

AVPWA Chairperson's report 2009

2009 has been a productive year for AVP –WA. The committee has worked to support and administer the organisation to enable the delivery of training and workshops in a range of settings. As with previous years 2009 showed that with commitment and persistence things can be achieved.

The 14th year of AVP-WA has seen it continue to deliver its core business of providing opportunities for workshop participants to explore the power of non-violence and identify how they do and can practice non-violence in their lives.

Workshops

Workshops have been offered in a range of settings. Of special interest are workshops that have been offered to Aboriginal community members. For a number of years AVP-WA has been committed to making AVP relevant and accessible to Aboriginal Australians. In previous years the brochure has been altered to make the content and its appearance relevant and we have *sought* to encourage and attract Aboriginals to participate in workshops and to become facilitators. This has been a lesson in being patient and persistent and shown that with commitment and building connections with core people things begin to happen. During 2009 we began to see our efforts bear fruit. A community workshop for an Indigenous group was held and is to be the first in a series that will happen in 2010. Other events reached Aboriginal youth. Facilitators presented AVP activities to participants at Saturday night basket ball. Participants engaged in AVP activities between games. Aboriginal high school girls at risk participated in team building and conflict resolution. Facilitators travelled to Broome and presented a workshop to Aboriginal inmates at Broome prison. This was well received and more are planned for 2010. Many of these activities are supported by funds provided by our generous benefactor.

A number of activities happened as forerunners to these activities and workshops. An AVP-WA representative attended NAIDOC and Reconciliation week events, and an Indigenous forum with government bodies. This provided the opportunity to network and give information about AVP. It is hoped that during 2010 AVP-WA is able to reach a greater number of Aboriginal Australians.

Prison Workshops

AVP-WA has facilitated 25 prison workshops in Western Australia during 2009. This equates to approximately 300 inmates having attended workshops. All workshops have been well received. I would like to thank the inmate facilitators who take on the role *of* promoting the workshops and providing information to potential inmate participants, gathering registrations and facilitating workshops. Without your help workshops would not happen so smoothly.

Acacia Prison

Twelve workshops have been held at Acacia, 7 basic, 3 advanced and 2 Training for facilitators (T4F). Acacia has a group of 10 inmate facilitators and has hosted 2 training days attended by both inmates and outside facilitators. Training days have proven to be highly successful with the inmates setting

the agenda and leading the training. These occasions provide new outmate facilitators with an opportunity to experience the prison and meet inmates prior to facilitating in prison. A general meeting has also been held at Acacia prison during 2009, this initiative began in 2008 and has continued. It affords the opportunity for inmates to be further involved in the business of AVP and to get a sense of the organisation as a whole.

Wooroloo

Six workshops have been held at Wooroloo prison, 3 basic, 2 advanced and 1 T4F. There were 2 facilitators at Wooroloo. Wooroloo inmates are usually not there for long so having a body of inmate facilitators is a challenge. The prison's role as a pre release centre sometimes means that inmates sometimes do their basic at Acacia and follow up with other workshops at Wooroloo.

Karnet

Five workshops were held at Karnet of these 2 basic, 2 advanced and 1 T4F. There is a pool of 8 facilitators at Karnet.

Casuarina

AVP-WA returned to Casuarina in 2008 after being absent from this prison for a number of years. Only 1 basic workshop was offered during 2009.

Broome

Broome prison hosted its first basic workshop during 2009. The workshop was facilitated by 2 WA facilitators and 2 facilitators from the UK. It was well received by the Aboriginal inmates and described as an amazing experience by the facilitators. It is planned that further workshops will be offered during 2010.

Community workshops

Eleven two day workshops have been delivered in the community. A number held in the Midland area, one in Mirrabooka and one for the staff of the Starick women's refuges. One of the community workshops was the first of a series to be continued into 2010 for aboriginal people. Over all 6 basic, 2 advanced and 3 T4F workshops were held in the community. Tasters were held in Broome and in the metropolitan area for ethnic support workers. A 3 hr team building session was held for child care workers from surrounding women's refuges.

School Workshops

Six workshops were presented in schools, mostly hosted by Warnbro Community High School. Many of the school participants were Aboriginal students. Of the 6 workshops 3 were basic, 2 advanced and 1 a T4F.

Facilitators

AVP-WA would not exist if it was not for the facilitators. During 2009 we had 20 inmate facilitators 10 from Acacia, 2 from Wooroloo, and 8 at Karnet. There were 46 facilitators listed as outmate

facilitators with 24 of these being active during the year. The committee thanks all facilitators for their efforts. Their willingness to give time, skills and energy *is* truly appreciated.

New Facilitators

During 2009, 22 people became AVP facilitators, 9 people in the community, 13 inmates from Acacia and 2 from Karnet. Welcome to all new facilitators. We look forward to having your involvement in AVP-WA.

Training

Monthly training opportunities were held. Two of these were offered at Acacia Prison as previously mentioned, and were led by inmates. This makes training available to inmates. The sessions are also attended by outmate facilitators. In the community training topics during 2009 were taken from AVP themes. In pairs, facilitators led different sessions which provided the opportunities for all to try out unfamiliar activities. A weekend away was held at Gilderton this provided the opportunity for those who attended to share good company, skills and participate in peer review. Thank you to Jo for the use of her beach house for this event.

Social Events

One end of the year gathering, was held at Acacia prison when all inmates who have facilitated or participated in workshops are invited to celebrate with visiting community AVP facilitators. A second gathering was held in the community and was attended by community facilitators and their families. These events enable the AVP community to gather, relax and have some fun.

Concluding comments

2009 has been a successful year for AVP-WA. We have seen our goal, to be accessible and relevant to Aboriginal Australians, begin to be realised while continuing to increase the number of prison and community workshops. Finances accrued during the year, will help us continue and further develop our work with low socio economic groups during 2010. AVP-WA has continued to offer opportunities to diverse groups by tailoring workshops to their needs. The organisation has been supported by a committed and stable committee who have worked well together. We have a core group of active facilitators whose efforts are very much appreciated. We would like to encourage others to be more involved, fresh input helps to energise and invigorate an organisation.

With thanks and much gratitude to all involved in AVP-WA.

Shane Bailey

Chairperson

1st March 2010