



# “We Deserve”

## Trans and Gender Diverse Family Violence Prevention Project

### Executive Summary

#### Overview

Between September 2018 and September 2019, Transgender Victoria (TGV) and drummond street services (ds) were funded by Office of Women to deliver a family violence prevention project for trans and gender diverse (TGD) communities. The project was commissioned by the Victorian government in response to needs identified by the Royal Commission into Family Violence and was established as part of the family violence prevention component within the w/respect consortia –the LGBTIQ family violence integrated service.

Responding to a gap in evidence-based practice, the project, named *We Deserve* sought to build knowledge around family violence prevention and develop targeted family violence prevention initiatives for under-researched LGBTIQ cohorts. Working with and for trans and gender diverse (TGD) communities, co-production was the means by which this aim would be achieved.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Build knowledge of family violence prevention approaches for TGD people including the development of an intersectional framework for understanding family violence prevention across the diversity of TGD communities;
- Design, trial and evaluate family violence prevention interventions for diverse cohorts of TGD people;

Further, this project aimed to evaluate co-production as a vehicle to achieve the overriding aims of evidence building and initiative development.

In accordance with these aims and objectives, TGV and ds employed a project team and developed a co-production model to centre the voice and experiences of TGD people across each stage of the project. The project sought to prioritise engagement with TGD people with varied intersections of experience and identity including; gender, sexuality, gender expression, faith, race, disability, age and experience of sex work.

The *We Deserve* co-production model served as an organic, evolving research process. The specific details of activities undertaken within each phase of co-planning, co-design, co-delivery and co-review were decided on in collaboration with TGD community, as the project progressed.

In addition, the co-production model supported knowledge building and refinement of learnings across each phase of project, whilst also providing a mechanism for the development of violence prevention initiatives with the TGD community.

Key activities undertaken through co-production were:

- Evidence review: Evidence scan of available family violence prevention literature for TGD communities and identification of socio-ecological model as key framework on which to build evidence
- Project oversight: Establishment and engagement of an Advisory Group of TGD community members to provide oversight and guidance on the project activities
- Co-planning: Facilitation of nine focus groups with 40 trans and gender diverse people representing a diversity of cohorts from the TGD community, and two interviews
- Analysis: Analysis and synthesis of focus group data to inform the development of a family violence prevention framework for TGD communities. This framework and the key consultation themes informed the development of family violence prevention initiatives for TGD communities
- Co-design and co-delivery: Recruitment, training and mentoring of a team of six TGD people to co-develop and co-deliver three respectful relationships short films designed to provide positive representation of TGD people and their diverse relationships. Through the creative team's employment, the project was able to directly respond to the underemployment of TGD people as one of the factors which increase vulnerability to family violence, while ensuring that the subsequent areas of the project were driven by and for the community.
- Co-review: Screening of the films at two facilitated events termed "Theatre of the Deserving", designed to 'test' the resources and gather TGD community and family violence sector feedback and insights to further inform the use of the films as family violence prevention initiatives

The We Deserve co-production process has identified several key findings and recommendations related to the prevention of family violence for TGD communities (see below). In addition, evaluation findings relate to the effectiveness of the co-production process.

Overall it was found that We Deserve was effective in building knowledge around family violence prevention and that the co-production process was effective and appropriate for ensuring TGD peoples informed the evidence-building process and violence prevention initiatives. We Deserve has become a primary prevention infrastructure and methodology to build further knowledge across other groups within the LGBTIQ communities.

At the completion of the project, the We Deserve films will be made publicly available on the [w/respect](#), [drummond street](#) and [TGV](#) websites.



## Key Findings: TGD Family Violence Prevention

- The We Deserve co-production process led to an increased knowledge base for family violence prevention for TGD communities through the development of 3 integrated tools:
  - Framework for the Prevention of Family Violence against TGD people, which identifies three key themes for action to inform family violence prevention approaches: Promoting equal and respectful relationships; Promoting non-violent norms and reducing the effects of prior exposure to violence; and Improving access to resources and systems of support.
  - Risk and protective factors for family violence towards TGD people
  - Types of relationships infographic which communicates the diversity of relationships identified as key to TGD people
- Through the co-production process, the TGD creative team utilised the violence prevention framework to inform the delivery of three short films to TGD communities and the family violence sector. The films were found to be a true representation of community and reflective of the intended consultation themes.

*"I really liked that they were positive stories for TGD people. They weren't stories without hardship, they were realistic. But they were ultimately positive, and that's not something that you see everyday."* - Community Event Participant

- Consumer testing with TGD community and family violence sector identified the need to scaffold the films with additional resources to increase their impact as violence prevention initiatives across diverse contexts.
- The family violence sector acknowledged the need for intersectional policy and practice which reflects a more inclusive understanding of family violence that isn't directed by the gendered binary of men's violence towards women.

Key learnings from this knowledge building include:

- Family violence towards TGD people is a complex social issue which occurs due to the interplay between individual, relationship, community and societal factors. Action to prevent this violence needs to take place across the individual, relationship, community and societal domains.
- Social inequality, in particular transphobic discrimination and cis and heteronormative systems and structures provide the context in which family violence occurs for TGD people;
- Rigid and binary beliefs and constructs of gender and sexuality across societal structures and within relationships contribute to TGD peoples' vulnerability to family violence;
- Limited and damaging portrayals of TGD people should be countered through positive representation of TGD people and their diverse relationships.

*"I think respect, in a way, is a process of humanising someone in the context of a society that does dehumanise and objectify us all the time."* - Focus group participant

## Recommendations: TGD Family Violence Prevention

- Government resources and funding for family violence prevention for TGD communities should be directed at intersectional policy and practice, including ongoing targeted primary prevention initiatives and the development of a more inclusive understanding of family violence that moves beyond the binary of men's violence towards women, as identified by the sector.
- Funding to extend the We Deserve suite of short films should prioritise filming of the script "Isolation", which tells the story of a Brotherboy living in a regional community. This prioritisation would increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within these violence prevention resources.
- Future resources should be allocated to support and scaffold the use of these films as violence prevention campaigns and initiatives for TGD people, their families, loved ones, LGBTIQ community and the community sector.
- To increase knowledge dissemination and capacity building, the TGD family violence prevention tools should be packaged and distributed across the family violence sector and utilised to inform future violence prevention work with LGBTIQ cohorts.

*"The films are important because they provide a real opportunity to increase people's understanding of where the issues and challenges are for TGD people in terms of their experiences of family violence; their experiences of discrimination, their experience when trying to engage services"* – Sector Event Participant



## Key Findings: Co-production Evaluation

Evaluation of each component of the drummond street co-production model and was undertaken. Overall it was found that the We Deserve co-production process was effective and appropriate for ensuring TGD peoples' voices and experiences informed the evidence-building and development of violence prevention initiatives. This was especially pertinent given the limited available evidence around family violence prevention for TGD communities.

Findings from each component of the model are included below.

## Co-planning

- A high level of attendance of TGD people from a breadth of diverse communities felt safe, were engaged and wanted to contribute their thoughts and experiences in focus groups for the purpose of developing respectful relationships initiatives for their communities.
- Focus group participation led to the development of key themes for action to inform family violence prevention initiatives, which in turn increased knowledge relating to family violence prevention for under-researched and under-represented populations.

## Co-design and co-delivery

- Employing a team of TGD people to design and deliver a suite of respectful relationship films, including undertaking further co-design activities with community members, was an effective way of ensuring that the violence prevention initiatives were driven by and for the community.
- Employment opportunities provided to a team of TGD people has built the capacity of team members, increasing skills and experience in family violence prevention work. This is important in the context of the Family Violence Royal Commission which identified the need to build a primary prevention workforce, coupled with poor employment outcomes and discrimination experienced by TGD people.

## Co-review

- Event participation from across TGD communities and the family violence sector led to the identification of key findings to inform the use of the short films as violence prevention initiatives, and recommendations for family violence policy and practice.
- The validating and diverse consumer feedback highlighted this co-review method as an integral test to the overall co-production process and also validated the key messages and primary prevention initiatives overall.

## Recommendations: Co-production

- The We Deserve co-production methodology is used to build further family violence prevention knowledge across other groups within the LGBTIQ communities.
- Future co-production initiatives with TGD communities commit resources to increase representation of trans men, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and people of colour (POC) communities.

