

Professional training

RAV has an established reputation for quality professional training and development in FDR and couple therapy.

Training Ground, our Registered Training Organisation (RTO), provides accredited training in FDR and relationship management skills for clinicians and other professionals who work in human services. It also provides clinical supervision and consultancy services.

Training Ground offers the Vocational Graduate Diploma in Family Dispute Resolution, a requirement for Australia's FDR workers. As a registered Mediator Accreditation Body, it welcomes applications from suitably-trained mediators to register under the national accreditation scheme.

Our Specialist Course in Couple Therapy has strong links with the University of Melbourne and is an accredited component of the Master of Social Work (entry-to-practise) and Master of Advanced Social Work (research).

Research

Research is an important aspect of RAV's work, enabling us to explore relationship-based issues in depth in collaboration with universities and other bodies.

We undertake studies on topics such as the effectiveness of couple counselling, family violence and same-sex parenting. The findings from these and other studies are used to highlight gaps in our services and identify areas for practice improvement.

Our history

RAV has its roots in the marriage guidance movement which was developed in Melbourne in 1948.

Victoria was one of three states to establish a marriage guidance council, the others being New South Wales and South Australia.

The move was driven by deep concern at the impact of the Second World War on marriages and the potential threat that marriage breakdown would have on Australia's ability to rebuild a stable society.

The early organisers were community-spirited people, clergy, doctors and professionals and 'some persons of high social rank' in the philanthropic and charitable areas.

Activities were based in the homes of the organisation's members during the early years. In 1964, the Council bought our first home at 46 Princess Street, Kew, which remains RAV's largest centre.

The late 1970s and early eighties saw increasing professionalisation of services, resulting in the recruitment of paid professional staff and the phasing out of trained volunteer counsellors.

Growth continued in the eighties and nineties through successful securing of government funding for new programs including family dispute resolution services, specialist family violence services and counselling services for problem gambling.

It was also during this period that the name was changed from Marriage Guidance Council to Relationships Australia, reflecting social shifts which brought more fluid arrangements into couple and family life.

More recently, family law reform in 2005 led to a significant increase in RAV's services through our involvement in Family Relationship Centres (FRCs). We are now involved in operating eight FRCs – four as the lead agency and four as consortium members.

We celebrated our 60th anniversary in November 2008. This important milestone gave us an opportunity to reflect on how we have successfully evolved from "marriage guidance" by adapting to changes in society and being able to meet the differing and often complex needs of our clients and the community.

Community development

RAV has an extensive engagement program with communities served by our centres, often in partnership with local community groups, other service providers and agencies.

Community building activities include pamper days for women in regional and remote areas, art-focused therapy programs, and family-focused programs such as fishing days and adventure camps where dads get the opportunity to share quality time with their children.

We also sponsor and take part in conferences, forums and seminars, and events such as the annual Harmony Day celebrations, White Ribbon Day and Bruthas Day Out, an initiative developed in partnership with the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place.

Our people

RAV employs a dedicated team of highly skilled and qualified professionals with expertise in counselling, family dispute resolution, family law, community development, skills development and training.

Our frontline staff are supported by corporate services in a range of areas including human resources, communications and marketing, information technology and financial administration.

Together, we focus on ensuring our clients' needs are at the forefront of everything we do.

More information

To make general enquiries, call 1300 364 277 for the cost of a local call or visit our website: www.relationshipsvictoria.com.au

For appointments, check our website for details of your nearest centre.

Funded by the Australian Government.

Images for illustration purposes only.

An introduction to Relationships Australia Victoria

Relationships Australia
VICTORIA



www.relationshipsvictoria.com.au

Helping Victorians achieve positive and respectful relationships

Who we are

Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) is a leading provider of relationship support services whose aim is to help Victorians achieve positive and respectful relationships.

A community-based not-for-profit organisation, we have no religious affiliations and aim to help all members of the community, regardless of their religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle choice, cultural background or economic circumstances.

Structurally, RAV is part of a national federation of eight state and territory Relationships Australia organisations, which while being independent of each other, share common objectives.

We respect the rights of all people in all their diversity to live life fully within their families and communities with dignity and safety, and to enjoy healthy relationships.

The bulk of our funding is from the Australian Government, with additional funding received from state and local government grants and client fees. Many services are provided free or at a modest charge, depending on the client's ability to pay.

We provide services from 12 centres in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. The corporate support team is based in Camberwell.

Our focus

Along with our state and territory counterparts, RAV's focus is on achieving positive outcomes for children and young people, couples and families, individuals and communities.

Our work includes:

- providing direct services, both to prevent difficulties and support people in changing their lives
- working with communities to build their capacity
- contributing to a society which is inclusive, responsive and supports people.

Our values

RAV believes in the core values of:

- respect
- integrity
- transparency
- responsibility
- high quality
- enrichment and celebration.

Our services

RAV offers a diverse range of services.

Counselling

Our specialised counselling covers relationships in all their aspects, for example thinking about how to nurture and improve an existing relationship, or reflecting on what's not working well. It includes:

- family counselling
- men's and women's counselling
- pre-marriage program
- relationship counselling
- telephone counselling.

Family dispute resolution

Family dispute resolution (FDR) services assist parents reach agreements that are in the best interests of their children and encourage separating couples to parent cooperatively. Parenting plans or agreements are used to assist in this process.

Family violence prevention

We provide sensitive, supportive and professional family violence services, including counselling and dispute resolution services, group programs and referral options to support people who have experienced violence and abuse.

We also offer group programs and courses to assist people who commit violence in the family to take responsibility for their violent and abusive behaviour and to encourage respectful ways of relating.

Relationship skills

RAV runs a variety of relationship education courses in small groups. The courses connect participants with others who may be facing similar issues and challenges. This can help people to feel less alone in their concerns and problems, as they learn new skills to help improve their own situation.

Gamblers Help

Our Ballarat Centre runs a Gamblers Help for communities in the Grampians Region. An integral part of the program is a free counselling service for those who have been affected by out-of-control gambling behaviour.

Post separation parenting

In addition to FDR, we help separating couples through ordinary counselling sessions. Counsellors can support parents to work through the best arrangements for their children and address any emotional conflicts, separate from the more technical aspects of FDR.

We also offer group work and post separation parenting courses at which individual mums and dads come together with others in similar situations to share their experiences and learn new skills.

Men and family relationships

Our services for men include counselling, groups, family dispute resolution, assistance on relationship and parenting matters, and education courses on relationship issues and personal growth.

Family Relationship Centres

RAV is a lead agency in four Family Relationship Centres established by the Australian Government as part of family law reform. The centres aim to enable separating families to achieve workable parenting arrangements outside the Court system.

Many services are provided free or offered on a sliding scale, according to clients' level of income.

The centres work collaboratively with, and provide referrals to, a variety of other services, matching the needs of the family or individuals.

Workplace services

Our AccessResolve program offers a set of professional services designed to maintain and improve the healthy functioning and productivity of workplaces.

Our programs aim to make a difference by helping to reduce the costs of conflict and stress and to improve productivity, staff retention, team functioning and effective leadership.

