

IWSS Multilingual Domestic Violence Resource launched

by Stephanie Anne, IWSS and Renette Viljoen, CDFVR

The Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) is proud to announce the recent launch of their multilingual domestic violence resources. IWSS, a community based crisis and support service which provides culturally appropriate support, information, counselling and referral, values cultural diversity and recognises the disadvantages faced by women and children of non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). IWSS works to assist these women and their children to live in safety and security and access services and facilities to make their independent survival possible.

Being able to communicate in one's first language with appropriate and effective engagement of professional interpreters by service providers is essential to obtaining assistance from relevant support services. The Multilingual Domestic Violence Resource includes essential information on:

- **What is Domestic Violence?**
- **Cycle of Violence**
- **Power and Control Wheel**
- **Equality Wheel**

The resources were developed and translated into English and 15 community languages that include **Arabic, Bosnian, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, French, Hindi, Japanese, Juba Arabic, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese**. Although IWSS recognises that there are a vast number of languages spoken across Queensland, IWSS was restricted to fifteen languages when translating this resource. Domestic violence exists in all communities and the selection of languages does not reflect the incidence of domestic violence within these specific communities.

Using translated resources in working with women from NESB who may be experiencing domestic violence, requires some specialist knowledge, cultural consideration and skills to ensure that information is contextualised and appropriately disseminated. IWSS has developed and delivered a training workshop to promote best practice in using the Multilingual Domestic Violence Resource.

The resource was designed specifically for workers to use when engaging in dialogue with women from NESB on the subject of domestic violence. It should not be used in place of professional

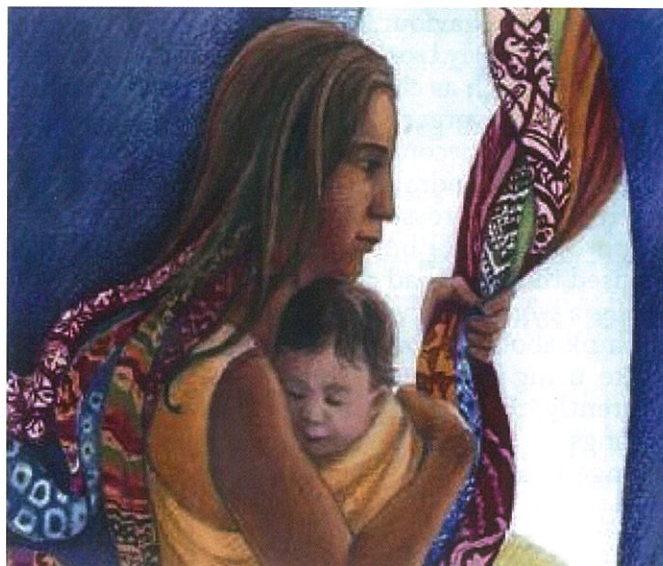


Image by Rachel Apelt © 2008

interpreters but rather seen as an additional tool when communicating about domestic violence. It is also not IWSS's intention for the resource to be distributed directly to community members as 1) it contains information and concepts that may be unfamiliar to women from some cultural backgrounds and therefore must be contextualised through dialogue; and 2) translated information resources about domestic violence in the Australian context cannot be relied on as a sole means of communication - information resources, if provided directly to community members without dialogue, may unintentionally cause confusion, distress and misunderstanding of key concepts.

IWSS advocates for workers to utilise sound cross-cultural frameworks that support a gendered analysis of violence against women and children in working with these translated resources.

Copies of the Multilingual Domestic Violence Resource have been provided to the State Library of Queensland, Queensland Parliamentary Library and the National Library of Australia and it should be on the IWSS website at a later date.

If you would like to order copies of the Multilingual Domestic Violence Resource or to enquire about training on using translated resources with women from NESB, please contact IWSS on telephone: (07) 3846 3490 or email: mail@iwss.org.au

Acknowledgments

IWSS acknowledges funding for the Multilingual Domestic Violence Resource project from Department of Communities: Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month Initiative. IWSS also thanks the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre and Multicultural Families Organisation for their generous permission to utilise and adapt existing domestic violence resources. IWSS acknowledges the artist, Rachel Apelt, for granting permission to use the image by copyright found on the cover of the resources.