YOU, ME AND US

Best practice in respectful relationships education projects for young people aged 10 to 24 years

Literature review for Women's Health West's You, Me and Us project

List of acronyms

ACSSA   *Australia Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault*

AFL   *Australian Football League*

CALD   *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse*

CASA   *Centre Against Sexual Assault*

DEECD   *Department of Education and Early Childhood Development*

FTB   *Forum Theatre for Bystanders*

GDHR   *Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships*

GLBTIQ   *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer*

LSSLRR   *Living Safer Sexual Lives Respectful Relationships*

MVP   *Mentors in Violence Prevention*

NAPCAN   *National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect*

RCC   *Respect, Communicate, Choose*

RPC   *Respect, Protect, Connect*

RRE   *Respectful Relationships Education*

RWF   *Relationships Without Fear*

SAPPSS   *Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools*

SECASA   *South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault*

SHARE   *Sexual Health and Relationships Education*

UNESCO   *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation*

WEEO, WISER *Women Educating Each Other… Women in Safe and Equal Relationships*

WHGNE   *Women's Health Goulburn North East*

WHW   *Women's Health West*

YMY   *Yes Means Yes*

YWCA   *Young Women's Christian Association*

Introduction

The primary prevention of violence against women and their children is a core focus of *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children,* as well as being a focus of a number of state and territory policies (DEECD, 2014; Evans, 2010; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009; National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009). Primary prevention is used to refer 'to efforts to prevent violence from occurring in the first place' (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 7), and achieves this through seeking to redress the underlying causative factors of violence against women and children. Having all children take part in respectful relationships education (RRE) is a key primary prevention strategy identified in *Time for Action* (National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children, 2009).

Effective implementation of RRE represents a core mechanism for the primary prevention of violence against women and children: that is, it is targeted at preventing the formation of violence promoting attitudes, beliefs, and cultural values, and thus works towards stopping violence against women and children before it occurs. As Flood, Fergus and Heenan (2009: 4) note 'early interventions with children and young people can have a lasting effect on their relationships in the future' (see also Dyson and Flood, 2008). Subsequently, it is unsurprising that considerable efforts have been directed towards implementing RRE across school, community, higher education and sports settings throughout Australia. Accompanying this is a growing body of research that explores and defines the components of effective RRE. However, the development and implementation of RRE is still in its infancy (Carmody et al, 2009), and there is much conceptual thinking, research, and evaluation required in order to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of these programs.

This literature review provides an overview of the current state of research and practice in relation to RRE both within Australia and internationally. These are considered across the setting of upper primary school, secondary school, sports, community and TAFE and universities. The review forms a component of the *You, Me and Us* RRE program run by Women's Health West, with the settings selected on the basis that they reflect those that this program runs across.

Methodology

A tri-layered approach was taken in conducting this literature review. This included: a systematic review of the Discovery database, accessible through the University of Melbourne; a targeted search of key authors and service providers in the prevention of violence against women field; and snowballing. This approach has allowed for a comprehensive search of relevant literature and other sources of information. Each of these three steps is outlined in further detail in the following section.

Systematic literature review

A systematic review of the available literature on RRE was undertaken using the University of Melbourne's Discovery database. The Discovery database combines search results from the university's catalogue and digital repository, as well as key journal databases. A list of the databases included in the search can be found in appendix a.

The key search terms used to conduct this review can also be found in appendix a. The parameters of the search were limited to sources that were published since 2000 to ensure that only recent work and programs were taken into account. The literature search was inclusive of all document types and sources. That is, journal articles, books, news articles, periodicals, conference materials, dissertations/theses, reports, magazines and reviews were all included within the search. Both peer-reviewed and non-peer reviewed sources were included within the search terms. Given that there is relatively little published on the topic of RRE, it was important to be as inclusive as possible within the search parameters. Additionally, as much of the work conducted in this area is by practitioners and government rather than academics, relevant sources often sit outside of peer-reviewed publications.

Targeted search

A targeted search of key academic journals, researchers in the field of respectful relationships, organisations, and websites was undertaken in order to locate relevant information for this review. This allowed 'grey' literature from government sources, and information about respectful relationships programs run by community organisations to be sourced, which was unlikely to be uncovered through searches of academic databases. The publication lists of academic leaders in the field of RRE, such as Moira Carmody and Sue Dyson, were located and searched for relevant articles and other outputs. Likewise,

prominent journals such as *Sex Education* were located and the author reviewed every issue of the journal published since 2000 in order to identify any relevant articles.

The selection of sources for the targeted search was based upon the author's own knowledge of and expertise in the respectful relationships field, and the use of snowballing information from other sources. For example, the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) website was searched for information on current respectful relationships programs. Additionally, the 'links' page of the ACSSA website was used to locate other services and websites that might undertake RRE programs, and these sites were in turn visited and searched by the author. A complete list of the sources included in the targeted search can be found in appendix a.

Snowballing

A snowballing approach was also utilised to identify relevant sources for this literature review. As suggested in the above discussion, snowballing involved identifying sources through other sources. Thus, the reference lists and bibliographies of publications already identified were searched for other relevant publications. Likewise, the 'links' pages of websites identified in the targeted search were visited to identify other sources or websites that contained relevant information.

Respectful relationships education

Definitions

There has been an increased focus on RRE over the past decade and the development of a number of programs aimed at instilling the skills and values that allow such relationships to flourish. However, there is a distinct lack of conceptual clarity in regards to what 'respectful relationships' are. Likewise, RRE is used to refer to a broad range of educational programs that cover romantic and/or sexual relationships, peer relationships, the relationships between students and teachers, bullying and homophobia. Some current programs cover all of these issues, while others focus more specifically on a specific relationship context. In other instances, the term is used with little insight as to which particular types of 'relationships' are of concern. Dyson and colleagues highlight the importance of having a clear understanding of what is meant by the term 'respect', noting that understandings of respectful relationships vary across cultures and contexts (2011: 4).

Programs and policies also occasionally adopt the language of 'healthy' relationships, rather than respectful ones (Carmody, 2009; Carmody et al, 2009; Evans, 2010), which further adds to the complexity and lack of clarity in this field. Carmody challenges approaches based on promoting 'healthy' relationships, arguing that they imply relationships are static, and that 'if young people understand the predetermined characteristics of a healthy relationship this will result in them governing themselves and being better heteronormative citizens' (Carmody, 2009: 8). Such an approach obscures the complex and dynamic nature of relationships. This suggests that further theoretical and conceptual work, as well as primary research, is required to refine and clarify what is meant by 'respectful relationships'.

Flood and colleagues view respectful relationships as being constituted by 'relationships – among peers, dating partners and others – characterised by non-violence, equality, mutual consideration, trust and a host of other positive qualities' (2009: 8). Such respectful relationships sit in contrast to relationships steeped in disrespect and an unequal division of power, which Flood, Fergus and Heenan (2009: 8) suggest can function as a breeding ground for violence and abuse. Evans, however, critiques current conceptions of 'healthy' or respectful relationships for lacking a clear model of 'what is beneficial, desirable or good in the absence of violence (2010: 48). Such discourse also positions relationships within a binary of healthy/unhealthy, which has the potential to obscure the complex reality of

relationship experiences. The Tasmanian Department of Education adopts a considerably broader view, defining relationships and sexuality education as 'any learning, teaching and knowledge that relates to sex, sexuality, gender identity, sexual health and wellbeing, personal and social relationships, emotions, thinking and understanding about ourselves and others' (2012: 5).

Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE) conducted focus groups with service providers and professionals across a range of government, education and community sectors. Participants were asked what 'respectful relationships' meant to them. Some of the core values and beliefs that participants saw as underpinning respectful relationships included (WHGNE, 2013: 7):

- Personal safety and the right to be free from violence and abuse
- The right to respect, to be listened to and heard
- Equality in relationships between men and women
- Care of the self and self-respect
- Honesty
- Acknowledgement of and respect for difference and diversity
- Meaningful inclusion for equity and empowerment.

The Women's Health West (WHW) *You, Me and Us* RRE program provides one current example of a program that provides a working definition of 'respectful relationships education', which includes education that strengthens the skills and capacity of young people to:

- Identify behaviours associated with healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Identify attitudes and behaviours that underpin and perpetuate gender inequity
- Understand their legal rights and responsibilities
- Access help and support if they or someone they know is experiencing an unhealthy or violent relationship (WHW, 2014)

Overall, as per Evans' (2010) critique, there is a lack of clarity in relation to what constitutes 'healthy' or 'unhealthy' relationships, and whether these characteristics would be different to 'respectful' relationships. Again, this suggests that further theoretical and conceptual work is required in this area.

Levels of prevention

The prevention of violence against women and their children occurs across three different levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Before discussion aspects of 'good practice' in RRE and exploring current programs, it is helpful to define and distinguish between these different levels of prevention:

- Primary prevention refers to the prevention of violence before it occurs (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). For example, through aiming to shift attitudes about gender roles that underpin violence against women and their children. Primary prevention efforts are generally targeted towards the broader community, regardless of their previous victimisation or perpetration experiences, or their perceived risk of becoming a victim or a perpetrator.

- Secondary prevention refers to prevention efforts that are targeted towards groups 'at-risk' of experiencing or perpetrating violence against women and their children. Secondary prevention can involve, for example, developing an intervention program for young people who are viewed to be 'at-risk' of becoming a perpetrator on the basis of past aggressive or inappropriate sexual behaviour.

- Tertiary prevention refers to prevention and other efforts that occur after violence against women has been perpetrated. Tertiary prevention strategies include criminal justice system responses to violence against women and their children, the provision of counselling and other support for victims, and behaviour change programs for offenders (VicHealth, 2007)

RRE as a form of prevention typically falls within the primary or secondary categories, and occasionally both. RRE can also involve some tertiary prevention, for example if participants disclose experiences of victimisation or if the program teaches participants bystander intervention skills that are designed to respond to violence after it occurs. In practice, these different forms of prevention do not always operate as discrete categories. For instance, primary prevention-focused RRE programs can be adapted for groups of 'at-risk' youth and therefore also act as a form of secondary prevention, while tertiary responses to violence against women by the criminal justice system can also act as a form of primary prevention in that they send a message to the broader community that this behaviour will not be tolerated.

Exploring 'good practice'

Although further work and evidence is required in consolidating our understandings of good or best practice in RRE, from the evidence acquired so far a number of core components of RRE have been identified (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). The DEECD (2014: 8) identify the key components of effective RRE (developed by Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009), and, ultimately, the effective prevention of violence against women and children, as including:

- A whole-of-school approach
- A common framework for understanding and responding to respectful relationships
- Effective curriculum delivery
- Relevant, inclusive and culturally sensitive practice and reflection
- Evaluation of the impact of strategies on the whole-school community.

These components also reflect and incorporate the *National Standards for Effective Sexual Assault Prevention Education* developed by Carmody and colleagues (2009). However, as Flood and colleagues (2009) remind us, achieving good or best practice is an ongoing, iterative task, and the 'markers' of good practice evolve over time (Fergus, 2006). It requires ongoing reflexivity and attention must also be paid to the context in which a program is delivered (see also Carmody et al, 2009). Schools should aim towards achieving these components. However, they should not be viewed in an overly prescriptive or rigid manner. The following discussion explores each of these components of good practice in further detail.

A whole-of-school approach

It is now well recognised that in order for RRE to be successful, a whole-of-school approach is necessary (Carmody et al, 2009; DEECD, 2008a, 2010, 2014; Ellis, 2008; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009; Hyde, Imbesi, price, Sharrock and Tufa, 2011; Imbesi, 2008). 'One-off' programs and initiatives might be used to complement a whole-of-school model, they are not sufficient in and of themselves to provide effective RRE (DEECD, 2008a, 2011; Dyson, 2009; Flood, 2005-2006; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). The use of one-off programs has the tendency to result in 'patchy and variable provision' of RRE (DEECD, 2008a: 17), and subsequently does not provide clear and consistent messages to young people about respectful relationships. One-off sessions can even be counterproductive, resulting in a backlash in attitudes or the reinforcement of problematic stereotypes (Imbesi, 2008). Hyde and colleagues (2011) also suggest that a one-off approach is inconsistent with a feminist

model of primary prevention, although they do not elaborate on why this is the case. Adopting a whole-of-school approach ensures that key messages are reinforced to students across their schooling, in different contexts, and by different teachers, staff and peers (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). However, as Carmody et al (2009) note, a lack of program evaluation means that there is currently a lack of clarity in regards to how long RRE needs to run for in order to generate significant outcomes.

A whole-of-school approach involves a comprehensive, multi-layered and multi-faceted strategy for implementing RRE – although 'emphasis should be placed on the learning, teaching, assessment and reporting for all students' (DEECD, 2011: 16). According to the DEECD (2014) the core elements of a whole-of-school approach are:

- School culture and environment
- School leadership and commitment
- Professional learning strategy
- Support for staff and students
- Community partnerships
- Teaching and learning.

It is important, to allow for a degree of flexibility in the application of these elements in practice (Kerig et al, 2010). This is to recognise that schools will often come to RRE from a diverse range of starting points, and will thus have different levels of initial capability in applying these elements (DEECD, 2014; Wright and Carmody, 2012). Wright and Carmody (2012) indicate that it is vital that a determination of a schools' level of awareness and readiness for implementing RRE be undertaken prior to initiating a program. This is necessary to determine what steps will need to be taken before a RRE program can be implemented in an efficient and effective manner. Emphasis is also placed on forming strong community partnerships, and for some schools this might involve engaging specialist services, such as women's health services or sexual assault organisations, to assist in delivering RRE or to provide specialist counselling and assistance to students in need (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 32).

A whole-of-school approach positions the responsibility to teach RRE with the broader school community (DEECD, 2014). Subsequently, formal curriculum forms only one component of RRE. Significant emphasis is also placed on what the DEECD (2014) term 'informal curriculum'. That is, schools must also develop an 'ethos and culture that models respectful practices and is consistent in dealing with incidents of…violence' against women and children (DEECD, 2014: 8). However, the ethos and culture of a school are not static entities (DEECD, 2008a). This suggests that ongoing reflection and evaluation of the ways in which RRE is incorporated into a school's culture is necessary in order to achieve ongoing success in implementing a whole-of-school approach to RRE. Additionally, the values and ethical approaches communicated in RRE should be reflected and reinforced across school policy, curriculum, culture, community partnerships, and the attitudes and behaviour of staff (DEECD, 2008a).

The provision of a 'safe space' is required for holding RRE and discussions on violence against women and children. A safe space is one in which 'students and teachers can share their ideas and opinions without fear of judgment or silencing; the focus is maintained on learning and education' and allows for the expression and respect of diverse points of view (DEECD, 2014: 11). The delivery of RRE can also result in students disclosing sensitive information to school staff, such as experiences of sexual abuse or disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity. Staff should be informed as to how to appropriately respond to such disclosures and be able to connect the student with relevant support services (DEECD, 2014: 12; Ellis, 2008; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). However, the creation of a safe space can be difficult to achieve in practice and requires highly skilled program leaders or facilitators (Fox, Hale and Gadd, 2014: 30).

Common framework

An appropriate theoretical framework should underpin the understandings of violence used in RRE programs (Carmody et al, 2009). Programs should also 'incorporate a theory of change' in order to explain how the program will lead to the proposed outcomes (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 33; see also Carmody et al, 2009). Utilising a theory of change requires those developing and implementing a RRE program to have a clear idea of the intended program impacts, how the program will achieve those impacts, and a strategy for evaluating whether the desired impact has occurred (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 35). Failure to draw on a clear theoretical framework can result in 'confused objectives, alienating certain populations and a lack of coherence between intended outcomes and the reality of the program' (Carmody et al, 2009: 33).

In order for RRE to effectively prevent violence against women and children, it is vital that educational efforts clearly address the links between gendered power relations and the occurrence of violence against women (DEECD, 2014; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009; Hyde et al, 2011; Maxwell, forthcoming). Flood, Fergus and Heenan (2009: 33; see also, Flood 2005-2006; Hyde et al, 2011) propose that this theoretical account of violence should be inclusive of:

- Feminist research on the relationships between gender, power and violence
- An examination of constructions of gender and sexuality which are violence-supportive
- A fostering of equal gender relations.

By developing RRE that is theoretically informed, this ensures that programs are based in a firm understanding of the underlying causes of violence and provides a clear framework for generating change (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). However, in practice, many RRE programs lack a clear theoretical framework and schools can be reluctant to draw on explicitly feminist frameworks, hence the value of partnering with feminist women's health services who have the expertise to deliver RRE programs (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009; Hyde et al, 2011; Mulroney, 2003). Feminist frameworks are a fundamental component of best practice in RRE. \Indeed, it is important that those running RRE programs are strategic in how they present feminist-informed content to avoid unintended or counterproductive consequences, such as perceptions that such program will alienate young men. One strategy for circumventing this is to focus on developing a positive role for men and boys in violence prevention, rather than emphasising what they should not do (Carmody, 2013; Evans, Krogh and Carmody, 2009; Flood, 2005-2006: 29). Likewise, programs such as *Sex and Ethics* (discussed in detail later in this review) have a strong focus on sexual pleasure and desire as well as the dynamics the underlie violence against women and children.

Effective curriculum delivery

Ensuring that effective means of curriculum delivery are used is also vital to garnering maximum program effectiveness. However, as Flood and colleagues (2009) note, the components of effective curriculum delivery are currently poorly understood in relation to RRE. They identify a range of factors that come together to influence effective curriculum delivery (2009: 35):

- Curriculum content
- Teaching methods and pedagogy
- Curriculum structure (including duration and intensity, timing and group composition);
- Curriculum teachers and educators.

As noted earlier, curriculum content should be informed by feminist theory and research on violence against women. Programs should redress a broad range of violent and abusive behaviours, as opposed to focusing specifically on sexual or domestic violence alone (Ellis, 2008; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 36). This is based on the premise that different forms of violence, abuse and discrimination are interlinked, but also that the skills required in negotiating ethical and respectful relationships support 'the development of non-violence relating across all spheres of relationships' (Cameron-Lewis and Allen, 2013125). Thus, best practice in RRE requires all forms of violence (including physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic violence and abuse) to be covered, an exploration of these kinds of violence across a range of relationship contexts, and a consideration of how these forms of violence intersect with other abusive behaviours, such as bullying and homophobic abuse (Ellis, 2008; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 36).

Cameron-Lewis and Allen (2013: 123) argue that preventative sexual assault education should be incorporated into a pleasure-based sexuality education curriculum, as segregating these topics might 'disallow recognition and exploration of the interrelatedness of pleasure and danger in sexual intimacy'. In doing so, such education does not reflect the complexity of young people's lived experiences. However, others, such as Hyde and colleagues (2011), have contested this point, instead arguing that RRE should be focused upon the primary prevention of violence against women in order to be effective. Curriculum should target the attitudes underlying violence at an individual, broader community and structural level, as well as seeking to change behaviours (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009).

Curriculum content should also be matched to suit the particular developmental stage of students. However, what this actually 'looks like' in practice is not currently well articulated in RRE programs and research (Kerig et al, 2010). The *Growing Respect* program run by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) provides one example where developmentally appropriate curriculum is clearly articulated. A key theme of the *Growing Respect* program is 'promoting equal and respectful relationships', and this encompasses understandings of gender. For students in the year 5 and 6 program, this involves looking 'at what it means to be a boy and a girl' and how this influences relationship dynamics, whereas for Year 10 students the focus lies on the ''unwritten rules' about sex, gender and relationships' (Walsh and Peters, 2011: 20). Likewise, a UK-based domestic violence prevention program discusses the topics of friendships and peer relationships with the youngest age group (ages 8 to 9), while the more confronting topic of domestic violence is introduced to children aged 10 to 11. It should also be noted that this 'developmental' approach to curriculum development has been critiqued on the basis that it perpetuates 'discourses of childhood innocence' and withholds information about sex and relationships to children and young people (Robinson, 2013).

Good practice in curriculum delivery involves some additional features identified by Flood and colleagues (2009: 40):

1. The use of quality teaching materials
2. Being interactive and participatory
3. Addressing cognitive, affective and behavioural domains
4. Giving attention to the development of skills
5. Being matched to the developmental stage of the student
6. Responding in an appropriate and supportive way to disclosures of victimisation

It is currently less clear whether a single-sex or co-ed environment is more conducive to the effective delivery of RRE, although the available evidence tends to support the use of single-sex groups (Carmody, 2013; Carmody et al, 2009; Flood 2005-2006; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009; Kerig et al, 2010). The DEECD (2014) advocates that schools adopt an approach that best suits the needs of their students and the unique culture of the school. For example, the beliefs and norms of some cultural groups might require that RRE be delivered in a single-sex environment. Cultural and social diversity should be recognised and redressed in RRE, including in relation to diverse gender and sexual orientation, disability, cultural beliefs and religion (DEECD, 2011: 18).

In line with the need to draw on a clear theoretical framework, Flood, Fergus and Heenan (2009: 44) suggest that the decision to use either a single or mixed-sex group should be based upon a clear rationale. A different approach might also be required for different elements of RRE. For instance, Dyson and Flood (2008: 25) note that sexual assault prevention education is most effectively delivered in single-sex groups, while Fox and colleagues (2014) suggest that boys and girls can have different learning needs and desires (see also Flood 2005-2006). Kerig and colleagues (2010) argue that the use of single-sex groups creates a more comfortable and safe space for young people to share their beliefs, experiences and feelings. However, a point of caution against using same-sex groups is that they can reinforce and perpetuate problematic gender norms, for example 'that boys and girls are 'naturally' different, that romantic relationships are always heterosexual, and that boys and girls cannot learn important relationship lessons from each other' (Noonan and Charles, 2009:1101).

Likewise, there is a general lack of consensus as to who should deliver RRE. That is, it is unclear whether teachers, peer educators or community educators (or a mix of these various groups) most effectively deliver RRE (Carmody, forthcoming). Fox and colleagues (2014) suggest that there are advantages and disadvantages to using either teachers or external facilitators to deliver RRE content. For instance, external facilitators are often more comfortable discussing sensitive topics such as sexual or domestic violence, but can sometimes lack the appropriate training and experience to deliver content effectively, while the reverse of this can be true for teaching staff (Carmody, forthcoming; Fox et al, 2014). This suggests that those responsible for the delivery of RRE require training in both teaching techniques and the program content areas for content delivery to be effective. The use of peer educators in RRE delivery is discussed in detail later in this review.

Again, there is also a lack of consistent evidence relating to whether those delivering content should be of the same-sex as students. Although there is consensus that whoever delivers RRE should be competent in doing so and provided adequate and ongoing support in the form of training and resources (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 50-53). Flood (2005-2006) argues that it is imperative for men to be involved in violence prevention work if it is to be successful and this suggests that men should have some involvement in the delivery of RRE. Flood (2005-2006: 30) presents five key reasons why men should deliver RRE to boys or other men:

1. Men's attitudes and actions are strongly influenced by their male peers, and this can be used to achieve positive outcomes in RRE
2. Single-sex groups provide a safer space for men to talk openly
3. It allows men to act as role models for each other
4. Male participants often view male teachers as more credible and persuasive
5. The use of single-sex groups avoids the gendered interactions that tend to take place in mixed-gender groups, which have the possibility to counteract the messages of RRE.

Participants in Johnson's (2012: 15) research on the issues faced by teachers in teaching sexuality and relationships education reported that this aspect of the curriculum could be viewed as 'women's business'. Thus, school gender-politics can also dictate which teachers are responsible for delivering this content. Additionally, it can be difficult to engage men in teaching or the delivery of RRE, which may make it difficult to find men to deliver programs in practice.

Relevant, inclusive and culturally sensitive practice

As highlighted earlier, the delivery of RRE programs should be informed by and responsive to the unique context of each school's environment. Ensuring that the content of RRE is inclusive of a broad range of groups means that program content is likely to be relevant to students and can assist in preventing students from disengaging with the key messages of RRE (Carmody et al, 2009; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 56). Different cultural groups have different norms in relation to 'appropriate' expressions of gender, as well as dating and relationship norms (Kerig et al, 2010). Such differences need to be taken into account in providing relevant RRE. Some forms of diversity, such as the religious affiliation or cultural background of students might be more readily known by schools, while other facets of identity, such as sexual orientation or gender identity, can be less visible. It is therefore

important that schools do not make assumptions about the identities of their students. There is also great variation and diversity within as well as between different demographic groups, and a 'one-size fits all' approach should be avoided (Carmody, 2009; Kerig et al, 2010; Wright and Carmody, 2012). Being responsive to diversity also requires recognition of the fact that not all young people attend school. RRE program delivery also needs to occur across other community-based locations, particularly in order to reach disadvantaged youths (Keel, 2005).

Existing research has identified that teachers can find it particularly challenging to identify, name and redress 'the inherent heteronormativity of schools and sex and relationships programs… [and in] dealing with cultural and religious diversity in sexual matters' (Johnson, 2012:1). Further, Australian states and territories currently vary greatly in terms of educational policies directly responding to sexual diversity and homophobia, while some states exempt religious schools from adherence to anti-discrimination policy and legislation (Jones and Hillier, 2012). This suggests that implementing inclusive and culturally sensitive practice can be difficult to achieve in practice, and that teachers and school staff often require additional support and resources in this area (Evans, 2010; Johnson, 2012). That said, for some teachers in Johnson's (2012) research, having students from varying cultural backgrounds presented an opportunity to discuss the diversity of beliefs and attitudes towards sexual relationships, and could be used as a tool to reinforce some of the key RRE messages regarding diversity.

There is relatively little attention paid to the specific needs of different cultural groups in existing RRE literature, research and programs (Kerig, Volz, Moeddel and Cuellar, 2010). For example, while Flood, Fergus and Heenan (2009: 50) note that 'Indigenous, immigrant, refugee and disadvantaged young people' might have additional needs or culturally specific requirements, and can require a tailored approach to RRE, they do not articulate what this would actually look like in practice. Haggis and Mulholland (2014) argue that 'difference' in the form of religion, culture or sexual plurality tends to be treated as an 'add-on' in much sexuality education research and practice. The effect of this is to leave 'the normative unchallenged, confirming the hegemony of the heteronormative, unraced subject' (2014: 57). While there is no systematic evaluation of this aspect of RRE research and curriculum within Australia, this is plausibly also the case for RRE.

Wright and Carmody (2012) provide comprehensive guidelines for delivering Carmody's *Sex and Ethics* program to Indigenous young people. They suggest that at the consultation or pre-implementation stage of a RRE program, consultation should occur with a range of families and community members and should be inclusive of Indigenous elders who can inform on topics such as:

- The political dynamics of the region
- How men's business and women's business are divided in the region
- The particular services available to the Indigenous community (2012: 23).

Additionally, in holding these consultations it may be necessary to focus on the potential impacts and benefits of the program to the community, rather than discussing culturally inappropriate theoretical frameworks (such as feminist theory) (Wright and Carmody, 2012). Wright and Carmody (2012: 30; drawing on the work of Memmot, 2006) note that good practice in program delivery to Indigenous communities can involve:

- Grounding projects in local culture and community
- Engaging men and elders in the program
- Considering the need to include reference to colonisation and inter-generational family history as a healing component of the program
- Delivering the project in a 'neutral' space
- Adapting delivery to accommodate for a cultural preference for group learning and other learning styles (e.g., oral rather than written learning)
- Flexibility in terms of how and when the program is delivered.

Wright and Carmody (2012) can be referred to for practical suggestions as to how these points can be translated into program delivery. There is also debate as to whether programs should be delivered by Indigenous or non-Indigenous facilitators. Indigenous facilitators are likely to have greater knowledge of the local community context, and be better equipped to deliver program content in a culturally appropriate way (Wright and Carmody, 2012: 35). However, Indigenous facilitators run the risk of being too 'close' to other community members to allow for participants to discuss respectful relationships openly. Wright and Carmody (2012) suggest that programs be delivered with one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous facilitator in order to overcome this. Ideally, at least one facilitator should be known to the community in order to overcome Indigenous distrust of outsiders (Wright and Carmody, 2012). Non-Indigenous facilitators should take part in cultural training in order to

ensure they are able to deliver RRE in a culturally sensitive and aware way (Wright and Carmody, 2012). Kerig and colleagues (2010) also suggest openly acknowledging the cultural and ethnic differences between facilitators and participants, as this can allow participants to talk more openly about issues pertaining to race and racism that intersect with RRE and to create space to discuss how participants' and facilitators' values and beliefs might differ.

SHineSA (n.d.) provide some strategies for the effective delivery of sexual and relationships education to CALD communities, including:

- Talking to parents beforehand to allay fears and to communicate why this education is important
- To form partnerships with relevant community organisations that work with CALD communities
- To engage with students prior to starting delivery of sexuality and relationships education to determine what their learning needs in this area are, and to explore what topics they do and do not feel comfortable covering
- To deliver the program in a way that acknowledges, and is respectful of, diversity of community values
- To be responsive to the need for students to work in single-sex groups, or with other students of a similar cultural background where possible or necessary.

Tensions can also arise if the cultural values and attitudes of community groups are at odds with the core messages and values underpinning RRE. It may be necessary to adopt RRE programs to suit the needs of different groups, though this should not occur at the expense of program effectiveness (Hyde et al, 2011).

Impact evaluation

In order to ensure that a program is one of 'good practice', it is imperative for evaluation to occur (Carmody et al, 2009). Evaluation involves the 'systematic review and assessment of the features of an initiative and its effect, in order to produce information that can be used to test and improve the project's workings and effectiveness' (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 57). Ideally, evaluation should occur prior to a program being implemented (for example, to gather baseline data on behaviours and attitudes or to explore the RRE needs of a particular community), during and after (ideally in both the short and long-term) a project has been run (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 57). According to Flood (2005-2006: 29) these evaluations should be 'based on standardised measures of both attitudes and behaviour'. Ellis, however, critiques this method of program evaluation, suggesting that reducing RRE learning to a 'set of standardized test scores obscures the contentious aspects of empirical research…and limits recognition of what is most valued about programs' by participants (2008: 125). Ellis promotes the use of qualitative evaluations, such as focus group discussions, to explore participants' experiences of RRE in greater detail.

However, as noted earlier, good program evaluation rarely occurs in practice (Carmody et al, 2009; Mulroney, 2003) and this is also the case with many international RRE and primary prevention programs (Casey and Lindhorst 2009; Fox, Hale and Gadd, 2014). There are significant barriers faced by schools or other organisations in conducting such systematic and rigorous evaluations, not least of all the time, financial resources and skill required in their undertaking (Carmody, 2009; Evans, Krogh and Carmody, 2009). Additionally, Imbesi (2009: 32) draws our attention to the difficulty of measuring large-scale shifts in social norms, community attitudes and behaviour (see also Child Safety Commissioner, 2010; Dyson and Fox, 2006). It is difficult to assess whether a particular individual was likely to engage in violent behaviour prior to the running of a prevention program and this can cause difficulty in determining whether violence has been prevented or if it simply would not have occurred in the first place (Albury et al, 2011). There is also currently a lack of consensus as to what 'significant' or 'meaningful' change in relation to violence prevention might look like, making an assessment of program 'success' challenging (Meyer and Stein, 2004). Walsh and Peters (2011) also highlight the difficulties in having students take part in rigorous evaluation, with many young students unable or unwilling to complete long evaluation forms (see also Dyson and Fox, 2006).

Current respectful relationships research and curriculum

Australia

Australia is currently a world leader in both research and practice regarding RRE (DEECD, 2014). A range of RRE programs have been developed and implemented within Australia, and an overview of the current programs located in the author's search is presented in appendix b. More detail will be provided regarding the focus of these programs, and existing research and evaluation of RRE in later sections. It should be noted from the outset that there is growing evidence to suggest that violence prevention aimed at children and youth can work, particularly when it is delivered within a school-based setting (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). That said overall there is still relatively little evaluation of primary prevention efforts, including RRE (Carmody et al, 2009; Dyson and Flood, 2008; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009). This is the case on both a national and international level. Where evaluations have been conducted, they typically face a range of methodological and conceptual limitations including, but not limited to:

- Not collecting baseline data prior to program implementation
- Not conducting long-term evaluation of behavioural or attitudinal changes
- A lack of standardised or validated scales or measures
- A lack of focus on identifying causal relationships. That is, the specific aspects of the program and it's delivery that have led to attitudinal or behavioural change (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 21). For example, in programs using peer education that show positive results in attitudinal change it is often unclear whether it is the use of peer educators which has resulted in this change (in comparison to delivery by school teachers or other professional adult staff), or something else in the program's content.

RRE is currently covered across a range of State, Territory and National curriculum policies and other documents.[1] This is the case for both primary and secondary school settings. Flood, Fergus and Heenan (2009) can also be referred to for a comprehensive overview of educational curriculum and government policy supporting RRE. Currently, RRE falls under the domain of Health and Physical Education in the Australian Curriculum, and constitutes a compulsory component of this curriculum (DEECD, 2014). The *National Standards for*

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[1] For example, Safe and Respectful Relationships is currently listed as a key social priority area under the *ACT Women's Plan 2010-2015*, while the prevention of violence against women and their children through the use of school education to promote respectful relationships is a core focus of *Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women and Children, 2012-2015*.

Sexual Assault Prevention Education, developed by Carmody and colleagues (2009), also provides comprehensive national guidelines for the delivery of RRE, and these standards are discussed in more detail later in this review. The following discussion identifies current state and territory curriculum and other educational resources currently in place that pertain to RRE.

Australian Capital Territory

The ACT does not include a clearly articulated RRE component within its current curriculum, which covers year levels kindergarten to year 10. However, there are some aspects of the current curriculum that draw on some key components and principles of RRE. For example, the current curriculum framework states that all students should have 'access to learning regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, disability' (Department of Education and Training, n.d.: 10) and so forth. This implies that schools in the ACT should work towards creating inclusive educational environments.

Additionally, teaching students to act with integrity and regard for others is an essential learning achievement under the current curriculum, and this encourages 'understanding of the concepts of integrity, compassion and respect' (Department of Education and Training, n.d.: 48) when interacting with others. Another essential learning achievement of relevance here is that the student manages their self and relationships. This learning area includes a focus on students' need to develop communication and conflict resolution skills, as well as exploring issues that relate to 'love and intimacy, how we feel about our bodies and ourselves, how we see ourselves as female or male and how we relate to others sexually' (Department of Education and Training, n.d.: 136). Importantly, this learning achievement area assists students to 'develop, maintain and enjoy positive and respectful relationships' across all aspects of their lives (Department of Education and Training, n.d., 136). While there is some focus on bullying, violence, and homophobic abuse within this learning achievement area, there is not a clear focus on the prevention of violence against women and children.

The ACT also has a range of policies in place to redress sexual harassment, sexual abuse, homophobic abuse, and bullying within its schools (Department of Education and Training, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c). Again, while these are not explicitly part of a RRE approach, they nonetheless contribute towards some of the aims expressed within a RRE framework.

South Australia

Within South Australia, RRE for year 8-10 secondary students is covered within the *2014 Relationships and Sexual Health Curriculum* produced by SHineSA. Respectful relationships are covered in a range of ways throughout this curriculum according to age level appropriateness, with key topics covered including:

- What respectful and disrespectful relationships look like
- Power dynamics
- The emotional aspects of relationships
- The negotiation of consent.

The Shine program has been relatively extensively evaluated, and represents one of the more comprehensive sexuality and relationships educational programs currently operating within Australia (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009; Johnson, 2012).

Victoria

The *Building Respectful Relationships* resource developed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD, 2014) provides resources and guidance for Victorian secondary schools in implementing the Australian Curriculum within Victoria. Aimed at year 8 and 9 secondary students, the resource provides activities and resources for the units 'Gender, Respect and Relationships' and 'The Power Connection'.

At a primary school level, sexuality and relationship education falls under the remit of the Physical, Personal and Social learning strand of the Victorian curriculum (DEECD, 2011). The *Catching On Early* resource produced by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) shapes the focus of sexuality and relationships education for students in years prep to 6. A key goal of *Catching On Early* is to ensure that all students have an understanding of the 'importance of respect in relationships' by grade 6 (DEECD, 2011: 5). *Catching on Early* is itself underpinned by the *Building Respectful and Safe Schools* resource (DEECD, 2010). Additionally, the DEECD resource *Catching on Everywhere* provides a framework for sexuality education across primary, secondary and special schools across Victoria, and places a particular emphasis on the whole-of-school approach to sexuality and relationship education (DEECD, 2008a).

The development of respectful relationships within Victorian schools is also supported through resources such as *Supporting Sexual Diversity in Schools*, which aims to promote the creation of schools that are inclusive of young people of diverse sexualities (DEECH, 2008b). Such resources contribute towards building a broader school culture that does not tolerate discrimination, disrespect or abuse, and reinforces the messages delivered in RRE.

New South Wales

Within NSW, the respectful relationships curriculum content for year 11 and 12 students is covered in the *Crossroads* resource, which is intended to build upon the sexuality and relationships education delivered to students in years 7 to 10 (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1999). Delivery of this course is mandatory within the NSW curriculum, and the theme 'working at relationships' constitutes a significant component of the syllabus. Within this, 'establishing and maintaining positive and non-violent relationships' is a significant focus. The *Crossroads* resource does not explicitly adopt a whole-of-school approach to RRE. However, there are elements of a whole-school approach apparent within the key principles underpinning this program. For example, schools are encouraged to actively involve students in the 'planning, delivery and evaluation of the course', and to develop partnerships across the school community (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1999).

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory curriculum for years 1 to 10 does not currently include an explicit RRE component. However, the NT does currently adopt a whole-of-school approach to being a health promoting school, and this does encompass some aspects of RRE. Relationships are currently a core component of the Health and Physical Education learning area. This learning area includes a focus on exploring gender roles, and an exploration of 'the impact of gender-specific messages on health behaviour for males and females throughout life', including within relationships (Department of Education, n.d.: 247). There is also an emphasis on exploring 'dynamics in relationships and how these impact on individual wellbeing' (Department of Education, n.d: 248), including topics such as domestic violence and sexual harassment. Thus, while the NT does not overtly adopt a RRE framework, many of the key features of RRE are incorporated into the current curriculum.

Queensland

RRE is not clearly articulated within the current Queensland curriculum, although there are elements of the current curriculum focus that overlaps with components of RRE. For instance, the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) *Learning and Wellbeing Framework* adopts a whole-of-school approach to providing a 'learning environment that is open, respectful, caring and safe' (DETE, n.d.). The current Queensland curriculum covers aspects of relationship education in the Health and Physical Education Learning area across all year levels kindergarten to year 10. However, this is not embedded within a RRE framework. Nor is there any apparent focus on the primary prevention of violence against women and children. This is despite research conducted exploring the feasibility of implementing RRE in Queensland schools, which concluded that 'it is feasible to develop and deliver, in Education Queensland schools, curriculum programs that facilitate positive, healthy, respectful gender relationships between young people' (Office for Women and Education Queensland, 2004). Based on the documents available to the author, it is not clear that this has been implemented in practice in Queensland schools.

Tasmania

RRE falls under the remit of the Tasmanian Health and Wellbeing Syllabus for levels kindergarten to year 10. The Tasmanian Department of Education includes reference to 'relationships' within its *Health and Wellbeing Policy* document, although this is primarily in reference to the creation of positive learning environments rather than the primary prevention of violence against women and children. Respectful relationships are covered more comprehensively within the *Relationships and sexuality education in Tasmanian government schools strategy 2012-2014*. This strategy mandates that sexuality and relationships education be taught comprehensively in all Tasmania government schools. It aims to support the provision of relationships and sexuality education that:

- Considers developmental processes for every age
- Provides appropriate information related to:
    - Sexual development
    - Physical Development
    - Reproduction
    - Respectful relationships
    - Gender (Department of Education, 2012: 3).

A whole-of-school approach is clearly supported by this strategy, with relationships education positioned as 'a shared responsibility between schools, government and non-government health agencies, parents and the wider community' (Department of Education, 2012: 4). The need for this curriculum to be inclusive of diversity is also acknowledged, and the strategy applies across primary and secondary school settings.

Western Australia

The *Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships* (GDHR) website hosted by the Western Australian Departments of Health and Education acts as a source of support and resources for teaching relationships and sexuality education. The Western Australian curriculum, also covered on the GDHR site, builds upon the four key themes of knowledge and understanding, self-management skills, interpersonal skills and attitudes and values. Each of these themes is developed in an age-appropriate way across early childhood (kindergarten to grade 3), middle childhood (year 3 to year 7), and early adolescence (year 7 to year 10). However, while skills such as 'active listening and speaking skills' are practiced as a way of maintaining 'healthy relationships in group situations or in close personal relationships' (GDHR, 2009), no explicit mention of preventing violence against women and children is made in the curriculum outline. The GDHR site also provides information for schools and teachers on class planning, communicating with parents and guardians, addressing and evaluating student needs and outcomes, and becoming a 'health promoting' school. This suggests that the Western Australian curriculum is founded in a whole-of-school approach to sexuality and relationship education.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) international guidelines on sexuality education include some reference to the components of respectful relationships education, although this terminology is not explicitly used. The guidelines position 'interpersonal and relationships skills' as being a core component of sexuality education, which includes skills such as:

- Decision-making
- Assertiveness
- Communication
- Refusal (UNESCO, 2009: 5).

UNESCO suggests that these skills allow for more 'productive' social and romantic relationships, however it is unclear what is meant by 'productive' relationships (2009: 5). The UNESCO guidelines also identify gender equality and respect towards others as key aspects of sexuality education, and this clearly overlaps with some of the aims of RRE. The guidelines provide 'age-appropriate' learning objectives for children and adolescents aged 5 to 18 years old.

The United States *National Sexuality Education Standards*, for year levels kindergarten to 12, includes 'healthy relationships' as a core curriculum topic. This component of the curriculum 'offers guidance to students on how to successfully navigate changing relationships among family, peers and partners' (Future of Sex Education Initiative, 2012:10). The curriculum progresses in a developmentally 'appropriate' manner, with the healthy relationships curriculum focusing on friendships and family within younger year levels, to identifying the characteristics of healthy relationships in grade 5. Topics pertaining to healthy sexual relationships are introduced in year levels 9 to 12. It is not clearly articulated in this document how 'healthy relationships' are defined.

An overview of current Australian and international programs

The following sections provide examples of current RRE programs targeted at a range of age groups, and run across a range of settings. A selection of RRE programs is presented for discussion here. Programs have been selected on the basis that they are either examples of 'best' or 'good' practice in RRE, have been extensively evaluated, or are particularly innovative in their approach. Refer to appendix b for a more comprehensive overview of RRE programs currently run within Australia.

Current research into the delivery of RRE: 10 to 13 years old

There is surprisingly little research into the delivery of RRE to this age group. This is particularly concerning given the widespread recognition that RRE should begin prior to young people entering romantic relationships, as well as research indicating that adolescents have already begun to form violence-supportive attitudes (Carmody, 2009). American research by Noonan and Charles (2009) explored the attitudes of 11 to 14 year old youths in regards to dating violence and healthy relationships, with important implications for the content and delivery of RRE. Participants in Noonan and Charles' study were not supportive of dating violence and particularly sexual and physical violence. On account of this, Noonan and Charles argue that RRE should 'include strength-based programs to build and support attitudes that reject violence' and to encourage young people to act as bystanders (2009: 1098).

In line with the need for RRE to be culturally inclusive and responsive to diversity, Noonan and Charles also found a need to tailor RRE towards different groups, particularly according to divisions of age, race and ethnicity and gender. For example, younger participants in this study had minimal, if any, dating experience, so it might be more fruitful to deliver material that assists them to develop generic conflict resolution and communication skills, rather than focusing more specifically on dating relationships (Noonan and Charles, 2009). Participants in this study also reported reluctance in seeking advice and information from adult sources, such as teachers, school staff, or parents, instead turning to their peers and siblings. Noonan and Charles suggest that the use of peer educators might be the most effective source of advice and information delivery on the basis of this.

Examples of current programs

Australia

Growing Respect

The *Growing Respect* primary prevention program, run by NAPCAN, is a whole-of-school program currently delivered to year 5 and 6 students in primary schools across Australia. The program is also run for year 7 and 10 students in secondary schools. *Growing Respect* developed from the *LOVE Bites* program run by NAPCAN and demonstrates many features of 'best' or 'good' practice in RRE. The program is informed by a feminist theoretical framework and maintains a central focus on the issues of gender and power (Walsh and Peters, 2011). It is also underpinned by theories of behavioural change. The program curriculum centres on the themes of 'promoting equal and respectful relationships' and 'promoting non-violence social norms and reducing the effects of prior exposure to violence' (Walsh and Peters, 2011: 20). As part of the program, school policies and procedures are reviewed, as are the school culture and environment. NAPCAN assist the school in developing a plan to redress current gaps or concerns that are identified. Additionally, all teaching staff are provided with training on child protection and on the *Growing Respect* program.

Flood and Kendrick (2012) evaluated an earlier incarnation of the *Growing Respect* program. The *Love Bites* program was also included in this evaluation, however this discussion will only focus on the results of the evaluation of year 7 students who completed the *Growing Respect* program. The authors conducted what they refer to as an 'economy model' of evaluation. That is, the evaluation covered the 'bare essentials of evaluation of violence prevention programs', which includes 'the assessment of the impact on violence-related variables, the use of standardised measures of these, a pre-test and post-test design, and a dissemination process' (Flood and Kendrick, 2012: 8). A total of 95 year 7 students participated in the evaluation survey, with 50 students completing the pre-test survey, and 45 completing the post-test survey. In relation to respectful relationship skills, the year 7 students were evaluated about their confidence in being able to:

- Communicate with their friends
- Solve conflicts with their friends peacefully
- Help support a friend who is being bullied (Flood and Kendrick, 2012: 28).

The students overwhelming reported that they were confident in these skills in the pre-test survey, with 98 per cent of participants indicating that they were confident in these areas. There was no change in this across the course of the evaluation. The students' attitudes towards violence against women were also evaluated, and shown to improve significantly after completing the *Growing Respect* program.

Respect, Communicate, Choose

Respect, Communicate, Choose (RCC) is a primary prevention-focused RRE program developed for primary school children in grades 5 and 6 across Canberra and Adelaide. The program compliments and builds upon work done with young people aged 14 to 18 in the *Relationship Things* program also run by the YWCA (Simon, 2013). The program aims to instill young people with the tools to negotiate respectful and equal relationships before they begin to form romantic partnerships (Simon, 2013).

You, Me and Us

The *You, Me and Us* primary prevention program run by WHW represents one of the few RRE education programs currently being run across primary school, sports, community and TAFE and university settings. The program adopts a peer educator approach to content delivery, and aims to enable young people aged 10 to 13 to 'develop the skills, knowledge and capacity to conduct respectful and ethical relationships (WHW, 2014). Peer educators are provided with extensive training and ongoing support throughout their involvement in the program. *You, Me and Us* also provides professional development training for adults who work within the settings named above in order to foster and embed ongoing cultural change within each setting (WHW, 2014).

Relationships Without Fear

Relationships Without Fear (RWF) is a UK-based primary prevention program that aims to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence in the longer term by 'teaching children and adolescents about how to identify different forms of domestic abuse, recognise that all forms of domestic abuse are unacceptable, and challenge attitudes and stigma surrounding domestic abuse' (Fox, Hale and Gadd, 2014: 32). The program targets three age-groups: 8 to 9 years, 10 to 11 years, and 15 to 16 years. RWF comprises six one-hour sessions delivered by trained facilitators. It adopts a gender-based framework, but also recognises the occurrence of domestic violence in couples of diverse genders and sexualities. The program has been evaluated by conducting focus groups with young people aged 10 to 11 and 13 to 14 years who have participated in the RWF. Findings of this evaluation highlighted:

- The need to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach to content delivery and to use a variety of activities
- The tensions apparent in trying to foster freedom of expression and participation with the need to counteract problematic statements made by students
- Younger students often struggled with the concept of violence against women and children, and did not understand why men were not represented equally as victims. This resulted in some students perceiving the program as 'sexist'
- A greater awareness of the prevalence of domestic violence did not always equate to a greater understanding of its dynamics.

Given the need to adapt program content to suit the needs and learning styles of students, Fox and colleagues (2014) argue that this best places teachers to deliver RRE and primary prevention programs due to their greater expertise in teaching and stronger relationships with students. However, they note that the provision of training, support, and external collaboration with specialist agencies is required in order for RRE to be delivered effectively.

Safe Dates

The *Safe Dates* primary and tertiary prevention RRE program is one of the longest running and well-evaluated international programs (Tharp et al, 2011). *Safe Dates* is targeted towards early adolescents ages 12 to 14, and includes a theatre performance, ten 45-minute

classroom sessions, a poster competition, and community-based activities such as the provision of training for service providers (Foshee et al, 2000). The program curricula covers a range of topics, including:

- Defining caring relationships and dating abuse
- Exploring why people perpetrate abuse
- Bystander interventions and providing support for victims
- Gender stereotypes
- Strategies for managing anger effectively (Violence Prevention Works, 2014).

Safe Dates also has an inbuilt evaluation component, which takes place in the final classroom session. Evaluations of the short-term effects of *Safe Dates* (one month after program delivery) indicate that it is effective 'in preventing psychological, physical, and sexual abuse perpetration against dating partners' (Foshee et al, 2000: 1619). However, an outcome evaluation conducted one year after program delivery indicated that the effects of the program on participant behaviour disappear over time, with no significant differences in behaviour observed between young people who had participated in the program in comparison to a control group. That said, those young people who had taken part in the program reported less acceptance of dating violence, and thought that there were more negative consequences for perpetrating dating violence compared to the control group. This indicates that the *Safe Dates* program does have some longer-term influence on participants' attitudes and beliefs about dating violence.

Current research into the delivery of RRE: 14 to 17 years old

As noted earlier, it is currently unclear whether single-sex or co-educational environments are best for the delivery of RRE. Student evaluations of the *Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools* (SAPPSS) program indicate that secondary school students found a single-sex environment more comfortable for discussing issues around sexual assault and respectful relationships (Hyde et al, 2011). However, they also valued the opportunity for a co-educational discussion towards the end of the program. In evaluations of the pilot version of the SAPPSS program year 9 and 10 students reported that factors such as 'covering issues in a supportive, inclusive classroom where they are actively engaged in their learning, where they have a chance to discuss and compare opinions, can reflect and develop empathy' were central to the effective delivery of the program (Ollis, 2011: 25).

In order for a whole-of-school approach to be successfully implemented, Hyde et al (2011) note that it is vital for strong partnerships and relationships between schools and (in this instance) sexual assault services be established well before the implementation of a RRE program. It is also strongly preferable that schools take a pro-active approach to RRE, rather than implementing programs in response to an incident of sexual assault (Hyde et al, 2011). This assists in ensuring that the implementation of RRE functions as a *primary* prevention tool. Hyde et al (2011) also reflect that schools that adopt a pro-active approach tend to be more committed to implementing RRE as a long-term strategy, which is vital in achieving longer-term cultural change.

In order to have ongoing impact, RRE must become incorporated into the curriculum and broader culture of a school. 'Train-the-trainer' models are one avenue for ensuring that RRE becomes embedded in a school's curriculum (Imbesi, 2008). A discussion on the current body of research and practice around professional development and training takes place later in this review.

Examples of current programs

Australia

Girls Talk, Guys Talk

Girls Talk, Guys Talk is a healthy relationships and sexual health education program developed by Women's Health West for secondary school students in Year 9. The program is underpinned by a gender-sensitive feminist framework and health promotion models, and adopts a whole-of-school approach to RRE (Kwok and Forwood, 2012). The program can be characterised as a form of both primary and tertiary prevention. The program was piloted in 2007 and 2008, and subsequently further developed and delivered across a number of different Victorian secondary schools (Kwok and Forwood, 2012). WHW works collaboratively with a school to determine their particular needs around RRE via an extensive needs analysis. Importantly, this also involves consulting with students about what they would like to learn, and how they would like to learn it. This consultation process involves the formation of a student working group, and students involved in the group are also presented with the opportunity to undertake training to become a mentor or peer educator (Kwok and Forwood, 2012). The program is ideally run over a time period of six school terms. In line with good practice principles, the program also includes an in-built evaluation component. This evaluation examines the process, impact and outcomes of the program delivery in relation to student behaviours and attitudes, school curriculum, cultural and ethos.

Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools

The *Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools* (SAPPSS) was developed by the Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) in 2004 (Hyde et al, 2011; Imbesi, 2009). SAPPSS is a primary and tertiary prevention program, is informed by a feminist theoretical framework, and adopts a holistic, whole-of-school approach to RRE delivery. The program seeks to foster ongoing relationships between the CASAs and schools in order to achieve longer-term cultural change (Hyde et al, 2011). While SAPPSS was initially developed and implemented within Victorian schools, it has since expanded to operate in other states across the country. According to Hyde et al (2011: 6), the three primary aims of the SAPPSS program are to:

- Reduce the incidence of sexual assault in school communities
- Establish safe environments for students and staff to discuss relationships, consent and communication
- Enhance the capacity of secondary schools to respond to sexual assault and provide support to students.

The SAPPSS program is delivered to students across years 9 and 10. However, it also provides professional development training to all school staff on 'sexual assault and the aims of the SAPPSS model' and how to demonstrate the core values of respectful relationships in their day-to-day interactions with students in the classroom (Hyde et al, 2011: 7), train-the-trainer workshops for selected groups of staff, peer educator training for year 11 and 12 students, assistance with developing school policy, and an in-built evaluation component (Hyde et al, 2011: 7; Imbesi, 2008).

The evaluations of SAPPSS conducted to date have demonstrated that the program results in 'positive shifts in students' knowledge, skills and attitudes towards sexual assault and respectful relationships', and that these shifts are maintained in both the short and medium term (Hyde et al, 2011: 7; Imbesi, 2008, 2009). However, young people also reported significant barriers to behaviour change, including feeling that 'they lacked the necessary support, incentives and role models to overcome the social and gender-based pressures' that influenced their sexual interactions and decision-making (Imbesi, 2009: 33). It is currently unclear whether the program results in longer-term attitudinal or behavioural change.

Sexual Health and Relationships Education/ Focus Schools

The *Sexual Health and Relationships Education* (SHARE) pilot project was run by SHine SA from 2003 to 2005 (Flentje, 2012). The program delivered comprehensive sexual health and RRE to secondary school students in years 8, 9 and 10 (11 to 15years). Sexual coercion and violence against women were core components of the program curriculum (Flentje, 2012), and SHARE adopted a comprehensive, whole-of school approach (SHineSA, 2010). Although the SHARE program is no longer in operation, it has informed the development and implementation of further RRE programs, such as *Focus Schools*, which builds upon the SHARE program. (SHineSA, n.d.). Additionally, the SHARE program was the subject of rigorous evaluation, and it is therefore still worthwhile discussing this program.

The *Focus Schools* primary prevention program is currently implemented across 57 schools in South Australia (SHineSA, n.d.), and targets secondary students in years 8, 9 and 10. The program targets young people, parents, school staff and the school environment. The core aims and objectives of the program in relation to RRE include:

- To increase the knowledge of young people and their ability to engage safely in all aspects of relationships
- For young people to have knowledge of and feel able to access support services
- For young people to develop the skills that allow them to develop and maintain respectful relationships
- To increase the knowledge of parents/families and school staff in relation to the areas outlined above
- To assist school staff in developing the skills to deliver this curriculum
- To assist schools in forming partnerships with community organisations and services
- To assist schools in developing a broader commitment to RRE and to develop a culture that is conducive to this.

This program has undergone extensive evaluation, particularly in its pilot phase as the SHARE project (Dyson and Fox, 2006). Dyson and Fox (2006) conducted a mixed-methods evaluation of the SHARE program pilot, which ran for three years across fifteen schools in South Australia. In line with a whole-of-school approach, the evaluation considered the impacts of the program on students, teachers and school staff, parents and families, and the school culture. The quantitative component of this evaluation involved the administration of a questionnaire prior to the program being delivered, and at three points after program delivery. As the SHARE program is a broad sexual health and relationships program, only a small component of this evaluation relates to respectful relationships. The evaluation reported a small increase in the number of students who 'agreed that a healthy relationship is one where both people feel equal', with 90 per cent of students in the post-program evaluation agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement (Dyson and Fox, 2006: 32-33). Flentje (2012: 6) reports that the SHARE program strategy was 'developed in consultation with parents, teachers and students to involve all parts of the school community', and that this was central to ensuring support for the program and enabled its success.

Human Relations Program

The *Human Relations Program* is a RRE and sexual health program for young people aged 14 and over who have newly arrived in Australia (WHW, 2012). The program, run by Women's Health West, Phoenix Youth Centre and cohealth adheres to best practice principles in sexual health education and aims to arm these young people 'with sexual and reproductive health knowledge and skills so that that can make safe, respectful and informed decisions about sexual relationships' (WHW, 2012: 2). The program has been reviewed and updated in both 2005 and 2011. The *Human Relations Program* is run in single-sex groups of up to 18 students, and is facilitated by two health professionals (WHW, 2012). An evaluation component is built into the program, with classes evaluated at the end of each session (WHW, 2012). A range of topics are covered throughout the program, with those topics relating to respectful relationships including:

- Learning to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships, and the behaviours associated with each
- Legal rights and responsibilities relating to healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Information about support services if they or someone they know is experiencing violence or abuse (WHW, 2012: 34).

These topics fall primarily under the umbrella of tertiary prevention, although aspects of the program (such as identifying healthy versus unhealthy relationships) can also be considered primary prevention.

Respect, Protect, Connect

Respect, Protect, Connect (RPC) is a primary prevention RRE program developed by South Eastern CASA (SECASA) in the mid-90s and is delivered to secondary schools within the south eastern metropolitan Melbourne region. RPC is a gender-specific program, with different curriculum content designed for male and female students, and runs across year levels 7 to 12 (SECASA, 2011). The program resources and manual have been designed for use by a broad range of professionals, including teachers, student welfare staff, and social workers, as well as peer educators (O'Leary, Pratt and Mitchell, 2011). Peer educators aged 18 to 25 deliver the RPC program, with peer educators being of the same gender as students (SECASA, 2011). RPC has also been run alongside the 'Love Drunk' theatre performance (refer to appendix b for further information) as part of the 'Empowering Young People' pilot program in 2009 (Child Safety Commissioner, 2010). The program is

underpinned by a feminist theoretical framework, and demonstrates many of the hallmarks of best practice in RRE, such as being inclusive of diverse populations (Fergus, 2006).

RPC was evaluated in 2009 during the Empowering Young People pilot, with approximately 464 students across six Victorian secondary schools participating in the program during this time (Child Safety Commissioner, 2010). The evaluation utilised quantitative surveys and open-response questions, and was administered prior to program, after the Love Drunk performance, and after the RPC program. Key findings from this evaluation indicate that RPC achieves success in 'engaging with young people and stimulating thought and discussion' around respectful relationships, although the program achieved greater success when run in combination with Love Drunk. It is unclear, however, whether RPC leads to longer-term attitudinal or behavioural change. Results from the pilot evaluation also indicate that young men and women engaged with the program in different ways, as did students from different schools. This highlights the need for RRE to remain responsive to the needs of different community groups and diverse populations, and to establish the needs of a particular community before implementing RRE.

A core strength of RPC identified in the evaluation was the program's ability to effectively communicate key messages to students. This was attributed to the use of 'engaging' methods of communication, such as focusing on active means of participation through the use of role-plays (Child Safety Commissioner, 2010). Co-running Love Drunk and RPC was also seen as an effective strategy, as RPC provided further opportunity to follow-up and expand upon the themes raised in Love Drunk. Unfortunately, this evaluation did not consider the role or experiences of the peer educators who deliver the program. However, an earlier evaluation conducted by Fergus (2006) did consider the experiences of the peer educators, and these are addressed later in this review.

Expect Respect is a U.S. based respectful relationships program targeted at elementary, middle school and high school students. The program adopts a whole-of-school approach to the prevention of dating violence and sexual violence, and to fostering respectful relationships between adolescents (Kerig et al, 2010; Snachez et al, 2001). This includes:

- Classroom education for students across 12 weeks
- The provision of training for school staff around bullying, sexual harassment and violence against women and children
- Assisting schools to develop appropriate policies and procedures to redress these behaviours
- Running educational seminars for parents
- Working in partnership with schools and universities (who undertook the program evaluation)
- Providing support services, such as counseling, to students (Sanchez et al, 2001).

The program adopts a broad approach to RRE, and also covers topics such as bullying (Sanchez et al, 2001). Sanchez et al conducted a mixed-methods (survey and focus group) evaluation of the *Expect Respect* program for grade 5 and 6 students. Results of the evaluation indicate that the program resulted in positive shifts in their knowledge of sexual harassment, and greater awareness and recognition of bullying. Importantly, students reported being more likely to take action if someone was being bullied, indicating that the program also resulted in behavioural change.

As well as engaging in primary prevention efforts, the program includes a secondary prevention component for young people who are at risk of experiencing intimate partner violence on account of having experienced previous victimisation, such as abuse within the family or previous history of sexual assault (Kerig et al, 2010). These support groups are run by trained facilitators, and run over 24 sessions that cover topics ranging from 'recognising abusive and controlling behaviour, dating norms and sexual rights…countering sex role stereotypes…personal boundaries…positive communication skills…and understanding the other gender's perspective' (Kerig et al, 2010: 663). The program is run in single-sex groups, with facilitators also of the same sex as participants, although the opportunity for a mixed-gender discussion is also provided towards the end of the program.

Current research into the delivery of RRE: 18 to 24 years old

While the 'best practice' principles of RRE were explored earlier in this review, there are also more specific measures of 'best practice' in relation to the delivery of adult education. It is worthwhile briefly exploring these elements of best practice here. Dyson and Flood (2008: 15) summarise some of the key facets of best practice in adult education, drawing on the work of Knowles (1973), as including:

- Self-directed learning to reflect the autonomy adults enjoy
- Connecting the life experiences and knowledge of adults with the current educational content
- Approaches to learning should be goal-oriented and relevant
- Content should be relevant
- Educational content should be delivered in a respectful manner that acknowledges the past experience of adults.

Dyson and Flood (2008) also highlight the need to draw on appropriate models for generating attitudinal and behavioural change in adults, although due to the limited scope of this review these will not be discussed in any detail here. As with RRE at the primary and secondary school levels, it is vital the RRE programs targeted at adults undergo extensive evaluation although, again, this rarely happens adequately in practice (Dyson and Flood, 2008). Many of the other key principles of RRE discussed earlier in this review are still of relevance to adult educational settings, such as recognising diversity, and providing content that reflects the level of knowledge that participants currently have (Dyson and Flood, 2008: 28). Program content should also adopt a positive approach by focusing on what participants can do, rather than what they should not do. This is particularly important when working with adult men, as programs that adopt a negative approach can elicit a defensive response from participants (Dyson and Flood, 2008: 29).

Examples of current programs

Australia

There are relatively few RRE or other prevention programs targeting adults currently in operation within Australia (Dyson and Flood, 2008). That said, a small number of programs have been developed in this field, some of which represent best practice in RRE. In an international context, the U.S. has a strong history of running sexual violence prevention programs in universities and colleges, many of which have undergone extensive evaluation. However, many of these programs are focused on delivering 'facts' and 'statistics' about sexual violence and rape myths, rather than being specifically focused on the development of respectful relationships. As such, many of these primary, secondary and tertiary 'prevention' programs have been excluded from the discussion presented here.

Sex and Ethics Program

The *Sex and Ethics* primary and tertiary program, designed by Moira Carmody, seeks to 'reduce unwanted and pressured sex between people known to each other, but not at the expense of positive experiences sex can provide' (Wright and Carmody, 2012: 25; see also Albury et al, 2011; Carmody, 2013; Carmody and Ovenden, 2013). The program adheres to best practice principles, targets young men and women ages 16 to 25, and has been run across a range of different settings, including schools, sports settings, universities, and youth services within Australia and New Zealand (Albury et al, 2011; Carmody and Ovenden, 2013). *Sex and Ethics* runs across six weeks, with a 3 hour session per week, and covers a range of topics designed to assist young people to develop or enhance their skills as ethical sexual negotiators (Carmody, 2013).

The program also has an in-built, rigorous evaluation component, and the program has demonstrated positive changes in young people's knowledge and behaviours in both the short and medium term (Wright and Carmody, 2012). *Sex and Ethics* adopts a train-the-trainer model, with educator training sessions run for professionals who then deliver the program to young people (Albury et al, 2011). The program provides a 4-day training program for educators, who are recruited from across a range of professional settings. Educators take part in the *Sex and Ethics* program during this training to encourage them to consider their own beliefs and ethics in relation to the program content (Carmody and Ovenden, 2013).

Rigorous evaluation of the *Sex and Ethics* program has been undertaken, with evaluation results indicating that the program has a positive effect on participants' understandings of the topics pertaining to being an ethical sexual actor. For example, a survey evaluation undertaken by Carmody of male participants indicated that they had 'a higher level of understanding regarding their own needs' as well as their partners' needs in a sexual relationship both immediately after, and 4 to 6 months after the program had been completed (2013: 11.1). The follow up survey completed 4 to 6 months after program completion also indicated that participants had incorporated the skills learned into their sexual practices. Additionally, 51 per cent of the men surveyed indicated that they had utilised the bystander skills instilled through the program in the past 4 to 6 months.

Evaluations of both male and female participants show that both groups experienced a significant increase in understanding both their own needs, as well as those of their partner (Carmody and Ovenden, 2013). The qualitative component of this evaluation again indicated that these improvements also translated to changes in how some young people negotiated sex (Carmody and Ovenden, 2013). Carmody, Ovenden and Hoffman (2011) note that across two major evaluations of the *Sex and Ethics* program between 85-100 per cent of program participants said that they implemented the skills and ideas developed through the program. Similar results were achieved in evaluations of the New Zealand roll out of the program (Carmody, Ovenden and Hoffman, 2011).

Youth Services

The *Living Safer Sexual Lives – Respectful Relationship* (LSSLRR) primary prevention program was developed and piloted in 2009 (Frawley et al, n.d.). The LSSLRR program is specifically designed to provide respectful relationships education to people with an intellectual disability, using a community development model. This involves the collaborative efforts of 'people with an intellectual disability, disability services, advocates and mainstream community services' in delivering the program content. LSSLRR draws on the real-life experiences of people with a disability to discuss sexuality and respectful relationships with participants (Johnson et al, 2001). LSSLRR is co-delivered by a facilitator and a peer educator, who is a person with a disability. Program evaluation has shown the co-facilitation approach to be an important component of the program's success (Frawley et al, n.d.). Additionally, evaluation of the pilot workshops suggests that 'they were extremely useful to families, service providers and women with intellectual disabilities' (Johnson et al, 2001: 79)

TAFE and universities

The *Mentors in Violence Prevention* (MVP) primary and tertiary prevention program developed by Jackson Katz in the early 90s is currently run across a range of higher education settings internationally, as well as within Griffith University in Australia. MVP is a leadership program that aims to prevent all forms of violence, including violence against women and children. This aim is achieved through teaching participants (both male and female) skills to act as effective bystanders (Griffith University, n.d.). The MVP model uses interactive and discussion-based training sessions to assist participants to develop skills and options for acting as a bystander in real life (Griffith University, n.d.). The program also aims to arm participants with an understanding of the dynamics that underlie all forms of violence, and engages participants to think critically about these topics (Griffith University, n.d.).

The MVP program has been extensively evaluated in the United States, although it is unclear if its Australian counterpart has been evaluated. Additionally, the U.S. evaluation involved high school students, so it is unclear to what extent these evaluation results apply to a university or TAFE setting. MVP was evaluated across three years, and using multiple methods, making it a particularly robust example of program evaluation (Mentors in Violence Prevention, 2001-2002). This evaluation included the use of a quasi-experimental survey administered pre and post-test, with results compared to a control group who did not take part in the MVP program. Results of the pre and post-test surveys indicate that participation in MVP led to:

- An increased knowledge and understanding of violence against women and children
- Less sexist or ignorant attitudes about violence against women and children
- Greater confidence in ability to intervene as a bystander (MVP, 2001-2002).

These findings were consistent across all three years of the evaluation.

Sports

A number of RRE have been developed for use in sports settings in recent years. Dyson and Flood (2008) stress there is not currently any Australian evidence suggesting that men who participate in sport are more violent than other men. However there is some international, and particularly American, research that supports such a claim. Many sports clubs, and particularly football clubs, have been heavily male dominated, foster hyper-masculinity and

unequal gender relations (Dyson, Grzelinska and Hobbs, 2011). Thus, the dominant culture and attitudes within many sports clubs contribute towards an environment that is tolerant of violence against women. Please refer to the discussion on the *Sex and Ethics* program for an example of a RRE currently run for this age group in a sports setting.

International

While there are very few university or TAFE RRE programs operating within Australia, such programs are comparatively well established, evaluated and widely used in the United States (Flood, 2005-2006). A selection of these programs is discussed here. These have been selected on the basis that they are particularly well established, well-evaluated programs that are referred to frequently in the literature, or because they represent a particularly innovative approach to RRE.

Forum Theatre for Bystanders

Forum Theatre for Bystanders (FTB) is a theatre performance-based program that aims to address the issues surrounding violence against women and children, as well as equipping participants with the skills to act as bystanders to violence. As such, it is a form of both primary and tertiary prevention. FTB is based upon principles developed in 'Theatre of the Oppressed', which draws on interactive methods to encourage students 'to ask questions about issues that affect their lives' (Mitchell and Freitag, 2011: 992). In FTB, performers and audience members are able to interact with one another, and audience members are encouraged to interject in the performance to shape its direction and avoid problematic outcomes for the characters. In doing so, this allows audience members to 'rehearse potential solutions in preparation for real-life interventions' (Mitchell and Freitag, 2011: 993). FTB uses scenes drawing on a range of situations in which bystanders could take action, including 'sexual assault, partner violence, stalking, harassment, hate crimes, or any behaviours that may lead to these acts' (Mitchell and Freitag, 2011: 999). As FTB is concerned with addressing participants with the skills to respond to violence and abuse just before they occur or as they are occurring it is an example of a secondary and tertiary, rather than a primary, prevention program.

This technique is well established and used by a plethora of groups working on various social-justice issues (including the prevention of violence against women and children), across the United States (Mitchell and Freitag, 2011). Performances are delivered by peer-

theatre groups, and are thus of a similar age to their audience. The program consists of a 60 to 90 minute session, which includes a performance by a group of actors, and facilitated discussion. The program is strongly informed and underpinned by theory and research on bystander intervention and violence against women and children. FTB has been evaluated using standardized, pre- and post- performance surveys and open-response questions, with evaluation results suggesting that the program can lead to increased understanding of the issues surrounding violence against women and children, and increased perceived ability to act as a bystander (Mitchell and Freitag, 2011: 1006). However, as with most RRE it is unclear whether these changes persist over a longer time frame.

Yes Means Yes

The *Yes Means Yes* (YMY) program is a five-week 'positive sexuality course' run through a small New York-based university in the United States. YMY is designed to help 'students decide what they would like from their relationships' and achieves this through the use of curriculum that focuses on 'creating healthy sexual beings who are comfortable engaging in safe, consensual and pleasurable sexual activity…and making healthy decisions for oneself' (Lafrance, Loe and Brown, 2012: 447). Participants in the course meet weekly to engage in group activities and critical discussion of positive sexuality, which is facilitated by university staff (Lafrance, Loe and Brown, 2012).

Lafrance and colleagues conducted an evaluation of the pilot YMY program using questionnaires delivered before and after the program. Participants were also compared to a control group of students who did not take part in the course. Results of the evaluation were largely positive, and indicated that participants held 'a more positive sexual self-understanding…ability to critically analyse their sexual attitudes, interest in healthy sexual practices…and ability to discuss and define sexual assault and rape' (Lafrance, Loe and Brown, 2012: 452). It is unclear, however, whether these changes are maintained across the medium and longer-term. As participation in the program is voluntary, more women than men have taken part across the program's history, and 'men only' sessions have recently been introduced to try and increase male participation (Lafrance, Loe and Brown, 2012).

Peer education models in respectful relationships education

Prevalence, use and experiences of peer educators in RRE

Before discussing current programs utilising peer educators within Australia and internationally, it is useful to briefly discuss and define what peer education involves. The use of peer educators in RRE seems to be emphasised, as Dyson and Flood observe 'programs that have used peer education and mentoring to end men's violence against women often have not theorised or focused any debate on definitions or discussion about what these terms mean or how the models are applied' (2008: 23). In contrast, Flood (2005-2006: 29) argues that 'best practice' in the prevention of violence against women and children should incorporate 'peer-related variables, use peers in leadership roles and emphasise the relationship of sexual assault to other issues'. This suggests that further work is required around the use of peer educators in RRE. Evans and colleagues (2009: 17) also identified a range of challenges with peer education models, including: 'peer educators being ill-prepared to facilitate programs, peer educators being overzealous in their self-disclosure, and…minimal support and preparation for peer educators'.

However, Dyson and Flood also note that peer education models are considerably more established in the broader area of health education and work with younger people. Drawing on this body of literature, they define peer educators as educators who 'are usually of a similar group to those they are educating, that is, individuals from similar ages, contexts and cultures to the participants' (2008: 24). They argue that peer education models can be especially useful in undertaking primary prevention work with men 'given the evidence that peer variables are an important influence on men's tolerance for and perpetration of violence against women' (2008: 24). Given the relative lack of training and professional development that young people are likely to have had, Carmody et al (2009) note that on-going training and support for peer educators is vital. In order for peer educator programs to be successful, Mulroney (2003: 10) argues that the debriefing and support provided to educators needs to be of high quality and to occur on a regular basis. Weisz and Black suggest that the length of training provided should correlate with the complexity of the skills that peer educators are supposed to teach (2010: 645). Peer educators should be used on the basis of a strong rationale and availability of resources, not because they are 'seen a 'cheaper' option that excludes a coordinated approach to prevention' (Carmody et al, 2009: 51).

Australia

Within Australia, a number of RRE programs currently adopt a peer educator model of program delivery. These include:

- You, Me and Us
- RPC
- SAPPSS
- LSSLRR
- Promoting Respect Project
- WEEO, WISER
- Domestic and Dating Violence Peer Education Program (pilot)

The SAPPSS program introduced the use of peer educators as a result of initial program evaluations. These evaluations revealed that young people were more likely to 'talk to friends, family and other trusted and known people' than make contact with a sexual assault service, and were strongly influenced by the opinions and views of their peers (Imbesi, 2008: 14; see also Carmody, 2009). Providing young people with opportunities to develop and enhance their skills in respectful and ethical communication is vital, and Imbesi (2009: 34) argues that 'role models and support structures are crucial to encourage and sustain this'. Other young adults who already engage in respectful and ethical behaviours represent one avenue for modeling appropriate behaviour. The young people who participated in earlier versions of the SAPPSS program themselves suggested that senior students could act as peer educators, and the SAPPSS program was adapted to incorporate this (Imbesi, 2008, 2009). The CASA Peer Educator Program was piloted in 2007, with peer educators receiving training in program delivery and their role as peer educators (Imbesi, 2008).

The SAPPSS peer educator pilot was evaluated using surveys and focus groups (Imbesi and Lees, 2011). This evaluation sought to investigate both the short-term effects of the peer education training, and the longer-term effects two years after training completion. In total, 64 peer educators (26 males and 38 females) undertook the peer educator training and participated in at least one SAPPSS session (Imbesi and Lees, 2011). Feedback on the training process suggested that the overwhelming majority of peer educators found it to be useful in developing the skills required to be a peer educator, and in forming an understanding of their role. That said, some educators reported a lack of clarity about the boundaries of their role and the authority they had as a peer educator, and this was taken on board by the program coordinators for future training sessions. Some participants were also

unable to attend all training sessions as a result of competing classes or other commitments, and this suggests that young people can face challenges in fitting peer education training into already busy schedules. A number of participants also reported that they were not able to engage in their role to their full potential in practice, for example because teachers did not fully understand the role of the peer educators, and did not provide the space for them to participate as fully as they were able to (Imbesi and Lees, 2011: 33). Their role as a peer educator opened up opportunities for the young people to meet new students and to form new links within the school community. Being a peer educator resulted in the further development of public speaking and communication skills for many of the young people.

The *Living Safer Sexual Lives – Respectful Relationships* (LSSLRR) program incorporates the use of peer educators as a strategy for positioning people with an intellectual disability as being experts in:

- Exploring what respectful relationships are
- Understanding the range of personal and social factors that impact on their risk of violence
- Positioning people with an intellectual disability as knowledgeable and skilled (Frawley et al, n.d.: 4).

Importantly, in the context of self-advocacy, the use of peer educators with an intellectual disability reflects the ethos of 'nothing about us without us' (Frawley and Bigby, 2014: 168). This suggests that the use of peer educators is ideologically important when working with young people with intellectual disabilities. Frawley and Bigby (2014) conducted an evaluation that explored the experiences of 16 of the 23 individuals who had undertaken the four-day train-the-trainer workshop as part of the LSSLRR program. The benefits of being a peer educator identified by participants included having a sense of empowerment and personal achievement from their role, being able to help others, acting as a role model for program participants, further developing their own knowledge and skills base, and 'being seen and feeling like credible sources of knowledge and experiences' by participants (Frawley and Bigby, 2014: 172).

Peer educator models have been used and evaluated in the Liverpool Women's Health Centre's *Women Educating Each Other…Women in Safe and Equal Relationships* (WEEO WISER) primary prevention RRE program. A feminist framework underpins this project, which aims to use peer education with young women to:

- Build a culture that does not support relationship abuse
- Help young women to develop the skills and attitudes that reduce the likelihood of them either entering or staying in an abusive relationship
- Use a partnership approach in project delivery (Rawsthorne, Hoffman and Kilpatrick, 2010).

Rawsthorne and colleagues (2010) note that implementing peer education programs was resource intensive in practice, and this resulted in them limiting the number of workshops offered to young women. Training and support provided to the peer educators includes a 9-day training program, in-training support, debriefing, and involvement in the evaluation of the program (Rawthorne, Hoffman and Kilpatrick, 2010).

Evaluation of the peer educators' experiences was undertaken using focus groups (Rawsthorne and Hoffmann, 2007). Peer educators involved in WEEO WISER reported a range of benefits from their role, including:

- Greater confidence in providing advice to family and friends
- Assisting with their future employment and educational opportunities through the learning of new skills
- Increased self-awareness, and greater awareness into the lives of other young women
- Increased knowledge of the issues surrounding violence against women and children, and their ability to act as a source of support to others.

The peer educators believed that their role made other young women feel more able to engage and participate in the workshops. They also faced a range of challenges, such as having young women disclose experiences of violence perpetrated against them, and having unrealistic expectations placed on them (although it is unclear what these expectations related to). Some of the peer educators also reported developing close relationships with students, and as adopting a mentorship or 'big-sister' role (Rawsthorne and Hoffmann, 2007). Additionally, the peer educators believed that having a range of women from different cultural backgrounds was valuable, and meant that the peer educators reflected the cultural diversity of the local community they were engaging with (Rawsthorne and Hoffmann, 2007).

Fergus (2006) explored the experiences of peer educators for the *Respect, Protect, Connect* (RPC) program run by SECASA. The peer educators took part in focus group discussions, although a smaller number took part in one-on-one interviews instead. Motivations for becoming a peer educator included:

- Seeing the RPC program as interesting and useful
- Having a commitment to working with young people
- Believing that they had the right skill set for the role and could make a difference in the lives of other young people
- Gaining experience in a field related to future employment goals.

The peer educators reported that while the training they received for RPC was useful, most of their learning was done 'on the job'. Separate training programs were run for male and female facilitators, and this reflected the gender-specific nature of the RPC program design. That said, the training for both groups of facilitators focused on learning the content of the program, and developing appropriate teaching skills (Fergus, 2006). Some educators expressed frustration that the peer educators in the training all had different skill levels, and this suggests it may be useful to organise training groups according to prior skill level if possible. Another peer educator reported that he did not remember the content of his training, and this indicates that running 'refresher' training sessions (and other forms of professional development) for educators might assist with knowledge retention.

The peer educators also noted a range of practical difficulties encountered in terms of delivering the RPC program, such as being put in inappropriate classroom spaces for running group activities, or having to change rooms constantly throughout the day. Whether or not teachers should be present for these sessions (and, if they were present, what their role should be) was a point of contention for these educators. That said there was agreement that teachers should be of the same gender as the student group, and someone that the students trusted. The peer educators suggested that communicating and negotiating mutual expectations prior to the program starting would assist in avoiding these issues (Fergus, 2006). The relatively low pay and irregular work was also a concern for the peer educators and many had to seek additional work elsewhere.

In Western Australia, the Domestic and Dating Violence Peer Education Program pilot was run across two schools in the WA region. The program involved educational sessions delivered by peers to students in years 8, 9, 10 and 11, fostered links between schools and local domestic violence support groups, and provided training and support for the peer educators (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007). The peer educators delivered information on 'domestic and dating violence, support services, and what constitutes healthy and unhealthy relationships' (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007: 9), suggesting that this program can be categorized as both a primary and tertiary prevention effort. Peer educators were used in this program based on the rationale that young people are more receptive to educational content that is delivered by their peers, that they are more likely to rely on peers as a sources of information and support, and that peer educators are able to more effectively engage members of their own peer group (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007: 9). The program drew on 'best practice' principles for peer education, which include:

- Having clear project aims and objectives
- Providing intensive training on both the program content and delivery skills
- Developing collaboration between agencies
- Setting clearly defined boundaries and roles for the peer educators
- Providing ongoing support and training, including training in how to respond to and manage disclosures
- Valuing a teamwork approach, and having peer educators present sessions in groups of two (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007: 9).

Peer educators for this program underwent a selection process that involved short interviews with potential educators. Applicants were asked to explain why they wanted to be involved as peer educators, with responses typically falling into the categories of: 'personal and vicarious experiences with family and domestic violence; a desire to help others; interest in learning about the topic; interest in pursing careers in related fields' (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007: 12). While it was considered inappropriate for young people who had experienced domestic violence to act as peer educators, these individuals were instead able to take part in the Peer Educator Support Group (although it is unclear what this group actually involved in practice).

The experiences of the peer educators were evaluated using survey and focus group methods. Overall, the results of this evaluation were positive, with 100 per cent of participants suggesting that their knowledge of family and domestic violence and dating violence had increased as a result of their training. Likewise, the majority of participants reported that they had increased their knowledge of how healthy relationships work, and about the use of power in relationships (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007: 40). However, only 57 per cent of peer educators 'strongly agreed' that they were confident about their role, suggesting that ongoing support and training is needed for peer educators in relation to this. The peer educators reported developing a range of skills as a result of their role, including skills in 'leadership, public speaking, listening, understanding and empathy, and knowing boundaries' (Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services, 2007: 41).

International

No additional international RRE programs that used peer educators were identified. Please refer to the Forum Theatre for Bystanders program for an example of an international RRE program that used peer educators.

Professional development

Support for 'drivers' or 'champions' of RRE

There is currently relatively little support or training within Australia for adults involved in the development and delivery of RRE (Carmody, forthcoming; Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009), and research and robust theoretical models are also lacking in this area (Carmody, forthcoming; Carmody et al, 2009). That said professional development is an increasingly common component of RRE programs, especially given the mounting evidence that suggests a whole-of-school approach is most effective in delivering RRE. Training and professional development for educators is also a fundamental component of best or good practice in RRE (Carmody et al, 2009; Evans, Krogh and Carmody, 2009). The training that is currently delivered tends to be done on an ad hoc basis, and with minimal accountability for training standards (Carmody, forthcoming). This section considers some of the professional development and other support or training options that are currently available to adult staff and/or volunteers who seek to become 'drivers' or 'champions' of RRE.

Upper primary and secondary schools

Effective delivery of RRE requires the opportunity for staff to take part in ongoing professional development and learning activities and opportunities. This ensures that there is 'a critical mass of staff across different curriculum areas' with the requisite skills to deliver RRE (DEECD, 2008a: 8). However, efforts to engage staff in professional development can be stymied by a lack of support, particularly by leaders within the school community (DEECD, 2008a). Participation in training and professional development is time-consuming and can place considerable demands on the already limited resources of schools (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009: 52).

To maximise the sustainability of project outcomes, *You, Me and Us* a comprehensive one-day professional development training is provided to adult leaders in primary schools, TAFE and universities, youth organisations and sporting clubs. The training supports the sustainability of the project through increasing workers' knowledge and skills to continue discussions about respectful relationships with young people and provides them with audit tools and action plans to develop strategies to promote respectful relationships, gender equity and ethical behaviour within those settings. During the training, we provide

participants with a whole-of-organisation action planning tool to support the development of strategies that promote respectful relationships and gender equity within their school or organisation. To support this process, we developed whole-of-organisation audit tools and action plans tailored to each of the four target settings: universities and TAFEs, schools, youth organisations and sports clubs. Action plans are a tool that effectively supported professionals to develop practical strategies that can be implemented within their setting to promote respectful relationships and prevent violence against women.

The SAPPSS program developed by CASA House also includes a component of professional development and training for teachers and other school staff (Hyde et al, 2011). All school staff participate in professional development workshops, which cover:

- An overview of sexual assault
- How to respond effectively to disclosures of sexual assault
- An overview of the SAPPSS model, which focuses on the primary prevention of violence against women (Hyde et al, 2011; 9).

The SAPPSS program also incorporates a 'train the trainer' approach, with workshops run with a smaller sub-set of school staff. Staff attend a one-day workshop on how to respond to sexual assault, and a two-day workshop on delivery of the SAPPSS program content (Hyde et al, 2011: 9). However, Hyde and colleagues (2011) also note that there are challenges in providing this training, including that teachers do not see RRE as their responsibility. Tension also arises between the role of the teacher in delivering SAPPSS in comparison to the teaching style required for delivery of more traditional school content (Hyde et al, 2011).

Likewise, the SHARE program previously run by SHineSA included a two-day training course to develop teachers' capacity to deliver the curriculum, the development of a teacher's manual, and the provision of ongoing support from SHineSA staff (Flentje, 2012: 7). An evaluation of the SHARE program conducted by Dyson and Fox (2006) found, perhaps unsurprisingly, that staff who had received training were more comfortable with delivering the program material in comparison to those who had not received training.

Youth services

Within a community based setting, the Darebin council resource *Promoting Equal and Respectful Relationships in Faith Communities* provides information and support for leaders in faith-based communities to become 'champions' of respectful relationships education and primary prevention work. This manual and toolkit provides a range of resource sheets, and a 10-step plan of action to guide champions in the process of promoting respectful relationships (Northern Interfaith Respectful Relationships Project, 2012). The program also includes a peer-mentoring component, with leaders from various religious denominations (although predominantly Christian) forming mentor/mentee pairs to engage in structured discussion of primary prevention. Participants reported an increased understanding of the causes of violence against women, and felt better able to respond as bystanders (VicHealth, 2012). However, the program has not been rigorously evaluated to date. While the project aimed to work with interfaith organisations, the project leaders note that in practice the project ran in an intrafaith manner (VicHealth, 2012). This may be due to the considerable differences in attitudes towards gender and 'appropriate' gender roles across different religions (VicHealth, 2012).

TAFE and university

No programs were identified that specifically provided training to champions within a university or TAFE setting. However, programs such as *Sex and Ethics*, *You, Me and Us,* and *Mentors in Violence Prevention* all provide examples of RRE programs that run within university and TAFE settings. These programs are discussed elsewhere in this review.

Sports

Fair Game Respect Matters is a primary prevention program targeted at community level football clubs, and serves as the counterpart to the AFL's *Respect and Responsibility* program. The program aims to 'introduce culture change in community football clubs' in order to prevent violence against women and children (Dyson, Grzelinska and Hobbs, 2011). Cultural change is aimed at evolving sexist and disrespectful environments into spaces where women are viewed as equals (Dyson, Grzelinska and Hobbs, 2011). The program works to empower 'drivers' – that is, adult representatives from clubs – to take a role in leading a process of cultural change within their club. A toolkit has been developed in

supporting and guiding clubs through the required process of change. Clubs are also requested to set goals for change, as well a timelines for achieving these goals.

The *Fair Game Respect Matters* program has undergone extensive evaluation. However, the results of these evaluations are not publicly available at this stage. Personal communication with the author of these evaluations, Dr Due Dyson, indicates that they involved a mixed-methods approach, with surveys, interviews and focus groups used. Surveys were conducted with program participants across a two-year period, while the qualitative evaluation methods were used with both participants and the trainers who deliver the program. Results of these evaluations have been largely positive. For example, the young male participants greatly respected and admired the trainers, who were generally senior or retired footballers from the AFL. Participants also valued the use of mixed-gender trainers, as this provided them with the opportunity to ask a woman questions about sex and respectful relationships that they were otherwise not provided. The evaluation results also indicated that participants retained knowledge gleaned from the project for up to a year afterwards, although many participants still adhered to rape myths. It is also important to note that the participants held complex and context-dependent understandings of what was meant by 'respectful' relationships. For example, being 'respectful' towards their male peers was achieved in a different way to being 'respectful' to women.

Finally, the evaluations conducted with the program trainers indicated that they:

- Enjoyed their role
- Felt gratified by their influence on participants
- Evaluated the training they received positively
- Enjoyed delivering the program in a team of two
- Developed methods of delivery that suited the unique dynamic of the trainer pair.

Barriers to participation in RRE

Upper primary and secondary schools

There exists a plethora of barriers to implementing and participating in RRE at the upper primary school level. The DEECD (2010: 16), for example, cites some of the common barriers to effective sexuality and relationships education as including: 'concerns by school leaders about crossing strongly held family values, a lack of access to teacher training (or support for teachers who may wish to attend), fear of saying the wrong thing to students, and juggling crowded curricula'. RRE programs can also be expensive to run, particularly if they involve the use of external service providers, and this cost can prove to be prohibitive for some schools (Child Safety Commissioner, 2010).

In their evaluation of a pilot of a whole-of-school approach to sexuality and relationship education, the DEECD (2008: 6) found that a lack of support from school leadership and staff attitudes are the two most significant barriers to implementing a whole-of-school learning approach across both primary and secondary school settings. Engaging parents also proved to be a challenge for some schools, although this was particularly a concern for secondary rather than primary school settings. Importantly, school-based RRE does not reach populations of young people who either do not attend school, or attend erratically. Carmody (2009) notes that these groups of young people may face the highest risk of victimisation, and efforts should be made to engage these young people in community and other non-school settings.

The effective implementation of RRE also depends upon collaboration between schools and community organisations. However, the 2008 DEECD evaluation of whole-of-school sexuality education pilots found that in practice difficulty was encountered in developing strong working relationships. A range of issues contributed to this barrier, including (DEECD, 2008a: 8):

- A lack of a common or shared language
- Incompatible timelines
- A lack of adequate funding
- Different reporting requirements.

Schools in rural and regional locations can also face challenges in forming relationships with services that are geographically distant, while the absence of a formal process for establishing relationships can also stymie this process (Dyson and Fox, 2006). Hyde and colleagues (2011: 8) note that the partnership process is time consuming, and that schools often struggle to place a strong priority on implementing RRE. Resistance can also be met from teachers who feel increasing pressure to incorporate more topics into an already over-loaded curriculum (Hyde et al, 2011).

Teachers can also express a reluctance or lack of confidence in teaching sexuality and relationships education (Carmody et al, 2009; Dyson, 2009; Goldman and Coleman, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Ollis, 2011). Timetable 'pressures' can also result in sexuality and relationships education being relegated to 'optional' classes, particularly in the later high school years, meaning that only students who enroll in the optional class will be provided with this education (Dyson and Fox, 2006; Johnson, 2012). Interestingly, participants in Johnson's (2012: 21) study did not think that students were particularly interested in learning about 'the importance of respect in relationships' – although this was the area of the curriculum that teachers most liked to teach. These participants also reported including the topic of respect in relationships into their class content 'to a great extent' (Johnson, 2012: 19). The lack of adequate funding can be a significant barrier to both the implementation of RRE, as well as to the ongoing training and evaluation required to ensure the long-term success of RRE programs (Dyson, 2009; Hyde et al, 2011).

In the case of SHineSA, significant resistance was faced from parents and community groups during the period of the SHARE program's implementation in 2003 – although locally conducted research indicated that the vast majority of parents and community members were in favour of sexuality and relationships education for students. (Gibson, 2007; Johnson, 2012; Talukdar, Aspland and Datta, 2013). Nonetheless, this political activism resulted in the enforcement of parental consent forms, meaning that only students 'who returned signed consent forms could participate in the program' (Johnson, 2012: 33). This action could plausibly lower the number of secondary students who are able to participate in sexuality and relationships education, either because their parents might refuse consent (and this may or may not be at odds with the young person's own educational intentions), or students and parents may simply forget to sign and return the forms (Talukdar, Aspland and Datta, 2013). Teachers and school staff who took place in evaluations of the program noted the need for parental consent formed a barrier to student participation (Dyson and Fox, 2006). The need for parental consent for students to participate in the evaluation of the SHARE program resulted in demonstrably lower rates of participation in the program evaluation (Dyson and

Fox, 2006). An alternative option here is to use an opt-out rather than an opt-in model of consent, such as that used in the *Girls Talk, Guys Talk* program (Kwok and Forwood, 2012). This approach ensures that parents are informed about the program and are able to remove their child from participating if desired, but does not rely on receiving parental consent for young people to participate.

In the context of the UK, Oerton and Pilgrim (2014) demonstrate that the broader political climate can act to either facilitate or hinder the implementation of progressive sex and relationships education, with a conservative political culture and a lack of cross-party consensus acting as significant barriers (see also Sherlock, 2012, for further discussion of the influence of political context on sex and relationships education delivery and policy).

In relation to GLBTIQ-inclusive RRE practices, barriers exist on account of a lack of a coherent national policy to provide a framework for implementing programs and practices that are inclusive of young people of diverse sexuality or gender (Jones and Hillier, 2012). Efforts to implement inclusive RRE are further hampered by the inconsistent state and territory policies on this matter, as discussed earlier in this review. Jones and Hillier (2012) also note that even where appropriate policies are in place, key actors might not be aware of their existence, and they are subsequently not enacted in practice.

Youth services

No specific literature was identified that discussed the particular barriers to conducting RRE faced by youth services.

TAFE and university

Mitchell and Freitag (2011) report a key challenge in delivering RRE within universities is actually finding an audience for their work. They note that university staff may hold problematic assumptions about violence against women and children, including (2009: 1008):

- It isn't a problem in our community
- The program is not effective
- Audience members won't be receptive to a theatre-based program.

The authors also highlight the challenges of running consecutive programs for the same university audience, which would allow the program to better adhere to best practice principles for RRE.

Sports

Sports settings can, at least in some instances, reinforce types of masculinity that foster or promote violence against women. Conducting RRE in sports settings can simultaneously contradict or undermine some of the key messages of RRE. As Flood highlights, sports 'culture also contributes to the construction of violence masculinity as a cultural norm' (2002-2003: 28). However, at the same time sports settings are a central location for reaching men and boys to deliver RRE and anti-violence messages. This tension illustrates a broader issue in RRE and anti-violence campaigns, which is the 'difficult balancing act between complicity and challenge' in trying to challenge certain types of masculinity while simultaneously engaging with them (Flood, 2002-2003: 28).

Concluding remarks

This review has discussed and critiqued current research and practice on RRE within both a national and international context. The review forms a component of the *You, Me and Us* program run by WHW and has been particularly concerned with RRE run in school, sports, community, and university and TAFE settings. This review has endeavored to highlight currently identified aspects of good or best practice in RRE programs and program delivery. Most notably, good or best practice in RRE should adhere to a whole-of-school approach to program delivery. In other aspects of good or best practice there is a lack of clarity and research. However, a key point of learning from this review is that there should be a clear rationale behind all decisions made within a RRE program. It is also vital that RRE programs maintain the ability to be responsive to the needs of individual community groups. Likewise, there is currently a lack of clarity and shared understanding around what is meant by the terms 'healthy' or 'respectful' relationships. This suggests that further work is required in this area, however in the meantime it is important for those running or designing RRE programs to clearly conceptualise and communicate what these terms refer to within the context of the program.

A number of gaps have been identified in relation to current curriculum and practice within Australia. For example, while some states currently have clear policy and curriculum in relation to RRE, others make little or no mention of RRE. Likewise, some states have a range of RRE programs currently in operation, while others had few identifiable RRE programs running. This suggests the both policy and practice is patchy and inconsistent across the country. Additionally, very little research was identified exploring the delivery and impact of RRE programs in community, sports, and university and TAFE settings within Australia and this is a significant gap in current knowledge. What best or good practice in RRE looks like when working with CALD or other diverse communities is also not currently well articulated and this area also warrants further attention.

A range of barriers to implementing RRE were identified, with common issues including a lack of resources, the reluctance of teachers to deliver sensitive or embarrassing curriculum topics, and finding space for RRE in already hectic curriculum schedules. Despite these barriers to RRE practice, it is encouraging to note that evaluations of current RRE programs operating within Australia and internationally have shown a range of improvements to participants' knowledge, attitudes and occasionally their behaviours in relation to respectful relationships. While there is still some way to go in developing and defining good or best

practice, such results indicate the potential of young people to form respectful relationships free from violence and abuse.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Databases

Databases are listed here in order of 'hit count' for the search 'respectful relationships education'. Databases at the start of the list were more heavily drawn on.

- ERIC
- PsychINFO
- OAIster
- Social Sciences Citation Index
- Academic OneFile
- MEDLINE
- SocINDEX with Full Text
- MasterFILE Premier
- Science Citation Index
- CINAHL
- Family and Society Studies Worldwide
- Business Source Complete
- Educational Adminstration Abstracts
- General OneFile
- ScienceDirect
- Expanded Academic ASAP
- University of Melbourne's Catalogue
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service Abstracts
- MAS Ultra – School Edition
- Criminal Justice Abstracts
- Informit Humanities and Social Sciences Collection
- LexisNexis Academic: Law Reviews
- Harvard Library Bibliographic Dataset
- JSTOR Arts and Sciences IV
- SPORTDiscus with Full Text

- Environment Complete
- Urban Studies Abstracts
- DBPIA
- Korean Studies Information Service System
- Communication and Mass Media Complete
- Political Science Complete
- PsychARTICLES
- Bibiotheksverbund Bayern
- China Science and Technology Journal Database
- Business Insights: Essentials
- RILM Abstracts of Music Literature
- Literary Reference Center
- Informit Indigenous Collection
- British Library EthOS
- eArticle
- HyRead Journal
- RCAAP
- LGBT Life with Full Text
- GreenFILE
- Arts and Humanities Citation Index
- China/Asia On Demand
- Energy Citations Databse
- Oxford Medicine Online
- Australasian Medical Index
- ProjectMUSE
- PsycBOOKS
- Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts
- Music Index
- Historical Abstracts with Full Text
- Risk Management Reference Center
- EconLit with Full Text
- NewsBank
- University of Melbourne Digital Repository
- NewsBank – Archives
- PsycCRITIQUES

- JSTOR Arts and Sciences VI
- Informit Health Collection
- J-STAGE
- Art Full Text (H.W. Wilson)
- Bridgeman Education
- JSTOR Arts and Sciences X
- Swe Pub
- R2 Digital Library
- Opposing Viewpoints in Context

Key Search Terms

- Respectful relationships education
- Dating violence education
- Ethical sexual relationships education
- Sexual ethics violence prevention
- Sexual ethics and relationship violence
- Ethical sexual relationships
- Relationship education
- Primary prevention education
- Sex and relationship education
- Romantic relationship education
- Violence prevention education
- Good practice/best practice AND respectful relationships/dating violence/sexual violence education*
- Delivery models respectful relationships/dating violence/sexual violence education
- Peer education models respectful relationships/dating violence/sexual violence education
- Respectful relationships/dating violence/sexual violence education AND barriers/limitations
- Professional development respectful relationships education
- Professional development AND dating/sexual violence prevention education
- Training respectful relationships education

*A '/' is used to indicate where multiple searches have been conducted with the terms separated with a / interchanged.

Targeted Search

- Sex Education journal
- Redress Journal
- Vic Health publications
- ACSSA publications and resources
- ARCSHS publications
- Foundation to prevent violence against women and their children
- ANROWS
- Women With Disabilities Australia
- Women's Health and sxa/vaw counseling services:
    - Family Planning Victoria
    - CASA Forum
    - CASA House
    - SECASA
    - (All other CASA websites searched, but not useful)
    - PiP
    - Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria
    - Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse
    - ShineSA
    - Yarrow Place (South Australia)
    - SASS (Tasmania)
    - Canberra Rape Crisis
- Moira Carmody publications
- Sue Dyson publications
- Patsie Frawley publications
- Government education department websites and state curriculum
    - Victoria
    - NSW
    - QLD
    - SA
    - WA
    - NT
    - ACT
    - TAS
    - National

- Google search Respectful Relationships peer education
- Google search Respectful Relationships sports settings

Appendix B

Overview of Current Australian Respectful Relationships Programs

Program name	State	Key program elements	Setting and age group	Whole of School/one Off	Organisation	Website/reference details
Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS)	VIC ACT	The SAPPSS program aims to reduce the incidence of sexual assault in school communities, and to build upon the capacity of secondary schools to respond to sexual assault. Specialised training is provided for principals, teachers, staff and student peer educators.	School Years 9 and 10	Whole of School	Developed by CASA House Program also run by: Canberra Rape Crisis	http://www.casahouse.com.au/index.php?page_id=172
Sex and Ethics Violence Prevention Program	NSW QLD NZ	Based on international best practice principles in violence primary prevention education.	TAFE/Universities Community		Developed by University of Western Sydney	http://www.sexandethics.net/

		Project aims to aid young men and women to develop ethical sexual subjectivity by 'training the trainer' to deliver content to young people in a range of settings.	Sports		Program also run by: National Rugby League elite youth	
SHine SA – Sexual Health and Relationships Education (2003-2005)/ Focus Schools	SA WA	SHine SA provides educational and professional development opportunities for school staff on Comprehensive Relationships and Sexual Health Education, Relationships and Sexual Health Education for Students with a Disability, and Sexual and Gender Diversity in Schools. SHine also conducted the project pilot Sexual Health and Relationships Education from 2003-2005. This pilot informed the development of the Focus Schools program, which currently operates in schools across SA. A consultation is currently underway to determine the respectful relationships	School Primary and Secondary	Whole of School	SHine SA	http://www.shinesa.org.au/

		education needs for remote schools in the Kimberley region of WA				
Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum	SA	Keeping safe is an age appropriate program that teaches children and young people of all ages to recognise and disclose abuse, strategies for keeping safe, and relationships and sexuality.	Primary and Secondary School	Whole-of-school	SA Department of Education and Children's Services	http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/teachingandlearning/pages/pandp/Childprotection/?reFlag=1
Living Safer Sexual Lives: Respectful Relationships	VIC TAS	Respectful relationships program for people with an intellectual disability and other cognitive disabilities. This program also aims to increase knowledge around the primary prevention of violence against women with disabilities.		Not school specific	Latrobe University	Refer to Frawley and Bigby (2014), Frawley et al (n.d.), and Johnson et al (2001).
Girls Talk – Guys Talk Health Promoting Schools program	VIC	This program aims to create supportive school environments that promote healthy relationships and sexual choices. Provides specialised training for principals, teachers and school staff.	School 14 to 15 year olds (but can also be used for 13-14 year olds)	Whole of School	Women's Health West	http://whwest.org.au/health-promotion/sexual-health/schools/gtgt/

Gippsland Respectful Relationship Education in Schools	VIC	This program delivers respectful relationships and sexual assault prevention in secondary schools in the Gippsland area. Specialised training is provided for principals, teachers and school staff.	School Year levels 8 and 9	Whole of School	Gippsland Women's Health Service	http://www.gwhealth.asn.au/pages/prevention-of-violence-against-women.html
Safe Landing/ Sexuality Education and Community Support (SECS) program	VIC	Safe Landing/SECS is a sexuality education program that includes a respectful relationships component. Specialised training is provided for teachers, staff and parents.	School 5 years – 18 years, and families	Whole of School	Family Planning Victoria, Deakin University and Barwon Health	http://www.fpv.org.au/safelanding
White Ribbon Breaking the Silence in Schools Program	VIC NSW	Breaking the Silence aims to develop models of respectful relationships in schools to prevent the perpetration of violence against women. The program involves workshops for principals or vice-principals.	School Primary and Secondary	Whole of School	White Ribbon Foundation	http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/schools
Respect Protect Connect	VIC	This program aims to promote healthy relationships and violence prevention strategies.	School Years 7-12	One off	SECASA	http://www.secasa.com.au/services/resp

		The project utilises a Peer Educator model of content delivery, and involves the use of gender-specific workshops.				ect-protect-connect/
Be The Hero	VIC	Be The Hero encourages men to lead respectful relationships with women, and to develop skills to become active bystanders in preventing men's violence against women. The program provides specialised training for teachers and school staff.	School 15-19 years	Whole of School	Paul Zappa	http://www.bethehero.com.au/
You, Me and Us	VIC	The You, Me and Us program is a respectful relationships education program that uses a peer educator model of program delivery. Specialised training is provided for peer educators, and for the professional development of adults working in the settings the program is offered in.	Schools, Universities, TAFE, Sporting Clubs, Youth Organisations 10-13 years old and 18-24		Women's Health West	http://whwest.org.au/health-promotion/sexual-health/you-me-us/

						years old.
Respectful Community Initiative	VIC	The Respectful Community Initiative is aimed specifically at preventing sexual and interpersonal violence within the Monash University Community. The program has a particular focus on working with sports teams, students living on-campus, and Monash Clubs, Societies, Associations and Unions. The program aims to facilitate discussion groups and provided targeted presentations that consider strategies to create and maintain respectful, welcoming and inclusive communities.	University Sports	Whole of Community	Monash University	http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/safercommunity/respectful-communities.html
We Can Do It: Good Samaritan Inn Prevention Project	VIC	We Can Do It is a three-year program aimed at developing respectful relationships through cultural change. Specialised training is provided for teachers, staff and community mentors.	School Year 10-12	Whole of School	Good Samaritan Inn	http://www.goodsams.org.au/good-oil/school-based-programs-vital-in-

The No Means No Show	VIC/Australia wide	The No Means No Show is a gender-specific, one hour comedy-based health promotion show that covers a range of issues around respectful sexual relationships and sexual consent. A Q and A session with qualified health professionals working in the field of sexual violence is also included. The show is only run in schools which already have respectful relationships education.	School 14-16 years old	One-off (but run in conjunction with Whole of School approaches)	Nelly Thomas, CASA House and The Royal Women's Hospital	http://www.nellythomas.com/nomeansnoshow.htm
Respectful Relationships Upper Primary School Program	TAS	This program aims to promote healthy, respectful and safe relationships using age appropriate language and concepts.	School Grades 5 and 6	One-off	Youth and Family Focus Inc.	http://www.yaff.com.au/php/page.php?p=22
Youth Educating Peers (YEP) Project	WA	The YEP Project adopts a human rights framework which takes the position that young people have a right to education and services that enable them to be	Community 12-15 years	Not schools based	Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia	http://www.yacwa.org.au/projects/the-yep-

		sexually, socially and emotionally healthy. This project includes a focus on positive and respectful relationships, although it also takes a holistic focus on sexual health. A Peer Educator model of program delivery is used in the YEP project.				project/resources-2.html
C.A.R.E.	VIC	The C.A.R.E program uses a peer education model of content delivery to run one-off or multi-session workshops with secondary school students. The workshops cover a range of topics including violence in relationships, strategies to deal with violence, injury prevention and personal safety, respectful relationships and self respect. Undercurrent also provides professional development workshops for teachers, school staff and community workers around the issues of domestic violence, sexual violence and bullying.	School TAFE/University Community Years 7-12 for school-based program. All ages for community, TAFE and university programs.	Whole of School	Undercurrent Victoria	http://undercurrentvic.com/c-a-r-e-program/program-structure/

Change – I Am	SA	This project is delivered in partnership with the Davenport Tji Tji Wiru Youth Centre, and aims to prevent violence against Aboriginal Women in the Davenport Community. Change – I Am assists participants to develop the knowledge and skills to build and maintain respectful relationships. Participants are also trained as Peer Educators.	Community	Not schools based.	Centacare	http://www.centacarecdpp.org.au/programs/aboriginal-cultural-programs/respectful-relationship-program
The Promoting Respect Project	WA	This project aims to provide young people with knowledge, support and resources to make respectful, healthy and informed relationship decisions to prevent relationship violence later in life. The project uses a peer educator model of program delivery.	Schools Years 8-10	Whole of School	Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services	http://www.womenscouncil.com.au/promoting-respect.html
Love Drunk	National	Love Drunk is a theatre performance that addresses issues surrounding youth culture and relationships, and includes a post-performance discussion and analysis.	Schools Years 9-12 and tertiary	One-Off	Phunktional	http://www.lovedrunk.org.au/

Respect and Responsibility Program	National	This program works towards addressing violence against women and the creation of safe and inclusive environments for women and girls across the football industry.	Sports	Not schools based	VicHealth and the Australian Football League	http://www.afl.com.au/news/game-development/respect-and-responsibility
Equal Playing Field	NSW	This project targets boys and girls from the region of Illawarra and provides education around gender equality and respectful relationships.	Sports 12-13 years old	Not Schools Based	Rugby League Against Violence	http://www.rugbyleagueagainstviolence.org/programs/equalplayingfield/
Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping out against gender-based violence	VIC	Building Respectful Relationships consists of a set of sequential teaching activities to educate secondary school students about gender, violence and respectful relationships.	Schools Years 8 and 9	Whole of School	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/respectrel.aspx
Respect, Communicate, Choose	ACT SA	Respect, Communicate, Choose is an evidence-based program which aims to give young people aged 10-12 the tools and support to develop, promote and perpetuate equal, safe and respectful	Schools Ages 10-12 years	One-off	YWCA	http://www.ywca-canberra.org.au/community_resources/re

		relationships.				spect-communicate-choose
Solving the Jigsaw	VIC	Solving the Jigsaw aims to help children learn to prevent and manage the threats of bullying at school and violence at home and in the community. It also provides professional development for teachers and school staff.	Schools Upper primary and lower secondary levels	Whole-of-School	Centre for Non-Violence: ending violence against women and children	http://www.solvingthejigsaw.org.au/
Y-ise Up Safe Relationships	NSW	Y-ise up promotes healthy relationships and provides students with effective communication strategies to assist them in developing safe and positive support networks.	High School Students Years 7, 9, 10 and11	One-off	YWCA NSW	http://www.ywcansw.com.au/Y-Ise_up_safe_relationships.php
The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence	VIC	The Taskforce organises and facilitates education and awareness programs in the fields of Family Violence and Sexual Assault. It is specifically concerned with the perpetration of violence within Jewish communities. They provide training and support for adults in the Jewish community.	Community Adults	n/a	The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence.	http://www.jewishtaskforce.org.au/

| Kinks and Bends | NSW | Kinks and Bends aims to encourage young women to discuss and explore issues surrounding violence in relationships through the use of creative workshops and the development of an art piece.

The project also involved the development of a community education program aimed at young people aged 15-19. The program is intended to be run in schools and community organisations. | Community and Secondary School

15-19 year olds | One-off | Program run by Chris Smith, Regional Violence Prevention Specialist for the Central Coast of NSW. | http://www.adfvc.unsw.edu.au/Conference%20papers/Seek-soln/Smith,%20Chris.pdf |
| Growing Respect | National | Growing Respect takes a whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education. This project developed from the LOVE Bites program run by NAPCAN, which is a sexual assault prevention program that involved the delivery of a one-day workshop to young people aged 14-17 years.

It aims to assist children and young people to develop an ethical framework for developing their relationships; identify | Primary and Secondary School | Whole-of-School | NAPCAN | http://napcan.org.au/our-programs/growing-respect/ |

		the difference between abusive and safe behaviours in relationships; discuss how gender influences relationships; identify healthy/unhealthy relationships are; and to develop respectful conflict resolution skills and problem solving skills. It also aims to provide professional development training to staff, and to build community and school capacity.				
Mentors in Violence Prevention Program	QLD	This program is a 'leadership program' that focuses on the prevention of all forms of violence. The program aims to enable people as bystanders to intervene in or confront violence as it occurs, or to prevent violence before it occurs. The program is delivered to both men and women in either mixed or single gender groups.	University/TAFE	n/a	Griffith University	http://www.griffith.edu.au/criminology-law/violence-research-prevention-program/training-development
Women Educating Each Other…Women in Safe and	NSW	WEEO WISER is a secondary-school based RRE program that aims to increase young women's understandings of gender, power and violence. The program	Secondary School Year 9	Two workshops are run.	Liverpool Women's Health Centre	http://www.weeowiser.org.au/

Equal Relationships (WEEO WISER)		is run across two workshop sessions, with groups of 12-15 girls. The program also engages peer educators in delivering content.				
Youth Advocates Against Family Violence – pilot project	Vic	Youth Advocates Against Family Violence is a pilot project that was run in inner-city Melbourne. It aimed to educate young people about domestic violence, including information about support services, and to enable them to develop the skills to develop respectful relationships. Program content was co-delivered by a male and a female facilitator.	Secondary School Year 9	Whole-of-school	North Melbourne Legal Service and Doutta Galla Youth Services	http://www.nmls.org.au/what-we-do/projects/