

A final message

The participants in the IAFN Oceania Consultation on Violence and the Family wanted to encourage Anglicans to take action so they said:

- Begin the work. Don't do it alone. Make sure you are supported.
- Connect with others who have skills and resources.
- Find the points of harmony between the values of your Christian faith and the best of your cultural heritage.
- Take the challenge to church and traditional leadership because, when they speak, people listen.



For the full Report and Action Plan from the **IAFN Consultation for Oceania on Violence and the Family**, see:

<http://bit.ly/1MBFTz9>



International Anglican Family Network

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IAFN

International Anglican Family Network

"sustaining the family as the cradle for human dignity"

Violence and the Family Action Plan for the Churches to Tackle Abuse



A contribution from the
Anglican Churches in Oceania
October 2010

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IAFN : “sustaining the family as the cradle for human dignity”

This Action Plan for tackling abuse in families is offered to all Churches in the Anglican Communion by the International Anglican Family Network (IAFN) Consultation for Oceania held in Aotearoa New Zealand in October 2010.

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Participants in the IAFN Oceania Consultation were drawn from nine Pacific states and represented Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous communities. They took six steps to prepare themselves to act against violence in the family. They offer these same steps as a model for adapting to different contexts in provinces, dioceses and parishes across the Anglican Communion.

Step 1 Meeting and Sharing

- Any reflection on violence and the family has to begin in our own world.
- We do this task together because tackling violence sits at the heart of the church's mission of reconciliation and healing.
- We must begin by understanding our strengths and the resources we already have for tackling violence.
- We must then name the problems. Many issues are known about but never named. There must be confidence to bring all of the issues into the

open so that they can be recognised and tackled.

- Finally we must recognise what we have achieved so far and not be overwhelmed by the weight of the problems still to be addressed.

Step 2 Theological reflection

Our response as Christians has to be rooted in deep theological reflection on violence and on human flourishing. It is not enough to have a superficial understanding of how our faith gives us the resources we need; we have experienced theologians and spiritual leaders who can help us.

Step 3 Resources

At this stage the task can feel overwhelming so we need to identify the resources that are available. There are many organisations, both Christian and secular, that have skills and experience they are willing to share. They need to be drawn into the conversation and the plan.

Step 4 Separate groups for men and women

A key moment in the development of the Oceania consultation was to separate women and men so that they could hold their own conversation. Most of the work was done together but the separate groups gave more freedom to talk openly about our experiences and to consider what was important for us as women and as men in this discussion.

Step 5 Coming together

Men and women then came together and freely shared their insights and understanding. This was the point at which the key messages of the consultation began to take shape:

- Faith, hope and love are transformative and restorative.
- Our leaders can be challenged to lead and support transformation.
- We must take personal responsibility for the issues and our own violence.
- Women and men can seek restorative justice together.

Step 6 Taking action

- There must be specific action plans which build on the previous five steps.
- The plans must not compromise on the principle that violence must stop but they must also be realistic and understand that changing attitudes is a long-term process.
- Underlying this is an appreciation that every step will change the lives of some women, men and children affected by domestic violence.
- The plan should set out specific targets and actions at all levels from the senior leadership of the church to individual parishes and families.