

AVP WA Chairperson's report for 2018



2018 was another very successful year for AVP WA. We ran 58 workshops in prisons, schools and the community, which is the same number we conducted in 2016. These included 31 in Acacia, Karnet, Wooroloo and Bunbury Prisons, and one in Wandoo Reintegration Facility (prior to its closure early in the year). Community workshops included six in Perth, four in Bunbury, and seven in South Hedland. Eight workshops were run in schools, including five youth and three HIPP workshops.

We also assisted with programmes in Darwin and Alice Springs. In Alice Springs a Perth facilitator co-facilitated two Basic, one Advanced and one T4F workshop. One WA participant also completed their T4F in Alice Springs correctional Centre.

Prison Workshops

As in previous years, there was a high demand for AVP workshops in Acacia Prison in 2018, and we facilitated a total of thirteen workshops at this facility, successfully training nineteen new apprentice facilitators.

We have successfully completed seven workshops in Karnet, five in Wooroloo and six in Bunbury Regional Prison this year, and have successfully trained four, six and five new apprentices respectively at these facilities.

Community and School Workshops

Six community workshops were run in Perth in 2018, resulting in the training of four new apprentice facilitators. Four were run in Bunbury, resulting in the training of four new apprentice facilitators which we hope will ease the load on our Perth facilitators who travel down to Bunbury for both BRP and Bunbury community workshops. Seven workshops were held in South Hedland, resulting in two facilitators being trained.

Three workshops were held at Helena College Junior School during the year, from which six new apprentice facilitators were trained.

Management Committee

In 2018, there were nine members on our management committee. These were Selene Moonbeams (Chair), Bheena Sewnarain (Deputy Chair), Niki MacLennan (Minute-taker), Collette Chesters (Treasurer), Sally Herzfeld (Assistant Treasurer), Mark Newhouse, Amy Thom, Jim Thom and Merrill Stokes (General committee members). Collette has been gradually taking on the role of Treasurer over the year with continued support from Sally. Bheena stepped into the role of Chairperson for several months while I was absent.

We continue to meet monthly in Mount Lawley, and also exchange emails between meetings in order to make decisions which can't be held off until the following month's meeting. An hour and a half for each meeting never seems to be sufficient time to adequately deal with all the issues that arise.

Administration

Mark Newhouse has once again, been invaluable in his part-time employment as AVP WA Administrator in 2018, and the committee was unanimous in their decision to renew his contract for 2019.

Mark does a wonderful job performing many administrative tasks, including website updates, keeping workshop kits well stocked, maintaining a complete database of facilitators and ensuring prison clearances are updated. He also liaises with prison staff and ensures as far as possible, the smooth scheduling of workshops. This includes not only confirming dates for workshops and putting facilitation teams together, but also ensuring inmate and community facilitators get together for team preps and that reports are sent to staff and inmate facilitators as soon as possible after each workshop.

He submits an extensive monthly report to the committee.

Training

Monthly training nights were continued throughout the year, with pizza and socialising time provided before each session. The committee considers these training nights to be important for facilitator connection, fun and honing of skills.

We also held two training days and a Christmas gathering in Acacia. These gatherings help inmate and community facilitators stay connected, and the prison facilitators appreciate these days.

During the year, the committee had many discussions about the disappointing turnout at the training nights, and we eventually decided to hold Saturday training days four times during 2019 in place of the Thursday training nights, to see if these attract greater attendance. The first of these was held on Saturday 2nd February 2019 in Osborne Park, and was planned and facilitated by Jim Thom and Merril Stokes. We were pleased with the attendance of about twenty facilitators including three ex-inmates. The training day focused on consideration of the first two AVP core values, and was generally well received. The next training session will be conducted by HIPP facilitators prior to the AGM at Helena College on 7th March, and then on Saturday 4th May at the Quaker Meeting House.

Australian, Regional and International AVP

During 2018, regular Skype meetings were held in order to share happenings and ideas from around the country and overseas. Information and queries are often then fed back to the AVP WA committee.

May Trust

Once again, we received a considerable sum of money from our anonymous donor. It is this that has allowed us to fund our part time administrator and extend our operations to prisons throughout the state. It has also helped to reimburse transport costs for facilitators to travel to workshops, sponsor two AVP WA facilitators to attend the National Training Gathering in Sydney in April 2019, and sponsor facilitators to travel to Alice Springs and Darwin to support their emerging programmes.

We are extremely grateful for this ongoing financial and moral support.

Personal Reflections

Being Chair of AVP WA for my second year has continued to be a rewarding experience for me. It is a privilege to work with such a committed and inspirational team of volunteers. I am very grateful to Bheena for filling my role as Chairperson for several months during Spring so that I could go on an extended journey, and I was confident that AVP WA business was in excellent hands during my absence.

I am constantly in awe of the continued dedication of committee members in performing not only their considerable roles on the committee, but also finding time to facilitate workshops throughout the year.

Of course, AVP WA could not flourish as well as it has this past year without the dedicated team of facilitators who volunteered their time and energy to facilitate workshops throughout the year. Their commitment to the collective desired outcome of a more peaceful world is extremely admirable.

Thank you for your confidence in me as Chair for 2018, and I wish the new committee another very successful year ahead.

Selene Moonbeams
AVP WA Chairperson
7 March 2019