

Background Summary for the Annual Debate.

Prepared by Christine Cook. July 2015.

Annual DEBATE 21 July 2015

Come and hear MPs from each major political party speak about the economic impact of domestic violence and what their party's response is to the recommendations arising from the recent report *Productivity Gains from Workplace Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence*.

James Shaw, MP – Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand
Kelvin Davis, MP – New Zealand Labour Party
Rt Hon Winston Peters, MP – New Zealand First Party
Marama Fox, MP – Māori Party
National Party – TBC

Koha welcome on entry
Refreshments from 5:30pm | Debate & questions : 6pm – 8:15pm
Royal Society of New Zealand, Turnbull Street, off Mulgrave Street, Wellington

There are only 150 seats in the venue and limited parking is available - so get in early to secure your s

**1. The PSA / The NZ Family Violence Clearing House Summary Paper
*Productivity Gains from Workplace Protection of Victims of Domestic
Violence* report. (Kahui, Ku and Snively, 2014)**

- An estimated 111,070 women (7% of all New Zealand women) in the workforce will have experienced domestic violence in 2014.
- In 2014, in the absence of workplace protections, domestic violence will have cost New Zealand employers at least \$368 million. If nothing is done, it will cost employers at least \$3.7 billion by 2024 – a loss of 2.3 million days of work.
- There is an average of 130 lost working hours for each employee who is a victim. This includes:
17,493 days of work lost due to victims leaving work early or arriving late to work;
and
950,725 days of work lost due to termination of employment; and
1,286,473 days of work lost due to victims being distracted at work.
26,724 days will be lost due to physical abuse and 8143 days lost due to sexual abuse.
1410 days of work lost because of stalking.
- Employment is a key pathway out of domestic violence. The body of research about domestic violence over the past 30 years finds conclusively that staying in employment is critical to reducing the effects of violence. Security of employment enables those affected by domestic violence to maintain domestic and economic stability, assisting them to find a pathway out of violence and to successfully re-build their lives.
- For every woman whose experience of violence is prevented as a result of workplace protections an average of \$3,371 in production-related costs can be avoided in a calendar year.
- With appropriate protections, workplaces and employers can enhance victim's safety, retain and develop their skills in the workplace. This will lead to increased levels of production and productivity and offset the current (hidden) costs of domestic violence and the projected costs of the implementation of workplace protections.
- As well as employers having the potential to increase productivity there is a growing body of evidence that suggests that as well as breaking the cycle of domestic violence, introducing workplace protections both saves employers costs such as recruitment, retention, re-training, health and safety. (p ii)

Recommendations

- Employers, unions and peak bodies acknowledge that domestic violence is a work issue with impacts that are potential workplace hazards and generate costs of recruitment, retraining and retention.
- That employer's create and implement tailored domestic violence human resources policies that can be integrated with existing health and safety policies, including induction and training programmes.
- That an on-line induction module about domestic violence be prepared that is freely available to all organisations.
- To work with peak bodies to motivate take up of existing programmes focused on training to recognise, respond to and reduce domestic violence.
- Develop and implement a national policy that entitles victims of domestic violence up to 10 days special leave (non-accrued) for specific requirements to address and resolve domestic violence problems
- To align the national policy with a monitoring tool based on the framework developed for this project to understand what does and does not contribute to workplace gains for victims and employers and to assess the costs and benefits of the leave entitlement and other workplace protections
- Set up an evaluation process to identify effective workplace protections and to inform the specification of replacements for ineffective ones. (Pages ii and iii)

2. Australia

Domestic Violence Workplace Rights and Entitlements Project "Safe at Home, Safe at Work". National Domestic Violence and the Workplace Survey (2011). Ludo Mc Ferran Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse, Centre for Gender Related Violence Studies.

- Domestic or family violence is an abuse of power by a partner or ex-partner or family member. It takes many forms including intimidation, control, isolation and emotional, physical, sexual, financial or spiritual abuse. Domestic violence can also occur between people in an intimate relationship who do not live together, between people in same-sex relationships', between carers and the person in their care and between people in kinship relationships. Domestic violence tends to increase over time, becoming more serious and more frequent. Domestic violence harms both the victim, and others including children who witness the abuse. (P 2)
- In briefing the PSA, the ADFVC cited evidence that being in employment is a key pathway for women to leaving a violent relationship (Patton 2003 p.71). The

financial security that employment affords women can allow them to escape becoming trapped and isolated in violent and abusive relationships, and to maintain, as far as possible their home and standard of living. (P 2)

- Internationally, the ADFVC found that the links between economic independence, being in paid employment and the impact of domestic violence have been steadily developing. The evidence is that women with a history of domestic violence have a more disrupted work history, are consequently on lower personal incomes, have had to change jobs more often and are employed at higher levels in casual and part time work than women with no experience of violence. (Family Violence Prevention Fund 1998 p 2)
- The ADFVC was further concerned by the correlation between domestic violence entering the workplace and an escalation of the violence experienced. (P 2)
- According to O'Leary-Kelly et al (2008 p. 6) domestic violence perpetrators target victims at work to increase their control and compromise the victim's economic independence. (P 3)
- Both men and women can experience domestic violence, but women experience more severe and persistent forms of abuse and are more vulnerable due to often having the primary care of children. (P 6)
- Nearly half those who had recently experienced an incident of domestic violence had discussed the violence with someone at work. (P 12). Friends and co-workers were also found to be more helpful than supervisors, HR staff or union representatives. (P 13). There will continue to be barriers to workers disclosing a sensitive issue, such as the impact of domestic violence on their work performance and safety unless the workplace has undertaken the necessary procedures to ensure this impact will be treated as a workplace issue and support is guaranteed. Concern about the barriers to disclosure has led to calls for a non-explicit leave entitlement that does not require disclosure. In this light, we consider it significant that nearly half of those who had experienced domestic violence did disclose to their manager or supervisor, even in the absence of entitlements, policies or an understanding of the workplace impacts. The evidence is that workers are prepared to disclose but require and need a workplace that is supportive and informed. (P 13)
- Twenty five percent of all respondents who had experienced domestic violence had obtained a domestic protection order, but less than half (41%) included their workplace in the order. (P 15)
- The results confirm that the impact of domestic violence is an Australian workplace issue, and demonstrate overwhelming support for sustainable and widespread change in the Australian workplace. All respondents though that domestic violence can impact on the work lives of employees (100%) and the vast majority (78%) believed that workplace entitlements could reduce the impact of domestic violence in the workplace. According to the results, nearly two thirds of the respondents had

personal experience or knew someone who had personal experience of domestic violence. Nearly a third of respondents had personally experienced domestic violence, and for nearly half of these workers the violence had affected their capacity to get to work. For 19%, one worker in five who experienced domestic violence, the violence continued at the workplace. (P. 17)

References:

O’Leary –Kelly A, Lean E, Reeves C & Randel J (2008), *Coming into the light: intimate partner violence and its effects at work*, funded by the National Institute of Justice and University of Arkansas.

Patton, S (2003), *Pathways: How Women Leave Violent Men*, Government of Tasmania, Hobart.

3. Extracts from Employer Case Studies

Bank of New Zealand, *Diversity Case Study 2014*

Diversity delivers a distinct competitive advantage.

- There are a number of strong arguments, together with plenty of research, that lead to the clear conclusion that there is a business case to target women as consumers – and to ensure they are fully engaged to achieve their maximum potential in the workplace. (P 10)
- With an ageing workforce, falling birth rates and skill shortages, women’s increased participation and success is a critical component that will affect the future of both the workplace and the economy. (P 10)
- Goldman Sachs coined the term ‘Womenomics’ to express the force that women represent as guarantors of growth. Economists worldwide have shown strong macroeconomic reasons for a more robust representation of women at all levels of an organisation, with some asserting that closing the gender gap would boost the level of New Zealand’s GDP by as much as 10%. (Goldman Sachs & Partners New Zealand Investment research. Borkin P. (2011). *Closing the gender gap. Plenty of potential economic upside*. 9 August, 1-20)
- By growing income levels through work or entrepreneurship there is more direct benefit for local communities, as women spend more of their available income in local economies. This has the flow-on effect of lessening the need for government or NGO support. (P 11)
- Those companies with the most women on their senior teams showed superior growth in equity, operational results and share price. (McKinsey & Company, Sept 2011), Catalyst found boards with higher proportions of women can provide between 26-60% higher returns on investment. (Catalyst (2010), *The Bottom Line*.)
- In 2010, when BNZ commenced its diversity journey, the organisation conducted in-depth research into why it had a workforce of equal proportions of men and women

but women's experiences in regard to progression differed. Men and women at different levels within the organisation were interviewed. It also looked externally in New Zealand and beyond to find best practices that would work within the BNZ culture and the financial services industry. *It was clear that the issues identified would take a prolonged and multifaceted response, from recruitment through to development. The bank would also have to join with other market leaders to tackle the wider issues of the industry.* (P 16)

- BNZ goes beyond New Zealand's legislative requirements for workplace health and safety and is generous in other areas such as leave entitlements and offers wellbeing programmes for employees, catering to health needs and extending, in many cases, to dependants. e.g.
 - Ten days paid domestic leave, which may be used for medical care for dependants.
 - Free counselling is available to employees and dependants.
 - Parental leave top-up for a maximum of 12 weeks
 - Lifestyle leave of up to an additional two weeks a year.
 - Family leave of up to three days
 - Two days paid volunteer leave to encourage our people to give back to their communities.
 - Extensive education, training and career opportunities are available for all employees, plus some that are targeted specifically to women. (P 16)
- International and domestic studies show by implementing diversity and work or career/life balance initiatives, we can gain benefits in a number of areas: employee motivation, satisfaction and engagement, attracting and recruiting the best talent, increasing productivity, reducing staff turnover. (P 27)
- Flexibility not only improves employee wellbeing and engagement, it also enables our businesses to be creative when thinking about how to deliver business objectives, meet customer expectations and enable BNZ to attract and retain diverse talent. BNZ offers a range of flexible working options; from job sharing to working from home, staggered start and finish times and compressed working weeks. (P 27)
- Leading research tells us that beyond social and moral responsibility, the key driver in fostering a diverse culture is the competitive advantage gained. (P 40) We commenced our diversity work on gender balance because it is vital this is tackled for the ongoing growth of the economy. Achieving gender equity in New Zealand will deliver significant gains to the nation. Achieving this requires a confluence of thought – and action between government, business, public and private sector enterprise and non-government organisations. This is a business issue, an economic issue, not a 'women's issue'. (P 40)
- In March 2012 BNZ voluntarily committed to the UN Women and United Nations Global Compact Women's Empowerment Principles. These principles offer guidance to businesses on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. We signed the principles as a demonstration of our respect and support

to the women in our organisation, our customer base and our communities. In practice and in spirit, we continue to strive to meet these important global guidelines. But importantly, where we don't, we have challenged ourselves to close any gaps and improve our performance. (P 41) diversity@bnz.co.nz

Ministry of Social Development – *Supporting staff Affected by Family Violence* (Kerry Tudor of Waikato regional MSD and W&I)

“The Ministry is committed to providing a safe and supportive workplace, and supports violence-free families. This means making sure that our staff members who are experiencing family violence can ask for and receive confidential help and support, and have access to appropriate help”.

- New Zealand has high rates of family violence with 1 in 3 women experiencing physical or sexual violence from a partner in their lifetime. This means that family violence can impact on our staff and our workplace.
- Employees who are victims of family violence may be:
 - distressed, anxious, distracted and fearful at work
 - struggling to manage their workload
 - forced to leave their job so they can hide from the abuser
 - prevented from getting to work on time or at all
 - absent a lot
 - phoned or emailed constantly by the abuser
- Lots of things can stop people from asking for help when they're in violent situations. These include:
 - their own experiences and perceptions
 - resources available to them
 - how others respond to the situation
 - fear of not being believed, losing their job or losing friends
 - believing the violence will get worse
- Separation is the most dangerous time for victims of violence – women and children are particularly at risk from death and serious violence when a relationship is ending. A workplace safety plan includes practical steps to ensure the safety of victims and their colleagues. It could include providing a car park close to the main access, accompanying a person to and from their car, relocating their workspace and changing contact details or keeping them confidential.
- Employees who are perpetrators of violence may:
 - pose a risk to the victims' colleagues
 - pose a risk to workers and clients in their own workplace
 - use work time and resources to harass, stalk and monitor their victim
 - need to take time off to attend court or stopping violence programmes
- Colleagues of people experiencing violence at home may:

- feel resentful because they are carrying the workload for people who are away a lot
 - may be aware of the abuse their colleague is experiencing and appear unsupportive
 - be worried about safety for their colleague/friend and themselves
- Workplace benefits – providing a safe and supportive environment for people who are experiencing violence benefits the workplace:
 - less absenteeism
 - lower staff turnover
 - greater productivity
 - fewer safety risks
 - better morale
 - staff feel valued

The three Rs

1. **Recognise Signs** that an employee may be experiencing family violence – unexplained injuries, uncharacteristic absenteeism/tardiness, sensitivity about home life, special requests to leave early or taking a lot of time off, isolation from work colleagues, unusual number of phone calls or emails or disruptive personal visits to the workplace by a current or former partner.
 2. **Respond** – support and empower your colleague and ask about immediate safety for them and their children
 3. **Refer** – to internal or external supports
- It's ok to seek advice – you don't have to disclose the person's name. If you identify there is a serious safety risk for the victim, their children or someone else. Call the police on 111, even if you are not sure.
 - Speak up for a child: If you are worried about the safety of a child, and don't want to give your name, you can phone 0508FAMILY to discuss your concerns and options.
 - Your offer of help or support may be rejected. Don't take it personally – it can take many attempts for victims and perpetrators to get the help they need.

SUMMARY: what needs to be done

THE PEOPLE'S BLUET- PRINT

Transforming the way we deal with child abuse and domestic violence in New Zealand



Transforming Our System

1. WHOLE-SYSTEM APPROACH

Implement a whole-system approach that draws together the multiple facets, services and people within the system, so they can work more collaboratively for the benefit of people affected by family violence and those who inflict violence.

Transforming Our Culture

2. NATIONAL PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

The Government and the family violence sector commit to, and implement, a sustained (spanning generations) national public awareness and prevention campaign that involves communities (including schools) and aims to change public attitudes about, and responses to, family violence.

3. ALCOHOL REFORM

Reform New Zealand's alcohol laws to restrict the current availability and accessibility of alcohol, and thereby lessen its contribution to violence within families.

Transforming Our Leadership

4. VISIBLE LEADERSHIP BY GOVERNMENT

Government provides visible leadership, direction and commitment to a cross-party strategy for addressing New Zealand's family violence problem. This begins with the appointment of a dedicated Family Violence Minister drawn from its most senior ranks, preferably the Prime Minister or the Deputy Prime Minister.

5. SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT APPROACH

Adopt a sustainable investment approach to direct funding of family violence prevention, response, recovery, and advocacy services to improve performance, resource security, and the continuity and quality of service delivery.

6. STAND-ALONE OPERATIONAL AGENCY

Establish a stand-alone operational agency that will:
a) implement the cross-party strategy and investment approach
b) coordinate and monitor family violence operational activity through prevention, response, recovery, and advocacy services, and
c) be responsible for enacting a code of rights and a system of advocacy for those affected by family violence.

7. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Educate and train the workforce about family violence, its dynamics and its effects, so that workers are more compassionate and will be better helpers.

8. STRATEGIC RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PROGRAMME

Develop a long-term strategic research and evaluation programme that aims to improve the quality of evidence, monitoring and evaluation of family violence programmes and services.

Transforming Our Services

9. NATIONAL INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

Implement a responsive national intervention programme so that families/wāhānau vulnerable to child abuse and family violence have timely and better access to the support that they need.

10. A NEW 'ONE FAMILY: ONE JUDGE' FAMILY VIOLENCE COURT SYSTEM

Establish a new Family Violence Court so that:
(a) there is a comprehensive and integrated response delivered by well-resourced and specially trained judges and staff who treat people and families holistically, and
(b) the safety and protection of those who are affected by violence, and the accountability of those who inflict violence, is assured.

11. EQUITABLE RESPONSES FOR GROUPS VULNERABLE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

Equitably address the specific needs of groups who are at high risk and vulnerable to family violence so that their needs are recognised and met by culturally-appropriate and acceptable services.

12. LONG-TERM COUNSELLING

Resource, and make available, long-term counselling for all children, women and men affected by family violence to promote recovery from the effects it has on individuals, families/wāhānau and communities.