INDIGENOUS WOMEN SURVIVING THE IMPACT OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Presenter: Valerie Alberts -James Cook University

"I'd have my clothes ripped off me- -he threw me down the stairs"…

"I drink more now …I always feel frightened"

"He would make me go out and steal money for drugs"..

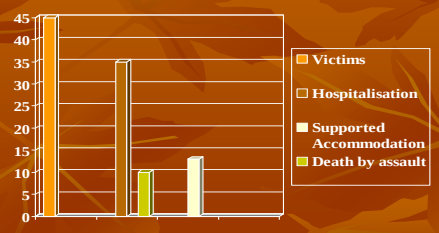
Research Question

What are the levels of stress symptoms and socio -psychological behaviors identified by Indigenous women who have withdrawn from an environment of violence?

B.Robinson. 2000 The A&TIs Women's Task Force on Violence Report

Effects and Prevalence of Violence

Compared to mainstream population



Research Methodology

- Ethnographic
- Feminist
- Participatory / Action

Data Analysis - Findings

Themes:

- Time span of withdrawal
- Relapse elements /factors
- Support networks – professional consultations
- Recognised life changes- self/family/children
- Sustained health issues
- Coping mechanisms- positive life changes

"No close family support- his family was afraid of him- never interfered"

"I made the decision to leave after 4 years later … I ended up with 2 kids".

GP's, Counsellors, Psychologists

"Trying to cope with the stress, changing behaviors and way of thinking"

High –blood pressure, rehabilitation, anxiety/panic attacks

Self-supportive; education, church support, womens support

Transgenerational Geneogram-Layers of psychological impacts

Psychological:

Cultural:

Social Determinants Impacts:-

Government Policies

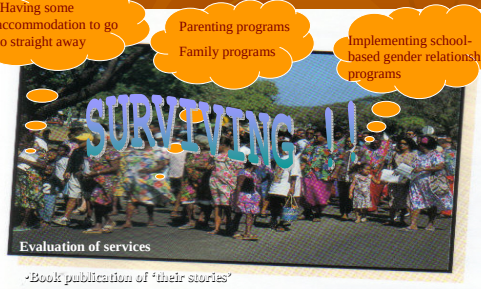
There is more to be done!!

Having some accommodation to go to straight away

Parenting programs

Family programs

Implementing school-based gender relationship programs



Evaluation of services

- *Book publication of 'their stories'*
- **Indigenous healing centres**

References

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