



## INDIGENOUS FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAMS IN THE APY LANDS

**The Indigenous Family Violence Offender Program is a 54 hour group work program. Referrals primarily come from courts and the parole board; however voluntary referrals are encouraged and accepted.**

The program addresses: Indigenous family violence; recognising and responding to anger build-up and calming down; intergenerational aspects of violence; the law and family violence; recognising and responding appropriately to anger; violence and substance abuse; motivation to change and changing controlling behaviours; abuse of power; dynamics of family violence, racism; jealousy; trust; relationships; fathers and fathering; taking responsibility for own behaviours; resolving conflict without violence and change.



Successful participants upon completion of the program at Ernabella.  
Left - Cultural Broker Pepai Carrol (Community Elder), Program Officer Laurence Pomery (third from left) and Program Officer Philomena Alchin (fourth from left)

The program is delivered in communities by dedicated Program Officers based in Alice Springs with assistance from local community Cultural Brokers.

The participants learn that Family Violence is not acceptable, and it is a crime. Their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are challenged in a non threatening manner. They are taught to take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings and behaviour. As the program is available in the community they reside in, they are then provided with the opportunity to practice strategies learned whilst supported by peer facilitators and the community.

A partner group is available and attendance is voluntary. Partners participate in a full day program in which they learn a portion of the content the offender is learning and are given strategies to address their own anger, conflict resolution skills and good communication. Women are provided with a list of safe places they can go if required.



*Upon group completion at Indulkana. Front left; Program Officer Sharon Forrester, next to her is Cultural Broker Peter Mungkari (Community Elder) also at rear 2nd from left; Clinical Manager Gary Wright, 3rd right at rear Cultural Broker Richard Aitken and far right Program Officer David Marsh.*

The first program was conducted at Amata from 13 June 2007 through to 13 July 2007. Although 6 men commenced the program 4 successfully completed it including 1 volunteer. The second program was held at Amata from 21 April 2008 to 15 May 2008.

This time 7 men commenced the program and 4 completed the program.

The program was conducted at Indulkana from 31 July 2007 through to 23 August 2007. On this occasion 9 men were directed to attend the program and 8 successfully completed. The second program at Indulkana has recently (11 June 2008 – 4 July 2008) completed. Again 9 men commenced the program and 8 completed the program. A photograph is attached.

Another program at Ernabella which commenced on 18 September 2007 – 11 October 2007 was not quite as successful as 11 men (mostly volunteers) commenced the program and only 3 completed. However the next program (10 June 2008 – 3 July 2008) which has completed was much more successful as 9 men were directed to attend the program and 6 successfully completed the program. A photograph is attached. The next Indigenous Family Violence Program commences at Fregon on 21 July 2008.

Cross Border Programs thanks Marla Community Corrections and the NPY Women's Council for their assistance.

Similar programs have been conducted in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The completion rate for men directed to attend the program by Community Corrections is 67%.

Should you require more information visit [www.paccoa.com](http://www.paccoa.com) and read the background paper to the presentation at the 2007 PACCOA Conference held in Adelaide.

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