

PIPA Forum # 3

University of Tasmania, Monday 23 April 2018

Introduction

Before we begin I want to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present – including those who might be here tonight.

It's fantastic to see such a wonderful audience here for this evening's forum. This includes a number of Government Ministers and I want to acknowledge the presence of the Tasmanian Attorney-General, Elise Archer, and Minister Jacquie Petrusma in the audience tonight.

I also want to thank and acknowledge the University of Tasmania for kindly hosting this event tonight. Through their generosity, and through their formal partnership in the project, they have shown their commitment to this important issue.

Just as importantly, I'd like to thank Heather Nancarrow for being here. Heather is the CEO of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, or ANROWS. ANROWS has funded the PIPA Project through the Perpetrator Intervention Research stream and, without their generosity and support of this issue, we obviously would not be here tonight.

Tonight is an opportunity for questions as much as answers. This discussion is about raising awareness of an issue which is largely invisible in the Tasmanian context, and to which most jurisdictions have failed to develop a considered or effective response. It's also about highlighting how a lack of a considered response can leave some families in desperate isolation for many years.

We're not going to hear lengthy speeches tonight – we're going to hear a brief summary of findings from the PIPA Project from its initiator, Elena Campbell, and then explore the issue further through a series of questions to our panel members.

We're very fortunate, of course, to have speakers with a diverse range of experience and perspectives on this issue. We have:

- Selina Spowart, a parent who experienced years of very serious violence from her oldest child in an incredibly complex context of disability. She is an advocate for reform and is courageously sharing her story with us tonight.
- Former Chief Magistrate of Tasmania, Michael Hill
- Sergeant Leah Adams from the Early Intervention Youth Action Unit of Tasmania Police;
- Dr Kiki Mussared, from the Family Advocacy and Support Service at Legal Aid Tasmania;
- Craig Mackie, legal practitioner and child advocate from Dobson, Mitchell and Allport;
- Dr Helen Cockburn from the Law Faculty here and a formal partner in the PIPA Project.

Thank you all very much in advance for your contributions tonight.

This is the third in a series of public forums we have been holding on the PIPA Project – a multijurisdictional, ANROWS project across Victoria, WA and Tasmania. Our first forum was in Victoria in April, almost a year ago to the date – kicking off the project and setting the scene for the project’s beginnings and we were equally fortunate in our panel that night as well. The next forum was in Perth in October where we explored some of the unique features of the WA context, as well as building on the fundamental themes of the project.

Since that time the research process has been progressing and before we move to the discussion about the context in Tasmania, I’d like to invite Elena Campbell, to explain a bit about how the PIPA Project came about, what it involves, and what sort of issues are emerging from the research.