



National Child Protection Week 2007

Newsletter

Issue 6, October 2007

Cairns takes the child friendly challenge

September saw the annual child protection week take place again. Due to a lot of hard work by the organisers and those in the Cairns community who contributed to the events, it was yet again another successful week.

The week was launched with RAATSICC hosting a lunch at the Cairns International Hotel, where those who attended were treated to food, entertainment and the company of Cairns service providers and guest speakers alike. The theme of the lunch, and the ensuing week's activities was 'Take the Child Friendly Challenge'.

The week was brought to a close on Friday with the traditional family fun day which took place in Fogarty Park. A good day was had by all, with on stage performances by Whitfield State Primary School Drama Group and Choir, the White Rock State School Torres Strait Islander Girls' Dance Group the Turning Point Dancers and Bop Stars. Entertainment and demonstrations were provided by Cycus Circus, Matsamoto Karate and others. Families were also able to enjoy plenty of off stage entertainment provided by the likes of Jeffery the Giraffe and the Gordonvale mobile Stilt Walkers. There was plenty of choice for things to do with activities on the different stalls and lots of give away items to be enjoyed by children. Along with staff from Ruth's Women's Shelter I had heaps of fun on our stall, noodle beading with children of all ages and their families.

Protecting children is everyone's Business



Child and Youth Witness Professional Educator

Inside this issue:

National Child Protection Week 2007	1
Child and Youth Witness Professional Educator	1
A DV what?	2 & 3
Far North Queensland school-based initiative wins Domestic & Family Violence Award	4
Survey findings on community attitudes towards relationship violence	4
CRDVS Community Education - Youth educational programs - Stand up & speak out	5
How can I help stop the cycle of domestic and family violence?	6
Community announcements	6
White Ribbon Day - 25th November	7
Myth busters	7
CRDVS — Services we provide	8
Useful contacts	8

I would just like to let everyone know that as of September I have taken on an additional role with CRDVS. As Child and Youth Witness Professional Educator I will be looking to the service sector for input as I tailor a training program to suit the needs of Cairns professionals as they offer a service to children and adolescents who are witness to domestic and family violence making them direct or indirect victims.

In order to develop an effective program suited to the service sector I will be conducting a needs analysis around what type of new skills and/or knowledge workers feel they would benefit from in their role so that they can offer young people a more effective service. Take a moment now to consider, what would be on your professional development wish list: practise at using therapeutic tools, learning about models of practice, appropriate identification of best practice interventions or understanding how to best support young witnesses. In developing this training I am really keen to hear from those supporting the young people of Cairns. Be assured I will be in touch with your service requesting a visit so that I can hear from you what you're looking to achieve from training in this area. Till that time comes don't hesitate to give me a call with any questions you might already have.

By the way our child counselling program will continue and will be facilitated by myself and Myra, who is a social worker.

Jayne

Child and Youth Witness Professional Educator, Child & Youth Counsellor.



A DV What?

A Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) can prove to be an integral and effective response for those people experiencing domestic and or family violence. However, like many aspects of the legal system the process of applying for a DVPO can be daunting to navigate. Firstly, it is important to know that often this is a process you, a friend, family member or a client may not have to face alone - many areas including Cairns have a court support worker or similar roles to assist people making an application for a DVPO. So, how does the process work?



To fulfil the requirements of the legislation an applicant also needs to have a recent incident - up to 6 weeks prior, a history of experiencing domestic violence and an ability to say why it will continue. If all of these categories are not met and answered fully in the application, it may be dismissed.

What is Domestic or Family Violence under the legislation?

Domestic and family violence is abusive behaviour used by one person to control and dominate another person within a domestic relationship. Domestic relationships can be spousal relationships, family relationships, intimate personal relationships and informal care relationships. It is important to note that if the relationship is based on the family definition both parties need to be over the age of 18.

The law in Queensland defines domestic violence as:

- WILFUL INJURY to the person
- WILFUL DAMAGE to the person's property
- INTIMIDATION OR HARASSMENT of the other person
- INDECENT BEHAVIOUR towards the other person without consent
- THREATS to commit any of these acts

Even if domestic violence is not committed personally, someone who encourages or asks another person to commit these acts is still recognized as committing domestic violence. However, evidence of this would be required.

Who can apply for a DVPO?

Anyone who is experiencing abusive behaviours and has a relationship with the perpetrator as outlined above can apply for a DVPO, this is referred to as a private application. In this instance, because it is your application you will be required to appear at court each time it is mentioned, otherwise it may be dismissed. The police also have the power to apply for a DVPO as they have a duty to investigate any report of domestic violence and to apply for an order if they believe it is needed. They do not need consent to do this. This is referred to as a police application. In contrast to a private application, because the police officer is applying for the order and not the person seeking or needing protection their appearance is not essential although it is often helpful and encouraged.

So what does it all mean?

Essentially, the purpose of a domestic violence protection order is to keep people safe and to remove the violence from a relationship by placing restraints on someone's violent behaviour. This does not mean that a relationship has to end because an order is in place. Often, a Magistrate will make a DVPO in the basic or mandatory terms which states that the violent party is to be of good behaviour towards the other person and is not to commit any acts of domestic violence as stated in the legislation. This allows those

A DV What? Continued

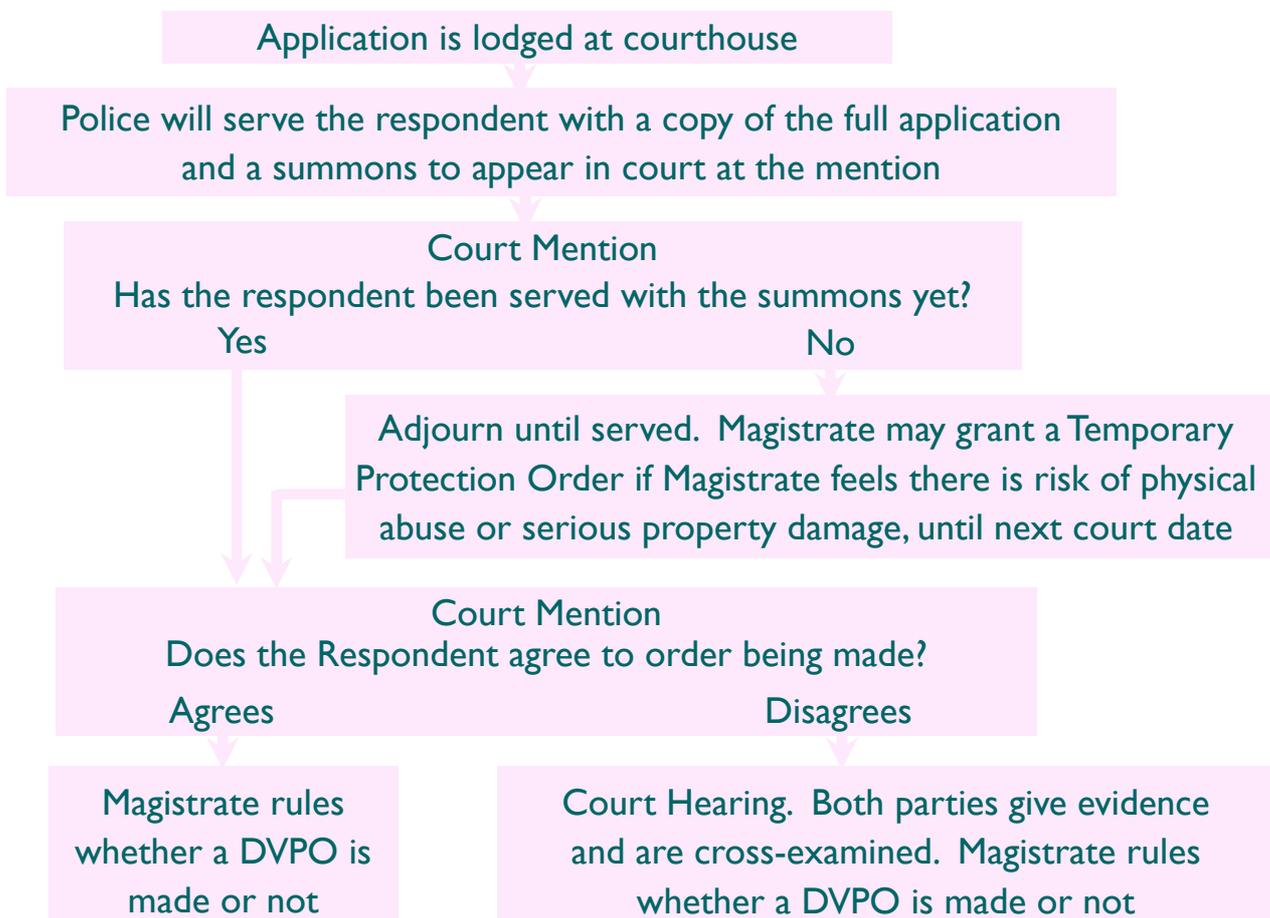
people wishing to continue their relationship to do so but without the violence. A DVPO can also have a number of conditions added to help increase a vulnerable person's safety however, none of the conditions will exclude a perpetrator from having contact with a child of the relationship. It is important to know that having a DVPO in place does not mean that the perpetrator will have a criminal record - it is a civil matter. However, if they breach the order by behaving badly, then there may be criminal consequences. If someone is breaching their order it is essential to report the continued violence, the purpose of the order is to try and keep those at risk safe and those using violence accountable. A DVPO usually lasts for two years and can be registered in any State or Territory of Australia as well as New Zealand and can also be varied to add or remove conditions during that time.

Most importantly, even though a DVPO may be in place it is essential for those at risk to have a safety plan they can act on, to help ensure their safety.

Important things to remember:

- **Everyone has the right to feel safe.**
- **Abuse is never okay, there is no excuse for it.** The person who commits the acts makes a choice to behave that way.
- **Safety planning is essential** for those people experiencing domestic and family violence.
- **People experiencing domestic and family violence are not alone** - there are support services like ours to help.

Domestic Violence Protection Order Process



Far north Queensland school-based initiative wins Domestic and Family Violence Award

In May this year Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service and Wuchopperen Health Service's Healthy Happy Families Program were recognised for the innovative work they had accomplished with students at Wangetti College. Minister Warren Pitt MP announced the 'Healthy Relationship Project' (HRP) as winner in the category of school-based violence prevention project at the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Awards.

HRP was a one year collaborative project developed to increase students' knowledge about family and relationships violence, work towards changing attitudes and beliefs that support violence and enable students to take action to prevent it. HRP facilitators visited Wangetti college over three terms to conduct information sessions and educational activities with students from years 8-12.

Knowing, valuing and respecting culture (both your own and other people's) was an important theme throughout the HRP and students got involved with cultural activities such as boomerang and spear throwing as well as musical and artistic expression. Another feature of HRP was the students created a short educational film about achieving safe and healthy relationships.

While participating in these varied activities students explored issues about conducting healthy non-violent relationships and learnt skills to use in their own lives.



Staff members from Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service & Wuchopperen Health Services' Healthy, Happy Families Program receiving the award from Minister Pitt MP at a ceremony in Brisbane

Survey findings on community attitudes to relationship violence

In 2006, The Body Shop Australia commissioned a customer survey about abuse in relationships. Over a 3-week period, more than 30,000 people responded to the survey, 87% of respondents were female and 13% were male. The survey elicited information about attitudes, understandings and responses to relationship abuse. Some of the survey findings include:

- The majority of respondents, both male and female, considered physical and psychological abuse as serious forms of relationship abuse. There were significant gender differences in knowledge about less well recognised forms of relationship abuse such as pressuring someone for sex, being told how to dress, name calling, checking a partner's mobile phone/text messages/callers and being given the 'silent treatment'.

15.8% of males reported it was not abusive to pressure someone for sex or they were unsure, compared to 7.5% of females

51.5% of males reported that being told how to dress was not abusive or they were unsure, compared to 32.2% of females

22.7% of males reported name calling as not abusive or were unsure, compared to 11% of females

33% of males reported checking texts and phone calls of a partner's mobile phone was not abusive, compared to 25% of females

Overall across both genders, being given the silent treatment was the behaviour least considered to be abusive in a relationship.

- The level of people's understanding about violence and abuse increased with age, especially in regards to the more subtle and hidden forms of abuse such as being given the silent treatment and pressure for sex.
- Police and domestic violence services rated highly as people who respondents would suggest a friend seek help from in a situation of abuse.

The authors of this survey report point out that community attitudes can differ from real life experiences and cite studies conducted in Australia and overseas which show that victims of relationship violence, overwhelmingly women, will most often go to informal supports such as friends and neighbours for help.

The findings of this Body Shop Australia customer survey suggest that young males are less likely to be aware of the many forms of violence and abuse in relationships. The survey report highlights that education about violence and abuse can have a positive impact by creating greater awareness and opposition to abuse in relationships.

Reference: The Body Shop Australia (2007) *The Body Shop Australia's survey of community attitudes, understandings and responses to abuse in relationships 2006: A summary of findings*. Mulgrave, Victoria.

CRDVS Community Education

CRDVS Youth Educational Programs

Our 'Healthy Relationships' workshops have proven to be popular with local schools. These workshops are free and offer young people knowledge and skills to develop healthy intimate personal relationships. The workshops last approximately one hour and incorporate discussion and information about:

- Young peoples' expectations for their relationships
- Distinguishing healthy from unhealthy relationship behaviours
- Developing skills in protective behaviours
- Using support networks and contacts

"It's a great lesson and don't be a bad boyfriend or girlfriend"



"I liked learning that abuse isn't acceptable"

For workers interested in providing these workshops to young people in remote areas, we now offer a train the trainer program. This train the trainer program is run in Cairns by CRDVS and will familiarise external facilitators with the 'healthy relationships package and equip them to deliver the healthy relationships program in their own communities.

Other workshops available for young people from CRDVS include:



'Keeping Safe'

Offers young people knowledge and skills to keep safe when domestic violence happens around them

'Domestic & Family Violence Protection Legislation'

Provides information about Qld's Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989

For information about any of our workshops please contact CRDVS at least 4 weeks in advance of your requirements - email office@dvcairns.org | telephone 4040 6100

Stand Up & Speak Out

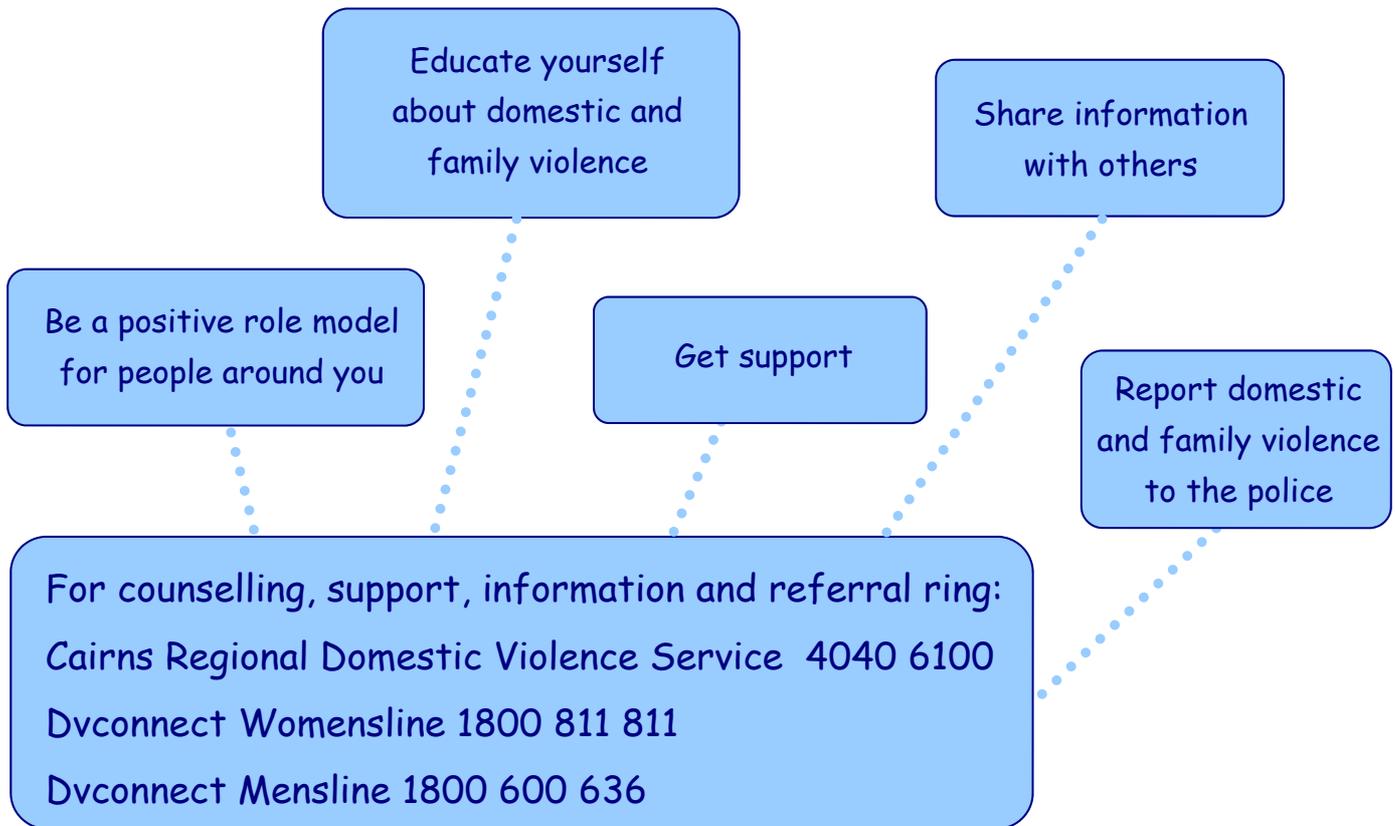


In September CRDVS staff participated at "Cuddy Cuddy Kowal Day" Children calling out, Yarrabah launch of Child Protection Day 2007 and the Violence No Way! Campaign. Raising awareness and speaking about domestic and family violence at community events is an important role for CRDVS.

"There are local services such as ours that can offer a range of supports and information to people who have experienced violent and abusive behaviours from a partner or family member".

Domestic violence is not a private matter. It is a serious crime. It affects the whole community. All of us have a role to play in preventing the cycle of domestic and family violence.

How can I help stop the cycle of domestic and family violence?



Community Announcements

Seniors Legal and Support Service

operated by the
 Cairns Community Legal Centre

A free Seniors Legal and Support Service is now available for seniors who are concerned about elder abuse or financial exploitation.

The Seniors Legal and Support Service is operated by the Cairns Community Legal Centre and funded by the Department of Communities.

The Seniors Legal and Support Service is staffed by a solicitor and a social worker, providing a tailored and holistic response to the needs of older people at risk of elder abuse or financial exploitation. Assistance includes legal information and advice, short-term counseling, advocacy and court support.

For further information or to make an appointment phone **4031 7179**.



Legal help for racial and religious hatred victims

Racial and religious hatred victims can call Legal Aid Queensland to get information about their legal rights and free legal advice. Legal Aid Queensland anti-discrimination lawyer Yasmin Gunn said she was concerned racial and religious hatred victims weren't aware of the protection available to them under the law.

"Our law states anyone inciting racial and religious hatred of others can be complained about to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland," Ms Gunn said.

She said it was unlawful for people to incite racial and religious hatred by using chat rooms, text messages, emails, hate-mail, hate-speech and a number of other types of communication.

"Anyone who incites racial or religious hatred by threatening or inciting others to threaten physical harm against people or their property could face up to six months in prison," she said.

Anyone who feels they are a victim or knows someone who is inciting racial and religious hatred of this nature should report it to the police.

"If you are unsure of your legal rights, call Legal Aid Queensland's free legal information and advice line on 1300 65 11 88 for the cost of a local call."

White Ribbon Day - November 25

**Wear a white ribbon
on November 25**



Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge to not commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and children

www.whiteribbonday.org.au

White ribbons will be available to purchase at Body Shops nationwide during November

Men ending violence against women

What is the White Ribbon Campaign about?

White Ribbon Day was created in Canada in the early 90s to urge men to speak out against violence against women. In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared 25 November the International Elimination of Violence Against Women and the White Ribbon has become the symbol of that day.

The purpose of the White Ribbon Campaign is to develop positive male role modelling in the community as well as provide leadership in changing culture and ultimately behaviour to stop violence against women.

Since 2000, the White Ribbon Campaign has gained momentum in Australia and the principal strategies are focused at national media awareness campaigns as well as education aimed at men and boys to eliminate violence against women.

Wearing a white ribbon is a personal pledge that the wearer does not condone violence against women, and is committed to supporting community action to promote equality between women and men.

How can men support and participate in the White Ribbon Day Campaign?

Men are the key component to this campaign. Simply wearing the white ribbon will not achieve cultural change. There must be an outward demonstration of commitment to setting the example that violence against women will not be tolerated in our community.

In 2000, I took my steps to making a change when I became a committee member of the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service (CRDVS). I have been actively involved in an organisation that is committed to eliminating violence against women and their families. In 2006, I was fortunate to be elected as President of the CRDVS and have taken this opportunity to provide community leadership in addressing this important issue.

Whilst not all men will follow this lead, there is a definite need for men to become more involved in this issue. A change in culture of this nature will not occur in a few weeks, months or even years. It needs broad commitment from the majority of men in the community for an extended period of time and the criminal justice system must follow with a zero tolerance on violence against women. So I encourage all men in the community, to stand up for the rights of their mothers, sisters and/or daughters and support this important campaign.

Mark Whitnall, President of CRDVS.

MYTH BUSTERS

Perpetrators of domestic and family violence often blame other people and other things for their own violent behaviour. Attempts to justify and excuse violent behaviour have led to the formation of myths in society.

For example:

MYTH— She provoked it. She deserved it.

REALITY - No one asks or deserves to be abused or beaten. Perpetrators often blame women in an attempt to 'excuse' their own violent behaviour. Women are made to feel the violence is their fault to increase their isolation and silence. Violent behaviour is solely the responsibility of the violent person. It is them who commit the crime.

MYTH— He can't control his temper.

REALITY - Violence is not caused by an uncontrolled outburst of anger. The perpetrator chooses the type of violence, the level of force, when and where the violence will happen. The violence is part of a pattern of behaviour that the perpetrator uses to control someone, it's not because they 'lose control'.

The reality is that using abusive behaviour is a matter of personal choice. It's important to dispel these harmful myths as they play down the perpetrator's responsibility to do something positive about their violence and change their behaviour.

THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE



Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service

Services We Provide

Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service provides confidential and free services for family members suffering from domestic violence. There are many issues that you can discuss with our staff members such as:

- Information about your rights and the rights of your children
- Steps that may help you to protect yourself from further domestic violence
- Information and assistance in making an application for a Domestic Violence Protection Order
- Support services that are available through our organisation, including Court support
- Counselling for you or your children to overcome the effects of domestic violence

Our Domestic Violence Workers can also refer you to other support services for financial assistance, crisis accommodation, relationship counselling, legal advice on matters of family law, parenting education and many other issues.

One member of our team is a Child Counsellor, who can provide face to face counselling for children and young people aged 4 to 16 years who are affected by domestic violence.

We can also provide information about programs for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Our service regularly conducts and participates in workshops, seminars, conferences, lectures and training sessions in Cairns and surrounding areas. If you are not sure that we can help with your needs, then please telephone on (07) 4040 6100 and ask us.

We're open Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm



Phone: (07) 4040 6100



Email: office@dvcairns.org



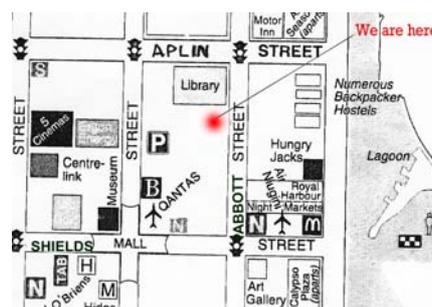
Fax: (07) 4040 6111



CRDVS, PO Box 4601, Cairns 4870



1st Floor
Suite 7&8
Placer House
135 Abbott Street
Cairns 4870



Useful contacts

Telephone Contact Numbers

If you're in immediate danger call the POLICE **000**

If you want to access safe accommodation (refuge for women and children who are in danger), or you need help and support dealing with a violent relationship you can call **dvconnect**, the Queensland 24hr domestic and family violence telephone service on:

1800 811 811

Cairns Police 4030 7000

Lifeline Telephone Counselling
13 11 14

Alternatives to Violence

A 12 week education course for men
4050 4955

Go Forward For Men

A service for men to help men overcome domestic and family violence behaviours
1300 364 277

dvconnect Men's Information Line
1800 600 636

We're on the Web
www.dvcairns.org

Would you like to subscribe to receive forthcoming issues of the CRDVS newsletter?

Have you an interesting article about domestic or family violence you'd like to contribute to the next issue of this newsletter?

Please let us know by contacting Gill at CRDVS — Tel: (07) 4040 6100

**Look out for the next
issue in
April 2008**

Websites with information about domestic and family violence

www.noviolence.com.au

www.dvirc.org.au

www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au

www.ofw.facs.gov.au

www.communities.qld.gov.au/violenceprevention

www.ntv.net.au