

ENDING FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM — CLIENT CASE STUDY



A CLIENT'S STORY

In February 2013 the Commission commenced a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs to deliver the Ending Family Violence (EFV) program in the four CYWR trial communities. QCS provided the program to the Commission and supported the training of staff. The EFV program focuses on attendees discussing the personal barriers and social challenges that contribute to violence, especially relating to family members. The three day program is tailored to each community and is supported by the Commissioners, community and employers. A recent participant tells his story:

I have two little girls. They came along quickly after I got together with my partner. We have another on the way and I hope it is a boy this time. For many years I was not a good father, partner or role model to my children. I would get very angry and just want to hit something. Sometimes it was my partner, sometimes it was the wall and sometimes I picked fights with other blokes knowing I could never win. I knew my behaviour was causing my partner to be upset with me all the time. She threatened to leave and take the girls, but this just made me angrier and we would start all over again with yelling and fighting. When I felt the new baby in her belly I thought I have to change. I will be a father of three and I want all three to be smart and go to school and get jobs. I know they need a good home to do this.

I talked to the Commissioners at the next conference I attended. They said if I want to change I need to work hard and a good start would be the Ending Family Violence program. I agreed to turn up the next time it was held in the community. I was a bit quiet in the beginning even though they wanted me to talk a lot, but I quickly began to enjoy it. We discussed family and told stories about ourselves, our past and long ago. I thought it would be really negative, but it was positive talk about what I value, what is important to me and how I make decisions every day that impact on my family. I encouraged the other attendees to tell their stories and kept asking questions. I was not made to feel bad or stupid and I learnt that I need to take responsibility for my actions, not to blame others.

I am a better man, a better partner and a better father now. I think first and act later, not the other way around. I still get mad and yell sometimes, but most of the time I calm down and think of what I can do to make things better not worse. My new baby will come home to a happy home now and my little girls will not be worried to laugh out loud and play noisy games because I will be laughing and playing with them, not yelling at them to stop. The program helped me see a different way to act and now my whole family is happier.



Isabella Falls