

# INTRODUCTION AND USE THIT USE THIT USE THIT

Refugee women and children have been identified by the United Nations as one of the most vulnerable groups in the world. Violence, in particular sexual violence, is endemic in situations of conflict, during flight and in refugee camps. Sadly, evidence is emerging that suggests that refugee families, who have survived torture and trauma as part of the refugee experience, are likely to experience a high degree of family and domestic violence. (McGinn, 2000, p.179.) This means that many refugee women and children do not have a safe space, either publicly or privately. This is detrimental to their physical and mental health wherever they may be situated, and impacts on their ability to resettle in new countries and to rebuild their lives (Molloy 2000).

The need for this kit was identified in 2002, when community workers from both the government and non-government sectors in New South

key service providers, both government and non-government, who work with either refugees or with the victims and survivors of domestic violence. A number of workers from refugee specific services identified the need for training and skills development in the area of domestic and family violence. Those from services designed to work with victims and survivors of domestic violence, identified the need for training and skills development in working with refugee families. The impact of domestic violence on children and young people within refugee families was also an area of particular concern to community service workers and educators. In 2003, the CRR obtained a partnership grant from the NSW Department for Women (now the Office for Women) for the project.

### **How the Kit was produced**

A community development model was used to produce the training kit. Two part-time project staff from the Centre for Refugee Research and one from the Department for Women, now the Office for Women worked for one year with a group of nine sessional bi-lingual workers from newly arrived refugee communities in the Sydney metropolitan area.

## HOW TO USE THIS KIT

# SESSIONS

## Session 1 – Purple

**The Refugee Experience**

## Session 2 – Pink

**Celebrating the Strengths of Refugee Women**

## Session 3 - Violet

**Leaving Violence Behind – Resettlement in Australia**

## Session 4 – Red

**What Is Domestic Violence?**

## Session 5 – Light Blue

**Refugee Communities and Domestic Violence**

## Session 6 – Dark Blue

**You Are Not Alone - Services Which Are Available To Help**

## Session 7 - Turquoise

**Keeping Families Strong - Caring For Survivors, Caring For Ourselves**

## Session 8 – Light Green

**Road to Respect - Learning About Different Communities**

# NOTES TO PRESENTERS

**It is essential that presenters read and are familiar with all of the background material and video, before facilitating any of the sessions.**

## Timing

The material has been designed to be used flexibly and in response to the knowledge level of each particular group. For example, if workers are familiar with refugee issues, more time could be spent on the domestic violence sections. Domestic violence workers may need more input on refugee issues. It is suggested that even when groups are familiar with some aspects of the material, a short ‘refresher” course is often very useful, and can provide participants with the opportunity to explore current issues and dilemmas.

It is anticipated that the course will be run over 3 X 6-hour days.

Day 1 Sessions 1 – 3	The Refugee Experience
Day 2 Sessions 4 - 6	Focusing on Domestic and Family Violence
Day 3 Sessions 7, 8	How Can We Help?

## How the sessions work

Each session has a PowerPoint presentation (or overhead projector slides if PowerPoint is not available). For each slide, there is a brief introduction which is linked to the background material, and a suggested activity for the group. You may also wish to develop some activities of your own. The presenter should talk the groups through the slides, answering questions and promoting discussion. The activities are optional, but strongly recommended. Participants in any training, learn a lot more if they are actively and imaginatively involved in the training process. The more opportunities there are for participatory and interesting forms of involvement, the more they will learn. The following are all activities which can be used in the course.





## PLEASE NOTE:

*The material presented may be quite distressing for some participants. Presenters need to be sensitive to the group's responses to the video and discussions.*

*Before presenting the program, teachers need to be aware of any participants who are refugees. Some participants may also be survivors of family and domestic violence. It is important to discuss with the group the fact that there may be people in the group who find some of the material upsetting. Ask them to remember this during the sessions and to be particularly thoughtful of other's feelings. Encourage participants to say how they feel about what they see in the video and the information presented to them and to be conscious of the reactions of other participants. It is important to have a confidentiality agreement within the group, so that participants can be confident that information they disclose in the group does not become public knowledge.*

### **Recommended ice-breaker:**

Start the course by asking people to share their name with someone they don't know. Then ask them to discuss what they would take with them if war was suddenly declared, and the military arrived and told them that they could take just one person and one thing with them to safety. No exceptions.

Ask them to introduce their partner to the group and share the person and thing they would take.

Discuss how hard it was to make these choices and point out that they are the choices that many refugees have had to make.

### **Group Safety Contract**

Ask participants to share the sorts of things that they do to protect themselves when they are upset. Explain that the course material is very challenging and that at some point, they all will be feeling upset.

Work out a group contract for looking after each other.

Write this up on butchers paper, to be used every session.

### **Using specialist co-trainers.**

Due to the sensitivity of the material, it is recommended that specialist co-trainers be used for some of the sessions. In particular, we recommend that a refugee specialist work with the trainer in Sessions 2 and 3, and a domestic violence specialist work with the trainer in Sessions 5 and 6.

## Participant Evaluation