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*Australasian Centre for Human Rights and Health Inc*

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# ACHRH

Empowering Communities  
through Knowledge & Research

## United We Stand

### Phase 2

PROJECT HOPE

October 2019  
Newsletter

**Congratulations to NSW. A historic win for the women of NSW and a "massive step forward for women" in the state according to the women's organisations.**

The NSW Parliament passed the bill decriminalising abortion on 25 September 2019. The bill brings NSW in line with Victoria and overturns 119-year-old law that treats abortion as an offence carrying penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment. South Australia is the next State that needs to look at its Laws on abortion.

A significant degree of opposition to the bill came from Political leaders such as Barnaby Joyce and Tony Abbott and some Liberal party members in NSW.

After a marathon debate in both houses, the bill was passed and allows terminations up to 22 weeks' and later abortions if two doctors considering all the circumstances agree a termination is necessary.

Labor MP Jo Haylen who co-sponsored the private member's bill said it was "a historic day" for women across the state.

The bill passed after several amendments were made to the bill. **The most significant and historic was the ban on terminations for sex selective abortion.** This is an area of deep concern for ACHRH. Population studies in Australia show male births preponderance among certain groups of Australia. ACHRH demands a similar amendment to the Abortion Bill in Victoria. And protection for those doctors who object to sex elective abortions in Victoria. Only a couple of years back I met a GP who was censured by the Medical Board for refusing to provide referral to an abortion clinic, requested by a couple who wanted abortion *because it was a girl*. We demand that doctors who protect the rights of unborn female foetus are protected in Victoria.



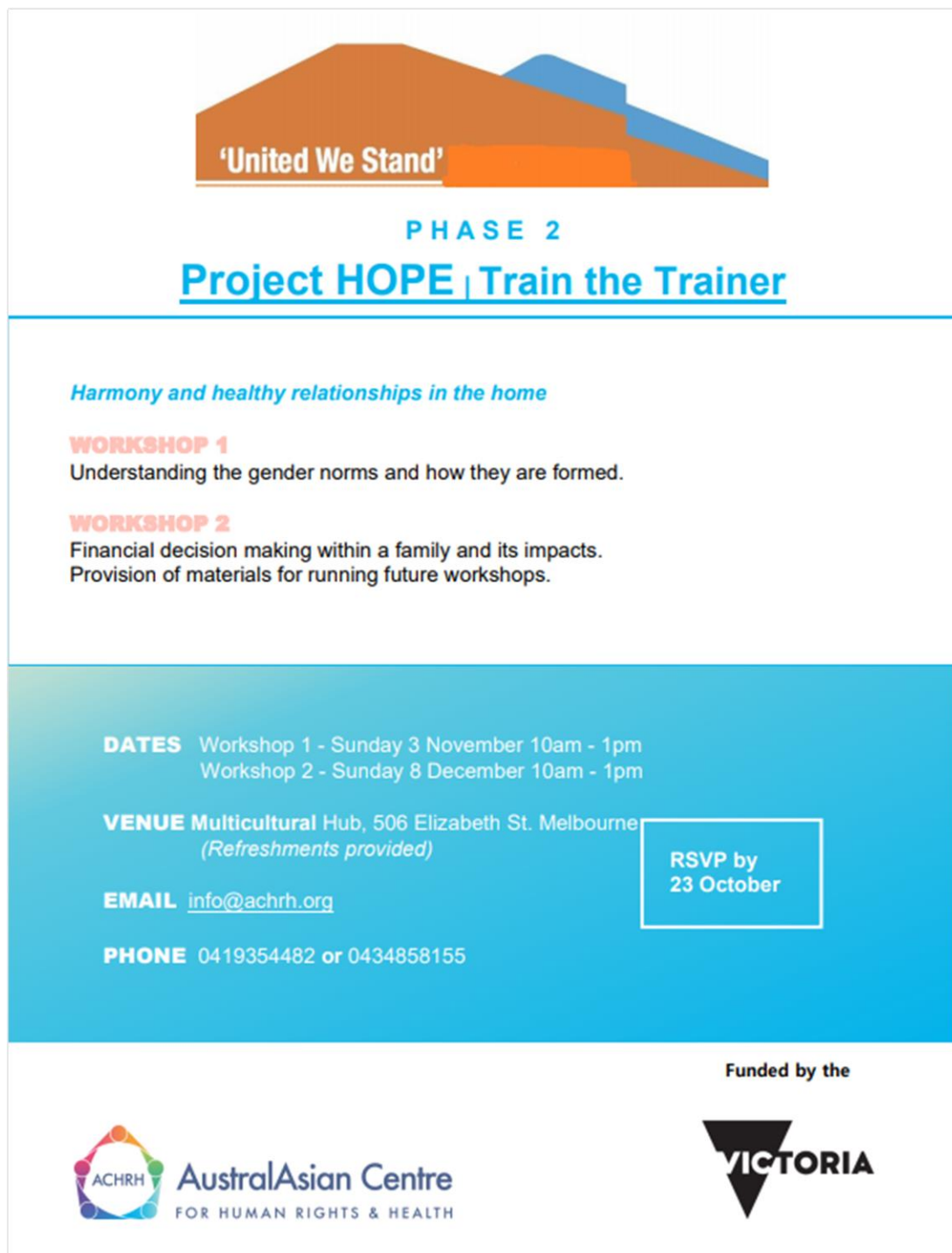
**Manjula  
O'Connor**

On another note- a historic win also for the ACHRHR led anti-dowry abuse campaign. Dowry abuse is now listed as a complex form of family violence in the 4th National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Children.

ACHRH is pleased to Invite Leaders and community members interested in promoting harmony and conflict free home to join Project HOPE. The Workshops consist of understanding how gender norms are formed in society and what we can do as members of society to promote respectful and equal relationships. It is filling up fast. Hurry! Please see the flyer for more details

Have a great weekend

manjula



The flyer features a header with a stylized house graphic in orange and blue, containing the text 'United We Stand'. Below this, the title 'PHASE 2 Project HOPE | Train the Trainer' is displayed in blue. The main body is divided into two sections: a white section for the theme and workshops, and a blue section for dates, venue, and contact information. The footer includes logos for ACHRHR, the AustralAsian Centre, and the Government of Victoria.

**'United We Stand'**

**PHASE 2**

**Project HOPE | Train the Trainer**

*Harmony and healthy relationships in the home*

**WORKSHOP 1**  
Understanding the gender norms and how they are formed.

**WORKSHOP 2**  
Financial decision making within a family and its impacts.  
Provision of materials for running future workshops.

**DATES** Workshop 1 - Sunday 3 November 10am - 1pm  
Workshop 2 - Sunday 8 December 10am - 1pm


**VENUE** Multicultural Hub, 506 Elizabeth St. Melbourne  
(Refreshments provided)


**EMAIL** [info@achrh.org](mailto:info@achrh.org)

**PHONE** 0419354482 or 0434858155

**RSVP by 23 October**

Funded by the

 **AustralAsian Centre**  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS & HEALTH

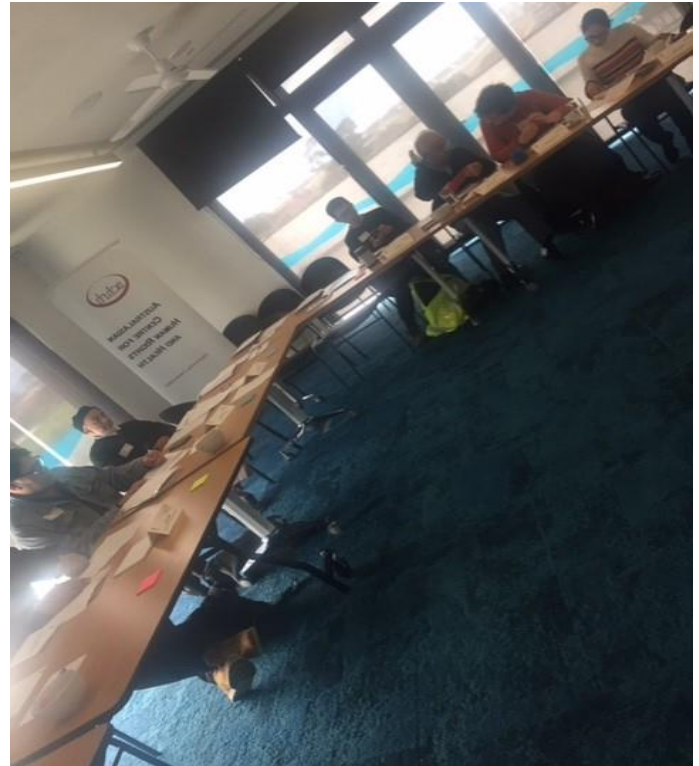
 **VICTORIA**

## Mutual Relational Respect by ACHRH as part of the Leadership in Primary Prevention for CALD leaders run in

ACHRH in the News with Kingston City council and WHISE. ACHRH co-facilitated training workshops for CALD Leaders being conducted by Kingston City Council. Our innovative program the Mutual Relational Respect provided the anchor.

<https://www.nationaltribune.com.au/courage-to-change-project-working-to-prevent-family-violence/>

<https://www.miragenews.com/courage-to-change-project-working-to-prevent-family-violence/>



Pictures of the Interactive session held on 24 September 2019 produced with permission.

## Fourth Action Plan of the “National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022”

Gauri Kapoor

**On Friday August 21,** the Fourth Action Plan was released following extensive consultations. In response to ACHRH’s campaign, it includes a recommendation that the service system and communities address the harmful cultural practice of dowry abuse.

More broadly, the plan explores factors influencing national policy responses to family violence and the consequent shaping of government responsibilities. It examines how all factors can be incorporated into a holistic approach to addressing what has fast morphed into an urgent as well as a highly complex public health issue and human rights issue. The document outlines a range of primary prevention measures and re-emphasises the need for greater consideration of all gender related aspects in the formulation and implementation of family violence responses. Networking and coordination between stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental agencies is essential in achieving set goals.

The Plan supports the case for strengthening counselling services as there is a significant link between family violence and poor mental health. It is clear more needs to be understood about the lived experiences of people who have survived various forms of family violence and who have endured a broad range of controlling behaviours in relationships. A clear strategy is yet to be developed around how best to link them to a full range of appropriate assistance. Improving social work capacity requires coordinated efforts at all levels of government and greater investment in educational and training programs.

Community perceptions of family violence have clearly evolved. It is no longer typically perceived as a private family matter that is best resolved within the home. Available data however indicates slow and inconsistent change in terms of the prevalence and impact of family violence. To this end, there is a much work to be done in changing cultural and social norms that perpetuate violence against women. Expanding dialogue around how to address harmful social pressures and how to debunk stereotypes is a necessary next step. Better and targeted community programs and media campaigns are important in achieving a sustainable and long-term effect in this regard.

The socio-cultural context in which violence occurs has been considered by the Plan. It acknowledges people of CALD backgrounds, indigenous Australians and LGBTIQ Australians have multi-sectoral and culturally specific needs. Dowry abuse, early/forced marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting and human trafficking are listed as examples of pervasive, violent and discriminatory practices affecting men and women in ethnic communities across Australia. Immigration related stressors are playing a uniquely harmful role in exasperating the nature and impact of gender-based violence. Addressing real or perceived issues related to migration and settlement is an aspect the Plan alludes to.

Despite this being a final phase of the 12-year plan, the Government is committed to systematic results-based monitoring and evaluation of measures taken. Establishing what is known and what needs to be known in developing an effective policy response to the problem of family violence continues to be a work in progress.

**Fossiled***A poem by Dr Shweta Mishra*

I would never question a ritual  
 I would never ask about  
 I would never ask why  
 And you need not riposte  
 You need not account  
 You need not explicate  
 A thousand year old tree  
 I stand for centuries now  
 And unlike all that die with time  
 I have not died  
 Immortal on this earth  
 I live  
 Women draped in red  
 Observe fasts and take circles  
 With a thread of belief  
 Wrap it round me  
 With prayers and promises  
 Drooping me even more  
 My back is hunched  
 And you want it strong  
 So you butt a rod down my spine  
 to keep me straight

And now I work not efficiently though

But ceaselessly yes

And you somehow manage

Distressed all the time

In pain with all your wits

Trying hard to enslave me

You would want to kill all

You would not want me to die

I am singular

Unlike the rest

I am your favorite trained tame, Of your use,  
whip lashes fossiled

*Dr. Shweta Mishra (M.A. Ph.D.) is an Assistant Professor in English and presently teaches at MBP Government Post-Graduate College, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) India. Her works include "The Most Orange", a poetry collection published by Authorspress, New Delhi, 2018; "What is a Woman: This is Trash. Leave it." published by Authorspress, New Delhi, 2016 and "Image of Girlhood in the Fiction of African-American Women Writers: Paule Marshall, Anne Moody, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Ntozake Shange" published by Prestige Books International, New Delhi, 2011*





## WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

- **POLICE IN EMERGENCY -- 000**
- **YOUR GP -- they are helpful, easy to reach, they will refer you to the right place.**
- **NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE -- 1800 RESPECT**
- **INTOUCH MULTICULTURAL CENTER AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE -- 1800 755 988**
- **WOMENS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS SERVICE (WDVCS) 24 Hour state wide line 1800 015 188**
- **MEN'S 24 HOUR REFERRAL SERVICE 1800 065 973 (FREE CALL VICTORIA ONLY)**
- **VICTORIA IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN'S COALITION 03 9654 1243**  
virwc@virwc.org.au, www.virwc.org.au
- **WOMEN'S INFORMATION & REFERRAL AGENCY (WIRE) 03 9348 9416**  
inforequests@wire.org.au
- **DR MANJULA O'CONNOR, FOUNDING DIRECTOR ACHRH 03 9654 5271**  
manjula@achrh.org

### WHY GET HELP?

- ❖ Domestic Violence damages our culture
- ❖ Domestic violence breaks our homes
- ❖ Domestic Violence causes:
  - Anxiety,
  - Depression,
  - Suicide,
  - Homicide in women, men and children

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ❖ Support those who may be victims
- ❖ Encourage victims to seek help and become survivors
- ❖ Encourage perpetrators to seek help
- ❖ DO NOT BE SILENT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

*Say No to Family Domestic Violence*

## Media Engagement

The ACHRH has been making waves in the media – the following is a list of mentions of the ACHRH:

- ABC radio – World News, RN, ABC News
- ABC digital news- by Hayley Gleeson
- ABC television news- by Naomi Selvaratnam
- SBS digital news by Mosiqi Acharaya
- The Age – Article by Jewel Topsfield
- The Sydney Morning herald - Article by Jewel Topsfield
- Daily Telegraph– Article by Clarissa Bye
- The Australian –Article by Sue Smethurst, published in Enquirer
- The BuzzFeed.News –digital news



The ACHRH has also received the following mentions:

Victorian Parliament (and recorded in Hansard) -- Role of ACHRH and Dr Manjula in attaining the difficult goal of inclusion of words dowry abuse in Family Violence Protection Act by MP Heidi Victoria, MP Gabrielle Williams, and MP Danielle Green.

Federal Parliament -- MP Julian Hill.

# #SAYNO TODOWRY

