**Fathering Across Cultures Website – Video Transcript**

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Showing your vulnerability as a man and as a father is not always easy. It is even harder if you believe that this vulnerability makes you less of a man in terms of your family, your community and your culture.

Depression, anxiety and other related mental health issues are arguably more problematic in diverse cultural communities, especially those in which mental health issues are treated as a taboo and associated with shame.

These issues may be complicating factors in violent or harassing behaviour targeting wives and children.

While no form of violence or harm is excusable we need to take care that when we deal with these issues with young men from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, we steer away from condemnations based on bias or racial prejudice.

In fact, that the most effective way of achieving behavioural change is to frame the intervention and education within a cultural context. That is, it needs to be delivered in a language and with messages that resonate culturally and that show an understanding of the man and the father.

This in no way should be seen as an excuse or a defence for the violence but rather as an effective means of intervening and achieving change and eliminating the violence.

In achieving this change there are a number of things which are essential:

We need to deliver a strong message that violent behaviour is both unacceptable and illegal;

We need to do this in such a way that does not stigmatise or particularly target an identifiable community as this will deliver counterintuitive results;

We need to find people who are trusted within communities and have them convey the information and expectation of parental behaviour in Australia;

We need to ensure that supports are available for men and that the supports start from a position of understanding history and culture as an important framework to achieve change.

The evidence of past migration provides a clear picture that behaviours do change over time with the incidences of family violence decreasing in tandem with the length of residence in Australia.

Accordingly, we need to focus on recent arrival communities with specific interventions, education and support to address and contest beliefs which in any way legitimise or justify violence against women and children.

While we want services to be culturally competent we also should acknowledge that the area of support for family violence requires counsellors with specialist skills and training in this area.

As a father myself and as a person who has seen his own community change over time I am keen that we invest resources and a focused effort in ensuring that young fathers from migrant and refugee backgrounds are equipped and supported to carry out their responsibilities in our modern Australia.