

Hon Lorna Harper; Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Jackie Jarvis; Hon Sandra Carr; Hon Klara Andric; Hon Sophia Moermond; Hon Dan Caddy

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Motion

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [11.25 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house —

- (a) recognises the role of intervention programs for perpetrators as an important measure to address family and domestic violence in WA; and
- (b) commends the Cook government's record of investment of more than \$300 million since 2017 in family and domestic violence initiatives, including recent investments in intervention programs for perpetrators.

I rise today to again discuss family and domestic violence and the issues it creates not just here in Western Australia but across Australia and the world. We cannot talk about family and domestic violence without first reminding ourselves what it is. It is an ongoing pattern of behaviours intended to coerce, control or create fear within a family or intimate relationship. It includes physical harm or threats of physical harm; financial, emotional and psychological abuse; sexual violence; or any other behaviour that causes the victim to live in fear. It is not just face-to-face; it can be done over the telephone or by email. Any action that causes another person to live in fear is family and domestic violence.

Many adults and children live with perpetrators who use coercive patterns of control, and they may not realise that what they are experiencing is actually family and domestic violence. We cannot ignore the fact that gender inequality is a huge driver of family and domestic violence; that women do not at all times have the power needed in the home to protect themselves and their children; or that men will control decision-making in the house over finances, friendships, who women can talk to, where they can go, how much money they can spend on shopping, and what they can do in life.

We know that in our culture it is not unusual for people to think that this is private business and that because it is occurring within the home and within the marriage, we should just ignore it. But there is a famous quote, "The standard you walk by is the standard you accept." We do not accept that family and domestic violence should happen at all to anyone.

Although family and domestic violence affects victims of all genders and backgrounds, the vast majority are women and their children. One in six women have experienced violence from an intimate partner—one in six! If members have a look around this chamber, they will see that there are more than six women in this chamber, thanks to the last election and the Labor Party. Members are potentially sitting in a room with victims of family and domestic violence. We know we are sitting in a room with victims of family and domestic violence. We know there are women in here who are survivors. One in 16 men are also victims of family and domestic violence and we cannot forget that. But we ultimately cannot forget that, overall, the perpetrators of family and domestic violence are men.

It is really weird to be talking about what we are doing for the perpetrators of family and domestic violence. There is a part of me, as a woman, that thinks, "Ugh. Really?" But then, there is also the part of me that thinks logically and says, "Well, do you know what? If we have a leaking roof, we can put as much money into buying as many buckets as we like to catch that water; or we can invest in trying to fix the leak." We will try to fix the problem. By investing in it, trying to fix the problem and assisting perpetrators of family and domestic violence, we will save potential victims. That is extremely important. We need to remember that on average, every nine days one woman is killed by a current or former partner. We need to remember that domestic and family violence is also a leading cause of homelessness; many perpetrators have been victims of family and domestic violence in their childhood; people with a disability are more likely to experience physical and sexual violence; and, unfortunately, there is a high prevalence of family and domestic violence in our Aboriginal communities.

Part of the McGowan–Cook Labor government's strategies is to introduce *Path to safety: Western Australia's strategy to reduce family and domestic violence 2020–2030*. Part of the guiding principles is that perpetrators are solely responsible for their actions. We live in an era when there is information everywhere. We cannot really go through life and say we did not know. We know, for example, that smoking is bad for us and that it costs an extraordinary amount of money. We then make a conscious decision about whether we smoke. We know that violence against others is wrong. We know that trying to control somebody through fear, intimidation, sexual, physical or emotional violence is wrong. There is no excuse. Perpetrators are responsible for their actions. We also know that every one of us has a role in stopping family and domestic violence.

We need early intervention for men, and one of the new initiatives is encouraging men to help other men. This is really important, especially if the victim of family or domestic violence is a female. Another man talking to another man would come across better than a woman trying to tell a man he has done wrong. It sucks a bit that that is

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what it is, but we have to use the tools we have to get the best results we can. A new joint initiative will be trialled in five locations across Western Australia. The initiative has been partly funded by the commonwealth government and a project has been awarded to Communicare. It is part of the \$3.3 million in funding being provided to the Western Australian government under the Australian government's innovative perpetrator responses initiative. The trial will see men's workers partner with family and domestic violence response teams in Northam, Bunbury, Midland, Joondalup and Fremantle over the next three years to engage male perpetrators. Family and domestic violence response teams will be co-located with police, child protection staff and non-government organisations and family and domestic violence advocates.

Communicare will provide interventions and individual sessions based on a perpetrator's use of violence and patterns of offending, offering tools and strategies to support them to make positive changes in their lives. The trial aims to improve responses to perpetrators, reduce reoffending and improve victim-survivor safety. It is never the victim's fault. The perpetrator always has sole responsibility for their own actions.

I am pleased that there has been a massive \$72.6 million investment to try to help stop family and domestic violence in Western Australia. This investment has been informed by discussions with the Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce, and the significant funding boost will go towards programs to support victim-survivors and to intervene with perpetrators and work towards stopping violence before it starts. The investment will include a \$5 million two-year public education campaign to promote understanding in the wider community and challenge outdated and dangerous views, because until we adjust the lens and bring those who use violence and coercion more clearly into view, until we intervene at the source of the problem, this cycle of family and domestic violence will continue. If we as a society do not call out bad, poor and violent behaviours and let people know that this is not acceptable, again, that is a standard we are accepting, and I do not believe there is a person in this house who would accept that standard. Violence does not solve anything. It is the cause of so much that goes on in our society.

Perpetrating family and domestic violence is a choice made by the perpetrator. Family and domestic violence occurs in all communities and cultures. It occurs to people of all ages. It occurs to people of all socio-economic groups. It does not matter whether someone lives in a mansion on the river or in a one-bedroom unit in any of the smaller suburbs in Perth or Western Australia. It does not matter who someone is or where they come from; we are all potentially victims of family and domestic violence. It occurs to people of all educational levels and professions. We have seen in the news the perfect couple—people we thought everything was going well for—and then it comes out in headlines splashed across the newspapers that they are going to court. It does not matter who someone is or where they come from; you, somebody you know or somebody you love could be a victim of family and domestic violence.

We all know victims of family and domestic violence, but I do not think that we all know perpetrators, because the perpetrators seem to be hidden. I do not know. We know there are victims, so where are the perpetrators? I am sorry, it just occurred to me while I was thinking about it. We talk about people who have been murdered, but we do not shine enough light on the perpetrators. We need to help people. We need to ensure that we stop these cycles. We do not want another woman to be killed in the next nine days. As we have seen in the news, in New South Wales, tragically, a young couple were killed by an ex-partner. We have seen it across the news. We need to stop this. We need to say to perpetrators, "We see you. You cannot hide from us. We will continue to look at you. Whether you use a pen or a fist, a dollar or social media, whatever you use, we are going to come after you, and we are going to make sure that you either change your ways or the full letter of the law will come down on you." Again, perpetrators are solely responsible for the choices they make and their actions.

My thoughts are with all victims of family and domestic violence. We stand with you, and we will always stand with you.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [11.39 am]: I will keep my comments brief because I appreciate that this is private members' business, but it is important that the opposition makes a few remarks about this motion, and I am pleased to be able to do so today. I absolutely agree with Hon Lorna Harper; violence in any form is absolutely unacceptable and family and domestic violence in any form is absolutely unacceptable. We as the opposition, and I as a member of this place, will absolutely support measures that aim to prevent family and domestic violence from happening in the first place. We will absolutely support interventions program and effective safety initiatives that support victim-survivors, who are mainly women—but not in all cases, as Hon Lorna Harper said—and children. I will come to children in a moment.

The motion specifically refers to intervention programs for perpetrators as an important measure to address family and domestic violence. Behaviour change programs, if we can call them that, are obviously central to that. As Hon Lorna Harper said, there have been a couple of recent announcements at both the state and commonwealth level about around men's behaviour change programs. The commonwealth is funding a trial that is being undertaken in five locations—Bunbury, Joondalup, Fremantle, Northam and Midland, which, of course, is in my and Hon Lorna Harper's electorate. There is also a \$3.1 million program based in regional WA, focusing on Albany, Bunbury and Northam. I understand that it is somewhat similar to the trials that are underway and will provide assistance and

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counselling services to men who use controlling and abusive behaviour in family relationships. As I understand, those locations were determined after service gaps were identified and to complement existing services offered to victim-survivors. I, like others, will obviously follow the trial that is underway with a great deal of interest. It is my strong hope—I am sure it is the same for everyone—that the results of that trial will lead to a reduction in reoffending and improved safety and, if it works, an expansion to other parts of the state.

In discussing this issue more generally, it is important in debates like this to recognise and thank the absolute dedication and commitment of mainly non-government organisations and individuals who work in this space each and every day supporting victim-survivors. They also support victim-survivor families and work in areas of early intervention. In my electorate, Orana House, Starick and a range of other organisations are doing absolutely amazing work. I am fond of and close to Starting Over Support. It is committed to supporting women and their families when they leave a refuge and effectively start over. The reality for many victim-survivors is that they leave with nothing; they leave their relationship and home with nothing. It can be incredibly hard when they leave a refuge or crisis accommodation and move into a new home. Starting Over Support, an initiative of People Who Care, effectively provides the contents of a home for its clients, ranging from all the furniture to the cutlery, crockery and cooking and cleaning utensils—everything they need to start over. These organisations do wonderful things each and every day and we do not recognise them enough.

I want to reference paragraph (b) of the motion more generally with regard to the issue of family and domestic violence and how it relates to children. Having visited organisations working in this space, it has become clear that there are very good supports for children. But the opportunity to do more to support the specific needs of children who have experienced family and domestic violence has been raised with me. At times, the impact of family and domestic violence on children is seen through the lens of the parents and caregivers—the mum or dad and the perpetrator. We absolutely need to look at the family as a whole, but it is also important to address the fact that children have specific needs. That has been raised with me. I refer to a paper titled *Stepping up for kids* released by the Australian Child and Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief Network, and the Australian National University. This report highlights the fact that sometimes the devastating impact of family and domestic violence on children can be minimised, not necessarily purposefully. As the report discusses, a number of myths sit around the space of children and young people. I will read the myths because we have all heard them. The report states —

Myth 1: Children who are not physically hurt themselves are not affected by family violence.

...

Myth 2: Children and infants are ‘too young’ to remember incidents of violence, and are therefore not affected by it.

...

Myth 3: Children and infants who have not ‘seen’ family violence, e.g. witnessed their mother being hit, are not affected by it.

...

Myth 4: All members of the family will be affected in the same way.

...

Myth 5: Children are passive victims of family violence.

The fact is that such violence can have a profound impact on a child’s life in terms of not only physical and emotional harm, but also their broader health and wellbeing and their educational and developmental outcomes, let alone the broader impact of financial and housing instability and insecurity and other negative outcomes. I encourage the government to look into this space. I do not raise it to be critical; I have taken the opportunity to do so on an important motion such as this. It is simply a reflection on some conversations I have had with people working in this space and I raise it as a genuine opportunity for us to look at this issue, because it relates to the areas of prevention, intervention and response. As the report states —

Myth 3: Children and infants who have not ‘seen’ family violence, e.g. witnessed their mother being hit, are not affected by it.

...

Noise travels, and children hear.

We have talked about perpetrators and behaviour change programs, and will probably hear more in speeches from other members, but at the end of the day, no-one should be invisible when it comes to tackling family and domestic violence. Thanks for the opportunity to say a few words today.

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HON JACKIE JARVIS (South West — Minister for Agriculture and Food) [11.47 am]: I rise to voice my support for this excellent motion brought forward by Hon Lorna Harper that we recognise that violence in any form is unacceptable and that family and domestic violence is the most insidious, occurring in places where women and children should feel safe. I want to thank Hon Donna Faragher for her excellent contribution, expressing her support for the measures that have been put in place and for taking the opportunity to recognise service providers, of which there are many that operate in this space on both a voluntary and paid basis. I acknowledge Hon Donna Faragher as a passionate advocate for the protection of children and early childhood education. I look forward to reading that paper, *Stepping up for kids*. I thank the member for bringing it to our attention.

We have an excellent minister in Hon Sabine Winton and for the first time ever, we now have a minister dedicated to the prevention of domestic violence. I think it is important, as Hon Donna Faragher mentioned, that we look at all those aspects. Obviously, Sabine Winton is not only the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence but also the Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Community Services. I know that these matters are front of mind for her at all times.

As we heard from my colleague Hon Lorna Harper, more than \$300 million has been dedicated to this space. I think it has gone up significantly. I note the media statement on 29 November announcing the Cook government's additional \$72.6 million investment. It says that the funding builds on the state government's additional investment of more than \$300 million since 2017. This funding is for a number of measures.

I might go back in time a little to August last year. Members in this place will certainly remember that there was a bit of a turning point in August—it was reported in *The West Australian* on the last day of August—when we saw a shocking spate of fatal attacks in this space. It is uncomfortable that sometimes it takes these very tragic circumstances to really bring the community together in calling for change. As we know, back in August a two-hour summit organised by the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing brought together the community and police.

I want to read a quote from the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Sabine Winton. She described the lived experience accounts she heard as powerful and a privilege to hear. She said that the recent deaths of women to family and domestic violence were horrific, absolutely tragic and unacceptable and that they needed to stop. As she said at the time, one act of domestic violence is too many. The Leader of the House, in her capacity as Minister for Women's Interests, was also involved in the summit. She described what she heard in those firsthand accounts as harrowing but important. I thank both Minister Ellery and Minister Winton for stepping up to that initiative.

That summit, of course, then led to the announcement of a special taskforce only a couple of weeks later, on 12 September. It was a key ask of the sector that came from the crisis meetings. The taskforce that was pulled together in September provided advice on the development of the \$72 million package that we announced in November. Although a lot of these programs will run over a number of years, I congratulate Minister Winton for pulling together these packages very quickly.

I want to highlight one member of the taskforce. Damian Green heads Stopping Family Violence, which is the peak organisation for groups that deliver men's perpetrator programs across Western Australia. The Department of Communities provides core funding to Stopping Family Violence, with funding to the tune of \$400 000 provided last year. It supports a professional network of providers that specialise in men's behavioural change programs. The organisations that deliver these programs include Anglicare, which runs a number of perpetrator programs in the justice system; Centacare; Communicare, which runs the Breathing Space program; Relationships Australia; and Stronger Families. All these organisations work cooperatively with the Department of Justice. Stopping Family Violence also supports the development of a perpetrator response framework. This is one of the key asks that came out of that really important summit last August. Again, we have really stepped up in making sure that we provide support. As Hon Donna Faragher said, there is always more to do. Government is working closely with the community, and a whole-of-community response is needed.

We know that by the time family and domestic violence offenders get to prison, those behaviours are already entrenched and it is much harder for them to change. I really want to congratulate the minister, who has brought forward early intervention programs after feedback from the taskforce. There is \$3.1 million to establish three new men's behavioural change programs in Northam, Albany and Bunbury. As Hon Donna Faragher said, we look forward to seeing the results of those pilot programs.

As Hon Lorna Harper mentioned, as part of the \$3.3 million in funding, we have family and domestic violence response teams located in police stations. They include police officers and workers from the Department of Communities and the community service sector. As Hon Lorna Harper also mentioned, additional funding was provided for new men's workers to be rolled out in Bunbury, Northam, Midland, Joondalup and Fremantle. Offenders will be assessed on their future risk of violent offending and offered case management and intervention.

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We have certainly come a long way from a policeman knocking on the door, saying, “Keep it down in there”, and then leaving the family to its own devices. The whole community is coming together to work out what to do to assist the most vulnerable in our communities.

I know that a number of members want to speak, so I will end by saying that the Cook government is committed to working with those with lived experience of family and domestic violence. We are committed to early intervention and education programs, and to working with the community to do what we can to keep women and children safe.

HON SANDRA CARR (Agricultural) [11.55 am]: I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by my colleague and friend Hon Lorna Harper. I am very pleased that she brought this motion forward for us to consider today, given that International Women’s Day, on 8 March, will have come and gone before we sit again. That is why I am wearing purple today; I do not usually dress in disco purple, but I wanted to have the opportunity to mention International Women’s Day and encourage people to support that day. We are very fortunate to have a number of really exciting things happening in Geraldton on International Women’s Day. One such event is being organised by a young woman by the name of Jodi Reilly—I say “young”, but she is my age; it probably depends on one’s perspective of what young is, but to me she is young and vibrant. Jodi is a life coach in Geraldton and is organising a sunrise swim, meditation and coffee catch-up for women. Lots of other great things will be happening in Geraldton, including the women in business breakfast. Angela Teale, head of engineering operations for SKA-Low in the Murchison region, will be the speaker at the breakfast. She is a fascinating woman.

The Mid West Development Commission will also hold a masterclass with Professor Petra Tschakert—please excuse my terrible pronunciation of her name! Professor Tschakert is a geographer and sociologist, and she will be talking to people about global energy futures and transitions. Desert Blue Connect, a fantastic organisation that is working in the FDV space, will also hold a quiz night. I will talk a little bit about that organisation later. I have mentioned all of this so that we can see that a really strong, cohesive group of women are working together in really important and significant roles in our community. However, the need for things like International Women’s Day and the role of women in the community is sometimes questioned. People sometimes argue with me that the role and status of women has been elevated, but there is still so much to be done, and I am pleased that our government is doing some of the work.

When I was a young woman in the late 1990s, there was a song in the charts called *Smack My Bitch Up*. It was accompanied by a music video that depicted drunken and drug-fuelled sexual violence and violence in the community. I have spoken before about the term “toxic masculinity” and that I feel very uncomfortable with that term. When I was a schoolteacher teaching both boys and girls, I found that the boys felt defensive when they heard that term. They felt like they were being accused of being toxic because of the very nature of their gender. I always thought that the term should be “toxic socialisation”, because when videos like that get made and groups like that put out songs, we are all responsible. People should have been called out for buying the album and listening to the song. I remember people around me listening to that music and laughing about it. They did not really appreciate the gravity of the behaviour that it was endorsing in our society. I argue that we need to look at toxic socialisation, because violence in our community, particularly family and domestic violence, is a whole community responsibility. Everyone should be in the chamber to listen to this debate. I know that there is urgent parliamentary business to attend to, but this is a crisis in our community. It does not seem that people are giving it enough attention or even necessarily realising some of the impacts of their own social behaviour and comments.

I am pleased to note the Cook government’s *Path to safety: Western Australia’s strategy to reduce family and domestic violence 2020–2030*. It is really important work. The government has put in some excellent cash and programs to address perpetrator behaviour, in particular. I am really pleased about the focus on perpetrators as that recognises that perpetrators are solely responsible for their actions and that we cannot victim blame. Men and boys are integral to the solution—the way they talk to and socialise with each other, and the way we socialise with and have the confidence to say things to them. The federal *National plan to end violence against women and children 2022–2023* recognises —

Nearly one in 3 Australians agree that women who do not leave a relationship in which violence is occurring hold some responsibility for the abuse continuing ...

We have a problem. We have a crisis in our community when that is the attitude that people hold. Where are the people who ask why he does not stop? Where are the people who do not turn away when they hear concerning sounds coming from their neighbour’s house? Where are those people? Where are the people who are having quiet conversations with colleagues when they say inappropriate things? I say again, addressing family and domestic violence is the whole community’s responsibility. Every time you ignore it, or you do not address it, or you let a comment go, you are part of the problem, whether you want to acknowledge it or not.

I am sure members have heard of Chanel Contos. She wrote a book called *Consent Laid Bare: Sex, Entitlement & the Distortion of Desire*. She posted a question online asking people about sexual assault during their school years.

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The post went viral, and about 7 000 people responded describing incidents or experiences that constituted rape. One of the outcomes of that was this book. The book is very popular and has been a big hit amongst women. Please tell me how women, and educating women, will stop people being raped and stop them experiencing family and domestic violence? It is the education of our males that is important. Ms Contos was instrumental in establishing the Teach Us Consent campaign. That consent education has now been agreed to by all federal ministers and incorporated into curriculums. We can see all that is happening. That is fantastic work by Chanel Contos and all those people who participated in the campaign. It is outstanding work. The campaign incorporates comprehensive consent education, including things like gendered stereotypes and understanding coercion and power imbalances. This is integral to changing behaviours, and it is really great that it is coming into our education system.

One issue that really concerns me is what I call the missing middle. There is a group of people who have not been subjected to this education. This group of people is probably the same age as the women who are really embracing the consent laid bare education. These people, particularly male perpetrators, will probably find themselves in trouble as women become better educated and more confident about identifying, reporting and seeking prosecution for what they now know, without any shadow of a doubt, are illegal behaviours that are being committed against them. That group of men is in trouble. It is our responsibility through the way that we socialise them to make sure that they are aware. If we do not, we will find our brothers, our sons, our footy clubmates and our uncles having charges brought against them for things that we failed to educate them about properly. It is a really important consideration.

I refer to the WA Centre for Rural Health in Geraldton survey, funded by a Healthway grant, and published in 2021, *Conversations for change—Local community attitudes and exposure to violence survey (LCAEVS): Report on baseline (2019) survey*. The survey discovered that young people aged 15 to 24 years—remember, this was in 2021, so I am talking about that missing middle—subscribe to myths such as violence is caused by things like alcohol and are less likely to identify abusive behaviours. There is a missing middle. There is a group of people we need to be very careful to make sure that we are educating. I was very excited and pleased to hear the federal Minister for Education, Hon Jason Clare, talk about a national student ombudsman for university campuses. A lot of women across a range of states have been working to make sure that we look at the fact that one in six university students has been sexually harassed, and one in 20 has experienced sexual assault while at university. It is all great work, and it is really great that there will be a national ombudsman.

The thing that concerns me a little bit about that is that it is not enough. It is not enough to say, “Oh, you know, we’ll address these things when they’ve been reported”. Why not put it at the beginning? Part of enrolling and undertaking a degree at university should include a program that says what rape, coercion, assault, disrespect and microaggression look like. If we educate people, they will go out into the workforce empowered, responsible for their actions and far less likely to cause these kinds of assaults. Why does that matter? It is because on the Counting Dead Women Australia Facebook page, which counts the number of women murdered by domestic violence each year in conjunction with a group called Destroy the Joint, so far this year the number of women who have been murdered is 10. It is not even the end of February. When I say we have a crisis, I am not joking. We have a serious problem of violence against women in family and domestic violence circumstances in this country. I am pleased that our government is working to address it, including by introducing the strangulation laws in the Family Violence Legislation Reform Bill that recognise that a person who uses strangulation against their partner is seven times more likely to murder their partner. Some good work is happening on the laws to monitor the perpetrators of violence. This work is very important, and we cannot underestimate it.

HON KLARA ANDRIC (South Metropolitan) [12.05 pm]: I, too, rise to make a contribution to this motion today. I begin by thanking Hon Lorna Harper for bringing the motion to the house this afternoon. As the minister who responded on behalf of the government mentioned earlier, family and domestic violence is an insidious blight on our society. It can be described as an ongoing pattern of behaviours that are essentially intended to coerce, control and create fear within a family or in an intimate partner or another type of relationship. The forms of domestic violence are quite complex. However, the many forms they come in include emotional or psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, social isolation, spiritual abuse and technology-facilitated abuse. Often it encompasses all of those. However, it is not always as obvious to outsiders as one might think. Although it encompasses all of those forms of abuse, that does not mean it is limited to only those forms of violence.

Essentially, domestic violence is a form of power control by the fear that it causes its victims. Even if a victim can cover the bruises on the outside, the pain and anguish on the inside never goes away. Abuse is not limited to physical assaults; it comes in various forms, shapes and sizes, with varying degrees of severity. Often victims are unable to talk about it because they are paralysed and feel ashamed. They feel ashamed because they are a victim of the abuse. They are also confused about what to do and many times cover-up for what they essentially know is not right. We know that domestic violence does not discriminate. As Hon Lorna Harper outlined earlier in her speech, many times it is hidden behind closed doors and, because of that, it does not discriminate. A person’s background, ethnicity, job, education or even the suburb they live in does not matter with regard to who either the offender or the victim of the domestic violence is.

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I truly believe that it is incumbent on each of us, but especially those of us in Parliament, to work towards putting a stop to domestic violence. I commend the Cook Labor government for its ongoing investment in and policies toward the intervention and prevention of family and domestic violence. The prevention of family and domestic violence has always been a focus of the WA Labor government. I commend the government for its significant legal reforms that include the automatic recognition of violence restraining orders from other states and a new standalone offence for non-fatal strangulation, which is part of the package of family violence legal reforms. Laws against nonlethal strangulation and suffocation recognise that such an attack is one of the strongest indicators of an increased risk of a homicide occurring. Someone putting their hands around another person's neck is the ultimate act of power in family violence. Commissioner for Victims of Crime, Kati Kraszlan, said that it can, in fact, kill.

The new laws will enable people with multiple family and domestic violence offences to be declared serial family violence offenders and enact tenancy reforms to support victim-survivors.

Before the election of this government in 2017, there was no portfolio for the prevention of family and domestic violence, as the minister mentioned. As we know, the portfolio was first introduced in 2017 when the McGowan Labor government announced its state cabinet in March that year, with Minister Simone McGurk taking responsibility for this incredibly important portfolio. In July 2020, the McGowan state government announced the 10-year strategy to reduce family and domestic violence, and under Labor family and domestic violence was finally taken seriously. The Cook Labor government has diligently continued with that vision that has been ongoing since the election of Labor in 2017.

Escaping domestic violence is not simple because victims cannot simply remove themselves from the situation. In many cases they frequently face a lot of malicious repercussions from the perpetrator they are trying to escape from, and certainly that is often the case with many constituents I have met with over the course of my short time as the member for South Metropolitan Region. The government recognises this and has announced several new intervention initiatives to help victims remove themselves from those situations as quickly and safely as possible.

In October 2023, we made major and really important announcements that legislation would be introduced to make GPS tracking mandatory for offenders under any community supervision order imposed at bail, sentencing, parole and post-sentencing. Those who choose to remove a GPS tracker will face a mandatory minimum imprisonment of six months. I welcome the announcement. It will give many of the victims, including many I have worked with closely in my electorate, further assurances, and it will assist them to feel that little bit safer. It means that any family and domestic violence offender who initially breaches their restraining order will face further retribution if they offend again.

Following the announcement, we had 14 new specialist family and domestic violence officers introduced to the frontline response team across our state. As we all know, those frontline workers on the ground do the most important work in supporting victims of family and domestic violence. Those officers are part of the Cook government's \$10.7 million commitment to bolstering frontline response to victims in WA. The Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce builds on the government's commitment to address family and domestic violence matters.

In November 2023, a further \$72.6 million was announced to fund crisis beds, one of the primary and essential services we need for prevention, intervention and recovery initiatives. As mentioned by the minister, it builds on the government's investment into family and domestic violence prevention of now more than \$300 million since 2017. Among some of the initiatives to receive further funding from the new investment, with a further \$3.1 million, is our Safe at Home program. The Safe at Home program is operated by centres like the Lucy Saw Centre. It assists women and children who are victims of domestic violence to stay in their own home when it is safe to do so. I have worked very closely with the Lucy Saw Centre and Andrea Mia centre in the South Metropolitan Region, and I look forward to continuing my work with them. On a closing note, I am very pleased to be part of a government that takes domestic violence seriously and strives toward prevention and support for all victims in our state.

HON SOPHIA MOERMOND (South West) [12.15 pm]: Thank you to Hon Lorna Harper for bringing forward this excellent motion and repeatedly speaking out for women in this chamber. One of the comments made by Hon Lorna Harper was about how perpetrators remain invisible in our society. The media contributes to this greatly. We see statements like: "Woman raped in Kings Park", versus, "Man raped woman, again in Kings Park". That happens all the time. Even when we talk about groups of perpetrators, as seen in paedophilia rings recently, the headline will read, "A group of people were arrested". When we look at the sex of that group of people, it is men. When a woman gets arrested for a crime, it is often clearly mentioned in the headline that a woman was the perpetrator. It is interesting to see how the media is complicit in making perpetrators invisible.

The other factor that I have spoken about quite a lot in this chamber is porn, which contributes to the ongoing violence against women and children. The early exposure of boys to porn, which sits at about eight to nine years of age—girls are now being affected by that, too—creates a range of unhealthy sexual behaviours. That is when choking comes in, as mentioned by the honourable member. Consent is confused—when we look at consent in

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porn, often a woman might say, “No, no, no”, but the man will continue. That means that saying “No” was simply irrelevant. Porn actresses get paid to make themselves look desirable and make it look like they are enjoying what is happening to them; therefore, it becomes more difficult for boys to see and read pain in women’s faces. This is an interesting factor that is often overlooked.

Porn has also been implicated in child-sex abuse and grooming brains into enjoying paedophilia. The porn industry understands that certain types of sexual violence keep people engaged—by people I mean it is still mostly men who watch porn. They have different categories for different brains. Every time a person watches porn and orgasms, they get a massive dopamine hit. That rewires people’s brains. To maintain getting those dopamine hits, viewers need material that is more and more extreme. We see that women in porn are starting to look younger and younger, and the acts committed against them become more extreme as well. It grooms both boys and girls into thinking that that is normal sexual behaviour.

The pornification of our society is obvious in our advertising, and we see this in outfits available for little girls. Just recently I saw an item I was particularly horrified by. It was taken off a company website called Shein. It had advertised fishnet stockings for baby girls, with little ribbons at the top. It was removed. Child sex dolls keep popping up on different websites as well, but they are slowly being removed. Imagine the horror of a mother finding her daughter’s face on one of those dolls, and that has happened several times. Increasingly, we are seeing more violent depictions and sexual objectification of women on clothing. Recently, a bunch of babies’ onesies were removed from a website, and I am not allowed to say these words in this chamber, but, basically, on romper suits, it reads “I have sex on the first date” and other sayings like that. I find that horrifying. In reducing male violence against women, pornography definitely needs to be addressed as well, and I would like to see more done about that.

HON DAN CADDY (North Metropolitan) [12.20 pm]: I do not have much time to speak on this motion, but I want to tell a personal story today. I have spent a lot of time with a young man who is dealing with the aftermath of family and domestic violence. I am fortunate because I can say, hand on heart, in the 17 years I lived at home, I did not witness once my father even raise his voice to my mother, so just to speak to this young man was a learning experience for me, and I think it is an important element to tease out. As a child and then a young adult, much of the behaviour modelling is a conscious decision and much of it is subconscious. How does this happen? Not every child is fortunate enough to have lived my experience, but every young man has the opportunity to self-reflect, reflect on the senior males in their life and, despite what is filtered into them subconsciously, make a decision for that not to be who they become.

This young man who I have been speaking to is one such a young man. I know him well. He is not a relative of mine, but he is someone who, at the age of 18, opened up to me about his experiences and his upbringing, and he has used me as a sounding board for his desire to be the best man that he can be. He watched his father’s abusive behaviour towards his mother for years, and it was only really as he became a young man himself that he realised just how insidious it was. This is critical, and I think it goes to one of the myths about family and domestic violence that Hon Donna Faragher spoke about. He did not realise it was that for a long time because his father never hit his mother, but he stood over her, he raised his fist, he certainly threatened to hit her, and he denigrated her through actions and language, but because he never hit her, it took this young man a long time to realise that this was not just a normal adult relationship. This is without the coercive financial control and other controlling behaviours also in the background that as a child one does not necessarily see or pick up on.

Why did he seek out another man similar to his father’s age to speak to? It was because he was driven by the desire to never become the man that his father is. On the one hand, it is incredibly sad that he feels so incredibly let down by the one man in his life who he should be looking up to, well into adulthood, and should be modelling his life on. But on the other hand, I admire him. I admire his strength, and I am in awe of the presence of mind shown by this young man to recognise that at his young age this is an issue and to actively take steps to ensure that this cycle will not repeat itself. I see no evidence of it in him or in him being like this, but he is petrified because of what he has experienced. To use his words, “I don’t ever want to be the monster that my father is.” Therefore, I want to take this opportunity today, without naming him but he knows who he is, to say: good on you. I am proud to know you. I am glad that you reached out, and I will be there to talk this through with you for as long as needed.

I also wanted to talk a little about financial coercive control, but I may put that into a member’s statement or speak to that at some stage later.

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [12.24 pm] — in reply: I rise very briefly to say I do not know whether people have seen the newspapers today, but I give our condolences to the family of the victim of domestic violence from Kununurra who has spent months in hospital and who died today. It is just another reminder that we need to be there, we need to call it out and we need to be aware of it. As Hon Sophia Moermond said, and she is right, a woman was not raped. A man raped her. We need to make sure that we use the right language and that we call it out and not walk past what is happening. Thank you.

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Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.