

UNITED AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONFERENCE

SPEAKER INFORMATION

Dr Elspeth McInnes AM

Dr Elspeth McInnes is a sociologist and Senior Lecturer in the deLissa Institute of Early Childhood and Family Studies School of Education at the University of South Australia. Elspeth teaches *Children in Families and Communities* in the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education program, providing pre-service early childhood educators with education and skills in responding to young children in a range of adverse social circumstances including child protection and abuse prevention. She also teaches in the Early Childhood Masters program and the Professional Doctorate program. Her research interests have focused on gender, social policy and family violence. Her continuing research and teaching interests include the impact of violence and abuse on children and the ways in which domestic violence impacts on mothers' parenting.

Dr McInnes has worked previously as a print radio and television journalist, before moving to the community sector and engaging in advocacy and project work on behalf of unemployed people, sole parents and people living on low incomes.

Dr McInnes was made a Member of the Order of Australia (2006) for her volunteer advocacy on behalf of sole parents and was also awarded the Centenary Medal (2001) for her work in the community sector. Dr McInnes is a former Vice President (2003-05) and Executive member of the Board of Governors of the Australian Council of Social Service and a current volunteer policy advisor to ACOSS on issues of income, work and education.

Peter Mertin has a PhD in clinical psychology, and has spent the majority of his professional career working in the area of child and adolescent health. Currently he is employed at the Legal Services Commission Family Division where his primary role involves the assessment of families whose circumstances prevent them from achieving a safe, mediated outcome post-separation. As such he has been involved with many families caught up in domestic violence, and has assessed and counselled children from these families at CAMHS, at the LSC and in women's shelters. In addition, he has published a number of papers documenting the effects on women and children, in terms of their emotional functioning, from backgrounds of domestic violence. More recently, he has become interested in the effects on the nervous system, and particularly the development of brain organisation in children, of stress as a consequence of repeated exposure to threat, in the form of domestic violence. Current research suggests that significant and repeated stress may result in changes to the organisation and functioning of the developing brain that have potentially life-long consequences for the individual concerned.

My name is **Mickelina Barlow** (Micky) my father is Italian and my mother Aboriginal, As an Aboriginal woman with extended family living in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands and throughout other regions in the Far North and West Coast of South Australia and whose grandmother maintains much of her traditional ways and her language I have had the chance to socialise and work with Aboriginal peoples from urban, rural and traditional communities throughout South Australia. This knowledge has enabled me to effectively work within a range of Indigenous cultural groups. This also extends to the period I lived and worked in the Northern Territory.

My background is in community service, where I managed Nunga Mi:Minar inc, an Aboriginal Domestic Violence Shelter for 6 years, I then moved to Health and developed the Family and Community Healing Program on a short term contract and am now in my current position as Principal Aboriginal Consultant with Families SA.

Shirley Callaghan is the Regional Coordinator (South) of Relationships Australia. She has a background of group work and counseling. Shirley has worked in the area of Domestic Violence for many years working with men, women and children in both counseling and groups. She has a Diploma in Counseling and Group work, a two-year Graduate Diploma in Family Therapy and training in the use of Narrative ideas, in her work uses a strength base approach.

Star Club: A therapeutic group program for children aged 5-10 years and their mums who have experienced domestic violence and family separation.

Isis Wassef works for Central Domestic Violence Service as a case manager. We support women and children experiencing domestic and family violence on an accommodation and outreach basis.

I have been working in the area of domestic violence for 14 years. I have been also a member of the Non English Speaking background Domestic Violence Action Group (NESBDVAG) (on and off) for the past 4 years.

NESBDVAG aims to encourage the community to explore and implement ways to reduce domestic violence in Australia's multicultural society.

Our focus is to promote the rights of NESB women experiencing domestic violence.

One of our primary objectives is to develop effective networks and ongoing liaisons between groups and service providers assisting non English speaking domestic violence clients.

Richard Putnam works for the Salvation Army as one of two men's workers with the Central Violence Intervention Program. The CVIP is an inter-agency initiative to reduce domestic violence provided by The Salvation Army and the Department for Correctional Services. Men are referred to the Program through the criminal justice system and the CVIP also offers services to women and children experiencing Domestic Violence. Richard Putnam's role mainly involves engaging men around their violence towards partners or former partners, assessing their suitability for the Program's 24-week Stopping Violence Group and co-facilitating the group. Richard Putnam's interest in domestic violence work began about eight years ago while he was volunteer telephone counsellor with Lifeline and the Domestic Violence Helpline.

Ele Wilde JP has worked in the domestic violence sector for twenty three years; initially Adelaide then the last 14 years in the Riverland. I oversee the day to day operations of the Riverland Domestic Violence Unit where we have four workers including myself attending to an average of 280 cases per year. We see women and children experiencing domestic violence on an outreach basis and also provide accommodation to those who need it. Our success depends on our partnerships with other community agencies including police, Families SA, Housing SA, the health profession and the general community.