

FACT SHEET (as at 6 May 2009)

The Indigenous Family Violence Offender Program NT Community Corrections

Background

The IFVOP has been operating in the NT since 2005, originally set-up under a bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments. At the completion of this agreement the Northern Territory Government decided to continue and expand the program Territory wide for the next five years through NT Community Corrections using Closing The Gap funding.

The aim of IFVOP is to work with offenders to educate and provide alternative strategies for addressing issues which result in anger.

What is it?

It is a unique program, delivered by local Indigenous facilitators who are respected by their community.

The 50 hour program raises awareness about family violence and its impact on the offender, their victims, families and community as a whole. Participants learn that family violence is not acceptable and is a crime.

They are taught to take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

Other concepts addressed during the program include: responding appropriately to anger, resolving conflict without violence, substance abuse, cultural context of violence, change and Indigenous spiritual healing.

Their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are challenged in a non threatening manner.

The IFVOP clientele

Participants are perpetrators of family violence who are on court orders to take part in the program.

About the facilitators

The IFVOP facilitators are identified through consultation with community Elders and respected community members. The facilitators then attend an intensive training program in Darwin which in turn enables communities to facilitate and own the program themselves.

The facilitators are also trained to conduct court assessments, partner/victim assessments and address varying needs of communities in relation to family violence.

Facilitators deliver the program in a mix of English and local language and they're employed on a casual contract basis by Community Corrections.

Where does IFVOP operate?

Currently the IFVOP can be delivered in 20 communities – Nguiu, Pirlangimpi, Wadeye, Nhulunbuy, Milingimbi, Daly River, Maningrida, Galiwinku, Tennant Creek, Ali Curung, Elliott, Katherine, Timber Creek, Lajamanu, Beswick, Barunga, Alice Springs, Yuendumu, Hermannsburg and Santa Teresa.

Community Corrections aims to further extend the program's reach across the Northern Territory.