



Report to IAW International Meeting - Paris 2015 Extracts from WEL Facebook - August-September

A Woman's Right to visit Reproductive Health Services without harassment

The Women's Centre for Health Matters call for the creation of privacy zones around reproductive health services in the **Australian Capital Territory (ACT)**.

Over the past sixteen years, some women accessing health services in the ACT have had to pass Right to Life protestors. This is because they are entering a health facility that offers termination of pregnancy, among other reproductive health services. Termination of pregnancy has been legal in the ACT since 2002 and is regulated like other health services provided by a medical practitioner to their patients. There are no other health services in the ACT for which patients and health professionals are subject to such public commentary, protest and condemnation.

Protests at the location where termination of pregnancy services are provided do impede access. Women and their families can feel considerable distress when exposed to anti-choice protestors as they enter clinics. Even silent vigils convey disapproval and judgement, and contribute to distress in women and their families. By staging their protest outside a health service, the Right to Life protestors engage in behaviour that violates others' rights to unimpeded access to health services and to privacy.

Tasmania introduced similar zones in 2013. Its legislation created a 150 metre access zone around premises at which termination of pregnancy is provided. It was recognised in the Tasmanian parliamentary debate that the access zones did not limit the right of protestors to express their views, but simply ensured that they had to do so outside of the access zone.

Protesters will be banned from harassing women on the steps of **Victorian** abortion clinics before the end of the year. The Victorian government has agreed to a deal with Sex Party MP Fiona Patten to put protest exclusion zones outside fertility clinics. The government will introduce the legislation before the end of the year. The Greens have indicated they will vote for it, and the Liberals will have a free vote, meaning the bill will pass. Patten said she had support from a number of Liberal women MPs who supported the right of women to go to fertility clinics without being harassed.

New focus in Victorian schools to help address gender stereotypes and discrimination

The Victorian State Government has ordered that the weekly 30 minute religious instruction program move to lunchtime and before and after school in 2016 to make way for new content on world histories, cultures, faiths and ethics. Classes that address domestic violence and respectful relationships will also become compulsory for all preparatory to year 10 students from 2016. This follows a pilot study that ran in 30 Victorian schools, and will focus on challenging attitudes and behaviours that can lead to violence against women. It also coincides with the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

Prevention of Family Violence Minister Fiona Richardson said this new focus would help address gender stereotypes and discrimination. "Respectful relationships education is key to combating prejudice and preventing violence – we're including it in the curriculum so that every Victorian school teaches students these important skills and content." Domestic Violence Victoria chief executive Fiona McCormack applauded the government for incorporating domestic violence prevention into the curriculum. "The time has come, we've got to start intervening earlier, and educating children at a young age about respectful relationships," she said.



Emily's List

The gender wage gap is sitting at 17.9% and it's growing. Share this graphic to remind others of this issue, talk about in your workplace today. Because we are entitled to a better standard than this!

'Equal Pay Day marks the period of extra days in the current year which women need to work to achieve the same wages that men earned during the previous financial year.'

<http://www.equalpayday.com.au/>

Minister bans school from screening gay film in class

27 August 2015 The NSW Education Minister, Adrian Piccoli, banned every public school in the state from screening a documentary about children with gay parents during school hours. He issued a memo to the State's school principals ordering them not to show the film *Gayby Baby* so as "to not impact on the delivery of planned lessons".

Up to 50 schools across Australia, including 20 in NSW had organised a simultaneous broadcast of the film as part of a nationwide Wear it Purple day campaign of sexual inclusion in schools.

This has provided tremendous publicity for the film and it is playing to large audiences.

National Spotlight on Domestic Violence



[Women's Electoral Lobby, Australia](#) [September 10 at 10:35pm](#)

"Men's violence against women is not a passive act. It's not an unfortunate incident that women stumble into. It doesn't share the unavoidable, unpredictable nature of the weather. It is premeditated, calculated and entirely supported by a society which uses passive language to dismiss it and make it invisible.

No more.

If we want to bring an end to the shocking statistics of murdered women, we have to be willing to name the problem. It is men's violence against women. It is tangible and devastating, and it isn't something women stumble into accidentally."

Victorian Government plans to introduce family violence leave for public servants

The crimes of family violence and child abuse first hit the headlines in the 1970s and 1980s when political feminist waves exposed the issues within Australian society. For the first time, sexual and other forms of abuse and violence were publicly named, personal stories were told and power imbalance and control were identified as key factors in the perpetration of such violence.

Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence will conclude hearings after weeks of evidence from victims, advocates and support services. It has learned that the impacts of early experiences of family violence and child abuse are often both significant and long-term. It has heard that victims often have trouble remaining in paid employment as they struggle to cope with physical and psychological trauma and deal with legal issues.

Tens of thousands of Victorian public sector workers will for the first time be entitled to family violence leave to help victims maintain stable employment. Nurses, teachers and other public servants facing family violence will be able to apply for the new form of leave under a clause to be built into all future Victorian public sector enterprise agreements.

Family Violence Prevention Minister Fiona Richardson said it would send a clear message that victims were supported in their workplace and need not suffer in silence. "Victims need to attend things like medical appointments and legal proceedings," Ms Richardson said. "This will give them the support, financial independence and wellbeing that they need during what are extremely difficult and stressful times."



TWO **WOMEN** HAVE BEEN **KILLED** EVERY WEEK THIS YEAR BY THEIR PARTNER OR THEIR FORMER PARTNER.

IF WE WERE SEEING TWO **SOLDIERS** **KILLED** EVERY SINGLE WEEK ...
COMMANDERS WOULD BE HELD TO ACCOUNT AND BE ASKED TO EXPLAIN.

RETIRED LIEUTENANT GENERAL
DAVID MORRISON

www.wel.org.au

Think  before you vote



WHEN YOU HAVE SOMETHING LIKE
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
SO PREVALENT IN SOCIETY,
IT, BY DEFAULT, IS A
WORKPLACE ISSUE
AND YOU CANNOT IGNORE IT.

FORMER TELSTRA CEO
DAVID THODEY

www.wel.org.au

Think  before you vote