses (programs or approaches) to violence against women in Indigenous communities? The report also summarises some of the national, state and territory and local initiatives developed to address and prevent violence in Indigenous communities (see pp.23-36). It then takes the step of evaluating these programs and approaches (see pp.37-53). Finally, it reviews the effectiveness of these programs (see pp.54-56), and asks, what are the Indigenous viewpoints on what works and what is needed? (pp.57-62).

The report found that there is a need for holistic approaches that move beyond removing women from the domestic situation and legal repercussions for perpetrators. It found that solutions to violence developed by Indigenous people are likely to focus on community healing, restoration of family cohesion and processes that aim to let both the victim and perpetrator deal with their pain and suffering (p 2). Relatedly, because Indigenous family violence is, in part, attributed to the breakdown of traditional culture and kinship practices, the rebuilding of these family and kinship ties is often seen as central to developing any type of response to Indigenous family violence (p 2 and 58). The criminal justice system is not considered the most appropriate means for dealing with family violence in Indigenous communities. Instead, communities prefer

Indigenous sentencing courts which allow for Indigenous Elders and community representatives to be part of the law and order process aimed at healing relationships and rehabilitating offenders (p 2 and 60-61).

Ombudsman Western Australia, *Investigation Into Issues Associated With Violence Restraining Orders and Their Relationship With Family and Domestic Violence Fatalities* (2015).

This is a review by the Office of the Ombudsman Western Australia of family and domestic violence fatalities in Western Australia and of relevant WA departments/authorities' administration of legislative responsibilities. The review also considered how family and domestic violence affects different people and different groups of people, in particular Aboriginal people given the significant overrepresentation of Aboriginal West Australians in family and domestic violence fatalities. The Office examined 30 fatalities over an 18-month period.

The review noted:

- > The legislative definition of family and domestic violence, and the central element being power and control exercised by a perpetrator (predominantly men) over victims (predominantly women and children)
- > Victims will resist violence and seek to protect themselves and children; how they do this depends on their circumstances
- > Perpetrators will try to overcome resistance to maintain power and control by threatening to kill or harm children if police are contacted
- > Aboriginal people (77% women) comprise 33% of victims of family and domestic violence, and 50% of fatalities
- > Concepts of family and domestic violence in Aboriginal communities are broader than mainstream definitions
- > There are disincentives to Aboriginal people reporting family and domestic violence including language barriers and concerns that cultural sensitivities will not be observed by authorities.

Purdie Nola, Pat Dudgeon and Roz Walker, eds. *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Well-being Principles and Practice*, 2nd edition (2014, Telethon Kids).

This book includes chapters on a wide range of issues associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health. The editors identify that the purpose of the book is to provide an appropriate resource for a range of health professionals who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, counsellors, and other staff of Indigenous health services. Chapter 1 'Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health: An Overview' by Robert Parker provides a good summary of relevant issues, see especially from p5-7. See also chapter 10

'Trauma, Transgenerational Transfer and Effects on Community Well-being' by Judy Atkinson et al.

Putt, Judy, Robyn Holder and Cath O'Leary, *Advocacy for safety and empowerment: Good practice and innovative approaches with Aboriginal women experiencing family and domestic violence in remote and regional Australia—Key findings and future directions* (ANROWS, 2017).

This project aimed to address a lack of evidence on the way in which specialist domestic and family violence (DFV) services work with and for Aboriginal women as clients/survivors, workers, board and community members.

A key finding is the identification by women (and mainly Aboriginal women) of what they value from services and as outcomes of contact at times of crisis (p 4):

- > Active and careful listening;
- > Clear and non-judgemental communication;
- > Immediate and practical help; and
- > Assertive advocacy on behalf of women with other organisations and people in the community.

A number of practice guides including for advocacy, safety planning, and measuring outcomes are available at the project link above.

Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Key Indicators 2016 – Report* (Productivity Commission, 2016).

In 4.12, 'Family and community violence,' the Productivity Commission looks at the impact of family violence on the health and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Some of the key statistics provided are:

- > In 2014-15, around one in five (21.8 per cent) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults reported experiencing physical or threatened violence, similar to 2002 and 2008. After adjusting for differences in population age structures, this was 2.5 times the rate for non-Indigenous Australians;
- > In 2014-15, hospitalisation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence-related assaults were 530 females per 100 000 female population and 191 males per 100 000 male population. After adjusting for differences in population age structures, this was 32 times the rate for non-Indigenous females and 23 times the rate for non-Indigenous males (p.4.98)
- > Hospitalisations for assaults increased with remoteness — from 156.5 per 100 000 population in major cities to 1044.4 per 100 000 population in remote areas for non-fatal family violence-related assaults and 390.8 per 100 000 population in major cities to 2013.6 per 100 000 population in remote areas for total assaults (tables 4A.12.15 and 4A.12.23). Data on non-fatal hospitalisations for assaults by

jurisdiction, sex and relationship of victim to offender, and by remoteness are in tables 4A.12.16–24.

The report notes that a multitude of interrelated factors that contribute to the occurrence of family and community violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, including: the trauma attributable to colonisation and dispossession; the breakdown of traditional culture and kinship practices; the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families; experiences of violence, including childhood experience of violence and abuse; low education and income levels and high unemployment levels, welfare dependency; poor and overcrowded housing conditions; poor physical and mental health; and high levels of alcohol misuse and illicit drug use (p.4.100).

Webster, Kim, *A preventable burden: Measuring and addressing the prevalence and health impacts of intimate partner violence in Australian women: Key findings and future directions* (ANROWS, 2016).

An estimated three in five Indigenous women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner since the age of 15 (p 4). Page four of this short resource explains that intimate partner violence contributes an estimated 10.9% to the burden of disease for Indigenous women aged 18-44 years, which is more than any other risk factor (including alcohol use, overweight/obesity, or tobacco use). Close to two-thirds (63.7%) of the burden of homicide and violence among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is due to intimate partner violence.

Wendt, Sarah, Donna Chung, Alison Elder, Antonia Hendrick and Angela Hartwig, *Seeking help for domestic and family violence: Exploring regional, rural, and remote women's coping experiences – Key findings and future directions* (ANROWS, 2017).

This resource is a short summary of a qualitative study examined the experiences of women seeking help for domestic and family violence who live in regional, rural, and remote areas in Australia. The research drew on interviews with 23 women and interviews / focus groups involving 37 managers and practitioners (see *Seeking help for domestic violence: Exploring rural women's coping experiences: Final report* for the full report). Many of the key findings relate to the experience of Aboriginal women, for example, Aboriginal women's dignity and pride being associated with being able to keep their children safe and rely on families (p 3); Aboriginal women using temporary stays at refuges as a way of staying safe (p 3); and social isolation as a result from fleeing partners for safety reasons, causing Aboriginal women to be away from their family and homes (p 7).

Willis, Matthew, 'Non-Disclosure of Violence in Australian Indigenous Communities' (2011) 405 *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* 1.

This article reviews the literature to consider the factors specific to Indigenous Australians that influence individual decisions to disclose violence. The paper suggests that some people may fear negative

consequences from reporting: escalation, breach of confidence, reprisals (both from the perpetrator and in the wider Indigenous community, and stigmatisation/ostracism from community), and distrust of police and the justice and government systems. Shame and lack of awareness of services are also identified as factors. In particular the author notes the reluctance to disclose in 'small, interconnected and isolated communities where anonymity cannot be maintained' (p4).

Wilson, Mandy, et al, 'Violence in the Lives of Incarcerated Aboriginal Mothers in Western Australia' [2017] January-March *SAGE Open* 1.

'Drawing on in-depth interviews with incarcerated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers in Western Australia, we report on the women's use of violence in their relationships with others. Results reinforce that Aboriginal women are overwhelmingly victims of violence; however, many women report also using violence, primarily as a strategy to deal with their own high levels of victimization. The "normalization" of violence in their lives and communities places them at high risk of arrest and incarceration. This is compounded by a widespread distrust of the criminal justice system and associated agencies, and a lack of options for community support' (p.1).