**Trainer Safety Principles (family violence and gendered violence)**

It’s common in most family or gendered violence training sessions that at least one participant will disclose an experience of gendered violence or family violence. It’s also common for some participants to get upset and need to leave the training room. In addition to this, when dealing with challenging topics like FV and GV it is not uncommon for trainers to encounter resistance[[1]](#footnote-1). As such ensuring the safety of trainers and participants is a key priority.

**Why are you Delivering Training?:**

Make sure that you are clear about why you are delivering training. Often trainers are brought in by employers/ organisations in response to an incidence or series of incidents which have occurred in the work place, as a way to ‘deal with’ or ‘fix’ the problem. It’s important that the organisation/ workplace you are training understands that family violence and gendered violence training is not a behavioural change program and will not instantly change culture or individual behaviour. Instead training should be undertaken as part of a range of measures designed to create change.

**Maintaining Safety of Participants:**

 The following steps should be taken in response to distressed participants or disclosures:

* Participants will be given referral information at the beginning of each training session
* At the beginning of each training session participants will be advised that if they feel upset/ distressed etc. that they can step out of the training room at any time
* Participants will be followed out by a trainer who will check in to see if they are ok
* Trainers will then check in with the participant again at the end of the day and make any necessary referrals.

**Maintaining Safety of Trainers:**

The following steps should be taken to ensure that the health and safety of trainers:

* Training should always be conducted by two trainers
* Ideally training groups should have a minimum of 8 and maximum of 20 participants
* When training runs for a full day (9:30am – 3:30pm) trainers should not resume other work but should finish for the day
* Trainers should not facilitate FV or GV training more than 3 days per week.
* Trainers should have clear policies and processes for dealing with aggressive, inappropriate and/ or abusive/ violent behavior from participants. These policies and procedures should include how and when to ask a participants to leave a training session and when to end a training session where there is the risk of harm to trainers or participants. The implementation of these processes and policies should be actively supported by leadership and managers
* A trainer debrief should be built into every training session for trainers to discuss challenges, or issues that arose and changes to course material or facilitation practices going forward.
* Trainers should have access to an EAP and/ or other supervision/ communities of practice.
1. The terms ‘backlash’ and ‘resistance’ are at times used interchangeably to refer to any form of resistance towards social change. Resistance is most likely to come from the people who are advantaged by the status quo. Resistance can be at its greatest when existing structures are threatened. Resistance can range from passive blocking techniques which seek to maintain the status quo, to strategies which aim to minimise or co-opt change efforts, to active, aggressive opposition in order to restore the old order inside and outside the training room. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)