



Families **FREE** From Violence

The Australian Child Safety Alliance (ACSA) – 2021-2022

The last two years have been very exciting for ACSA as the Community of Practice (CoP) Working with Perpetrators has been established and built upon over this period. In February 2021, we employed Flinders University Social work Innovation, Research Living Space (SWIRLS) and their Social Work Department to co-design the COP along with Service Managers and Practitioners from across the sector.

We met three additional times in 2021, in April, September and November. We were delighted to miss the Covid restrictions (sometimes only by a week) and were able to meet face to face for the entire year. Across the year we had an average of 30-40 participants per session. In 2022 we weren't so lucky and both our March and June CoP's were hosted online. This did impact our numbers, which were less overall, but as a result of being online we did have a few participants from regional locations.

As part of the co-design session back in February 2021, participants discussed the importance of sharing information amongst each other, encouraging ideas and discussions and supporting each other's interactions and collaborations.

As a result of the CoP, a number of agencies have collaborated to learn together. Staff from several agencies, including a governmental agency, have been able to observe each other's men's behaviour groups, to learn how others do the work and reflect on their own. Inter-agency group supervision between practitioners was also something that was birthed through the CoP sessions. In addition to these examples, participants were asked directly how the CoP improved their practice, with answers ranging from teams having more discussions around the issues and looking at training opportunities, to increased confidence, ability to refer and improvements made to their service delivery.

I want to acknowledge the valuable time the organisations involved in ACSA have given to their staff to participate in the CoP. This is an investment in the shared understanding of the work at a sector level. It is also growing a community of competent, capable and confident practitioners and managers who can protect children through providing opportunities for men to change their behaviour. We hope this will lead to preventing the use of violence in relationships into the future.

Thank you to CAFFSA for supporting this initiative with support of staff (Andrea Konigsmann and Melissa Gibson) and Rob Martin who is a great supporter and advocate for ACSA, and who provide COVID friendly spaces for us to meet.

Michael Hawke – Chair of ACSA