



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**29 April 2009**

### **Conference focus on men's issues**

Developing better ways to work with men and family violence, health and early intervention in relationships will be the focus of a conference at Monash University's Churchill campus on Friday 1 May.

The *What Works in Men's Work* conference will be attended by providers of family violence and men's services, Victoria Police representatives and welfare professionals.

Eric de Bruyn, Family Community Development Facilitator at Gippsland Early Intervention Services and one of the conference organisers, said it was important that all those working in the family violence and men's services fields in Gippsland had an opportunity to explore and be presented with the range of services and programs available and what they were doing.

"We need to work together as effectively as possible to facilitate referrals that will lead to positive outcomes for men, their families and the community."

"Family violence causes confusion and anxiety and can lead to a range of reactions such as depression, medical disorders and drug and alcohol abuse. Family violence also leaves children confused, angry, sad and frightened," Mr de Bruyn said.

Early intervention services aim to work with people before relationship issues develop or become too serious.

"By sharing our experience, we will gain insights into the different ways we can work with men and continue to improve the integration of services and referral systems."

Australian cricket selector and former fast bowler, Merv Hughes, will be the key guest speaker at the conference. Other speakers will include:

- Maxine Morand, the State Lead Minister on Family Violence reform
- Rob Koch, Principal Consultant of *BETTER MEN Australia*
- Carol Aberly, Groups facilitator with Anglicare Victoria
- Sgt Craig Millar, Family Violence Adviser for the Gippsland Region, Victoria Police
- Hughie Pepper, Facilitator of Young Aboriginal Men's SHED with Latrobe Community Health Service.
- Ed Shackell, Family Dispute Resolution Practice Leader with RAV.

The conference is sponsored and supported by Relationships Australia (Victoria)'s Traralgon Centre, Latrobe Community Health Service, Gippsland Lakes Community Health Service, Monash University, Family Mediation Centre, Anglicare Victoria, Quantum Support Services, Salvation Army – Gippscare, Gippsland Women's Health Service, Victoria Police, and Timeout Service as part of Yoowinna Wuralung Healing Service (Gippsland Lakes Community Health Service).

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