

Media Release



Healing community from Tyabb killings starts with working together to prevent family violence

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The Federation of Community Legal Centres has called for a focus on lessons for family violence prevention as agencies and communities work together to respond to the deaths of Luke Batty and his father in Tyabb this week.

The Federation's member centres help victims of family violence obtain intervention orders and the Federation is a key member of Victoria's Systemic Review of Family Violence Deaths Reference Group.

'The profound tragedy of family violence deaths is that they can be prevented,' says Dr Chris Atmore, a member of the reference group and a senior policy adviser with the Federation.

'In order to do that, the very system that failed the person needs to come together and collaborate on working out what went wrong and how to fix it.'

'While the Police have said that they will conduct their own investigation, and the Commission for Children and Young People is planning their inquiry, this tragedy must also be examined through the Systemic Review of Family Violence Deaths as part of the coronial inquests that should now occur.'

'It is essential that all of these approaches are not only timely and well resourced, but work together with a common understanding of the realities of family violence and how they interrelate with issues like child protection. Then we can unpack exactly what happened and make concrete recommendations for change.'

Dr Atmore said that the current system tended to be piecemeal and slow, with only the coronial process requiring mandatory responses from the agencies involved.

'We owe it to Luke and the courage of his mother Rosie Batty to fix this broken system. That means understanding that 26 per cent of Victorian family violence deaths involve parent-child or child-parent killings. These are shocking and traumatic – but it is important that we make the effort to understand how, in a society like ours where family violence is so common, they can and do happen. Putting in the hard work of accepting that fact and understanding what then to do about it is what we all need to do to heal as a community,' Dr Atmore concluded.

Systemic Review of Family Violence Deaths – First Report

<http://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/find/publications/victorian+systemic+review+of+family+violence+deaths+ +first+report>

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