



Creating Compassionate Communities

Changing one mind and one heart at a time.

2024 Conference

“Ending the Blame Game Shame”

Preventing victim blaming is everyone’s business. We need to change the narrative, show compassion and instead put the focus on the perpetrators and expect accountability.

Wednesday 30 October 2024 | Novotel Perth Langley Hotel



Phoenix
Professional Development
and Prevention Services



Phoenix
Support & Advocacy
Service Incorporated

www.phoenix.asn.au





Conference Program

9:00am	Registrations Open	Please be seated by 9:25am
9:00am	Arrival Tea & Coffee	MC - Dr Alec O'Connell
Time	Presentation Topic	Speaker
9:30am	Acknowledgement of Country	TBC
9:40am	Welcome and Setting the Scene	Louise Lamont
10:00am	Community Attitudes Study	Prof. Andrea de Silva
11:00am	Morning Tea	Please be seated by 11:25am
Time	Presentation Topic	Speaker
11:30am	Keynote Address	Dr Jessica Taylor
1:00pm	Lunch	Please be seated by 1:50am
Time	Presentation Topic	Speaker
1:55pm	Interactive Session	Prof. Leah Bromfield Prof. Patrick O'Leary
3:10pm	Afternoon Tea	Please be seated by 3:30pm
Time	Presentation Topic	Speaker
3:35pm	Panel Discussion with Conference Speakers and Q & A	MC - Louise Lamont
4:25pm	Conference Closing Statement followed by Sundowner Welcome	Julie Woodhouse Phoenix Chair
4:30pm	Phoenix 40th Anniversary Celebration and Networking Sundowner	
	Presentations from Special Guests and Lived Experienced Survivors & Networking Sundowner	
Thank you to everyone for supporting the Phoenix Conference and Celebration		



Creating Compassionate Communities

2024 Conference: "Ending the Blame Game Shame"

Phoenix's

40th Anniversary

Sundowner

Celebrate Phoenix's 40th Anniversary after the conference from 4.30pm to 6.00pm in the Silver Room, Novotel Perth Langley. The Sundowner will include presentations from special guests and lived experience representatives.

Tickets are \$25 and include canapes and a drink on arrival. A selection of alcoholic beverages may be purchased from the private bar. We invite all conference delegates to mingle with our special guests, celebrate and catch up over a drink, post-conference.

Conference MC (morning)



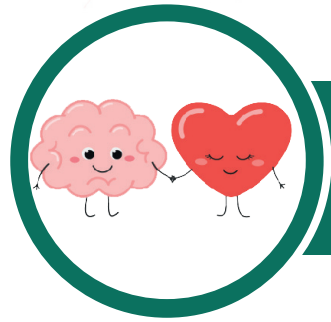
Dr Alec O'Connell

Dr Alec O'Connell was appointed as the 7th Headmaster of Scotch College in September 2010.

He was the foundation Head and CEO of Trinity at the University of Western Australia and held the positions of the Executive Director, Vice Chancellery and Executive of Academic and Student Services at The University of Notre Dame Australia. He was the WA Chairperson and a member of the National Board of the Australian College of Educators. Dr O'Connell is a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators, the Australian Institute of Management and the National Association of University Colleges and Halls, and a Life Member of Trinity Residential College at the University of Western Australia. Dr O'Connell has a Doctor of Business Administration from the University of Western Australia where he investigated the concept of values congruence and its effect on organisational commitment. He also holds a Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor, and Master of Education, Graduate Diploma of Language Studies and Diploma Royal Society of Arts London. He has provided a number of guest lectures on the topic of leadership and values and the creation of innovative learning spaces. He is currently Chair of Telethon Speech & Hearing, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Association of Independent Schools in WA and a Director of the Independent Schools of Australia. He is a Director of the Perth Symphony Orchestra Board, a member of the UWA Business School Ambassadorial Committee. He currently chairs the External Advisory Board of the School of Health Sciences at the University of Notre Dame.



Thank you



Conference Sponsors

Thank you to our sponsors who have helped to bring the Creating Compassionate Communities Conference.



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Conference Speaker Profiles



Professor Andrea de Silva

Professor Andrea de Silva is the Director of Knowledge Generation, Research and Evaluation at the National Centre. Andrea has over 25 years of experience working across diverse areas of public health, prevention, social justice, and inequalities. She is skilled at researching, co-designing, and evaluating solutions to complex social problems informed by lived experience, data, evidence, and practice-based knowledge. Andrea has led research teams in top tier universities and previously held roles as Research Director in the public sector and NFP organisations. Bringing her own lived experience and expertise, Andrea also shines a light on aspects of marginalisation, discrimination, and cultural and racial diversity. She has published over 150 research articles and reports, presented internationally, and is adjunct Professor at Monash University.

Presentation | Examining community attitudes and beliefs about child sexual abuse and victim blaming in Australia and beyond - where do we need to direct our attention?

The National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse (the National Centre) was established as a key recommendation from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to extend the evidence base upon which to design strategies for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse. In December 2023 we conducted an online, population-based survey of over 4,000 Australian adults to examine attitudes, awareness, and knowledge of child sexual abuse (the Community Attitudes Study). As there was no suitable existing instrument, the questionnaire design involved an evidence review and extensive consultation with experts, stakeholders, and victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

The global evidence review (2000-2023) included 48 studies, reporting on data from 23,146 participants from 24 countries across six continents. Consistently among studies of parents, mothers and older parents were better able to identify child sexual abuse risk factors. There was, however, consistently limited awareness of the complex factors that affect child sexual abuse risk and disclosure. Globally, parents also held the misconception that their child would tell them about experiencing sexual abuse and victimisation. We also found substantial stigmatisation of child sexual abuse victims in certain countries, negatively impacting important life outcomes and family reputation.

In the data collected from Australians in the Community Attitudes Study we found that most participants reasonably estimated child sexual abuse prevalence and had good knowledge of child sexual abuse and grooming, although mirroring international results, some Australians held misconceptions and victim-blaming attitudes.

This presentation will focus on

- Commonly held views that stigmatise, shame, and marginalise child sexual abuse victims and their families in many countries
- Australian community member's knowledge, attitudes, and abilities to identify risk factors, and their confidence and capacity to appropriately respond to instances of child sexual abuse.
- The appetite for community awareness raising and engagement activities to enhance knowledge and confidence.
- National Centre activity informed by these findings

Conference Speaker Profiles



Dr Jessica Taylor

Dr Jessica Taylor is a British Psychologist, bestselling author, and campaigner. She specialises in trauma-informed, anti-pathology, anti-victim blaming approaches to supporting and protecting women and girls from all forms of violence, abuse, oppression, and exploitation. She wrote the 2020 bestselling book 'Why Women Are Blamed For Everything'. A regular psychologist for Netflix, she often appears on trending Netflix docuseries such as 'Meet, Marry, Murder' and 'My Lover, My Killer' as a victim psychologist, to ensure female victims of murder and serious crime have a voice in documentaries. She has also made appearances on British television, including BBC Two documentary Womanhood, in ITV 'Celebrity Health Stories,' and in two seasons of true crime documentary My Lover, My Killer, which aired on UK's Channel Five.

Dr Taylor began her career volunteering with domestic and sexual violence victims before earning a Bachelor of Science Hons degree in Psychology. She was accepted on to a top PhD program in Forensic Psychology in 2015, and in 2017 she founded VictimFocus, which she describes as "a company designed to challenge and change the victim blaming practices in social care, policing, mental health, and support services all over the world.

In 2019, Taylor completed her PhD in forensic psychology from the University of Birmingham with a thesis titled "'Logically, I know I'm not to blame but I still feel to blame': exploring and measuring victim blaming and self-blame of women who have been subjected to sexual violence." While working towards her doctoral degree, she was appointed to Chair of the Parliamentary Conference on Violence Against Women and Girls. Upon finishing her doctoral research, she became a Senior Lecturer in Criminal and Forensic Psychology at the University of Derby. She was later recognised for her "contribution to the psychology of victim blaming of women, her work in mental health and her contribution to feminism" by the Royal Society of Arts.

In 2020, she self-published her thesis as a book titled 'Why Women are Blamed for Everything'. Based on three years of doctoral research and ten years of practice with women and girls, the book focuses on the reasons why society and individual psychology blames women for male violence committed against them. The book went on to sell tens of thousands of copies and led to a leading publisher, Hachette, offering her a multi-book deal.

In 2022, she published her second book, *Sexy But Psycho: Uncovering the Labelling of Women and Girls through Constable*. She described it as a "mixture of academic research, history, psychology and real-life stories of women and girls who have been told that they are mentally ill, instead of being listened to." 'Sexy But Psycho' became The Sunday Times Bestseller in March 2022. Dr Taylor's next book, the ITIM (Indicative Trauma Impact Manual), which is co-authored with her wife, Jaimi Shrive, is the world's first completely trauma-informed manual of its kin, designed to indicate, respond to, and understand every kind of human trauma and emotion. The ITIM became #1 Amazon Bestseller in four countries within 24 hours of release.

Dr Jessica Taylor regularly appears on national and international television to discuss violence against women and girls, psychology, victim blaming, mental health and trauma. She also writes screenplays, drama, social experiments, and proposals for TV programs. Dr Jessica Taylor has been the chartered psychologist on several TV programs, to advise producers and commissioners on programming about women's rights and male violence.

Conference Speaker Profiles

Dr Jessica Taylor continued...

Dr Taylor grew up on a council estate in the UK where brutality and coercion were normalised, and where substance abuse was a day-to-day occurrence. She was a teenage mother by the age of 17 and had her second child at the age of 19. Now one of the UK's most spirited advocates and leading psychologists in ending violence against women and girls, Dr Taylor shared her own personal journey for the very first time in her second Sunday Times Bestseller, "Underclass: A Memoir," which was published in May 2024.

Dr Taylor has recently finished developing an innovative new program to help women and girls process their trauma from abuse using education, anti-pathologisation and self-reflection called 'The Amethyst Programme' which will roll out in January 2025. Her new book, 'The Watcher of Your Own Flame: Understanding and nurturing yourself after trauma and abuse' is out on 6th December 2024.

Presentation | Victim Blaming

One of the most common experiences anyone will have who has ever been abused or assaulted in any way - will be to be blamed for what someone else chose to do to them.

What were they doing? Why were they there? Why didn't they stop it? Why didn't they just leave? Why didn't they report it to the police? What were they wearing? Did they bring it upon themselves? Why didn't they spot the red flags? Did they deserve it? Did they do something in a past life? Is this karma for their own wrongdoing? Have they attracted negativity?

No matter who the victim is, questions are quickly raised about their character, their behaviour, their appearance, and their background. But why do we do this? And why are we not comfortable with blaming perpetrators of their own crimes?

This presentation will explore years of Dr Jessica Taylor's work, her seven reasons for victim blaming women and girls, and her integrated theories of the psychology of victim blaming, including real interviews with women and professionals about their views.

Does victim blaming come from religion? From cognitive bias? From self-preservation? Or maybe from porn and the media?

Dr Taylor discusses our global, embedded need to blame the victim, the impact this has on everyone subjected to abuse, and how we stop this narrative in our families, our communities, and in our media.



Conference Speaker Profiles



Professor Patrick O'Leary

Professor Patrick O'Leary is an internationally recognised researcher on social work, gender-based violence and child protection having worked in numerous international universities as well as conducting complex research projects in over a dozen countries. Over the last 30 years he has been doing research with survivors of child sexual abuse with particular interest on male survivors and a focus on disclosure and life course effects. Professor O'Leary is currently Co-Lead of the Disrupting Violence Beacon at Griffith University, as well as a Chief Investigator for the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women where he leads a work stream on perpetrators and bystanders. He is the Co-Chief Editor of International Social Work published by SAGE it has become a Q1 journal and more than doubled its impact factor to 2.2.

Professor O'Leary has worked with UNICEF, Terre des hommes and Islamic Relief Worldwide. He was commissioned as an Expert Academic Advisor to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and was a member of the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Professor O'Leary serves on numerous boards and advisory positions in the government and non-government sectors including being on the Advisory Group for National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse for the Australian Government, non-executive Director of DVConnect, and member of the Practice Advisory Committee for Survivors and Mates Support Network.

Professor O'Leary is currently a member of the Advisory Group for the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse.



Professor Leah Bromfield

Professor Leah Bromfield is an internationally recognised and award-winning researcher in the field of child abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse. She has held a range of leading positions, including her current role as Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection and Chair of Child Protection at the University of South Australia, where she has led the application of contemporary evidence, research and a public health approach to lead major reforms to respond to the epidemic of child maltreatment.

Prof Bromfield works closely with government on establishing and implementing child welfare reforms, including serving on the governance and advisory committees for Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, and the National Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse. She was the Professorial Fellow to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse established by the Australian Government, and a Commissioner for the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. She is the Chair of the South Australian Government's Child Protection Expert Group, which is spearheading the transformation of South Australia's child protection system.

Conference Speaker Profiles

Professor Leah Bromfield continued...

She has authored more than 250 commissioned reports, academic, policy, and practice papers, including on the causes and impacts of child sexual abuse, child safe organisations, mandatory reporting, best practice responses to children interviewed by police, children displaying harmful sexual behaviours, therapeutic treatment and responses to child sexual abuse, child protection and out-of-home care. The impacts of Professor Bromfield's research, support of government reform, and assistance to Inquiries and Royal Commissions has been profound with lasting national and international changes to law, policy, and practice. Her innovation, expertise and leadership has been extensively recognised and she has received several awards for her work, including the National Telstra Business Women's Award for Public Sector and Academia in 2017, and multiple awards for innovation and impact.

In addition to her significant traditional academic track record, Prof Bromfield has been awarded in excess of \$20 million research income over the course of her career. Prof Bromfield is currently Co-Chair of the Advisory Group for the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse.

Presentation | Victim/ Survivor Disclosure Across Lifespan

Professor Leah Bromfield and Professor Patrick O'Leary in conversation with Louise Lamont

Disclosing child sexual abuse and/or sexual violence is often a momentous experience for victim-survivors – whenever or wherever it happens across the lifespan. Positive experiences of disclosure can be the pathway to getting help, support, justice, and to breaking from the chains of shame and self-blame. Yet, too often experiences of disclosure can be fraught for victim-survivors.

Disclosures can be met with disbelief, minimisation, stigmatisation, dismissal, blame and even further abuse. There is an extensive body of research on the barriers and facilitators to disclosure, most often the focus is on first disclosure or formal disclosure to authorities. However, across the lifespan disclosures occur for many other reasons whether it be impromptu or purposeful sharing with family or friends, or asking for trauma needs to be taken into account by a professional or service, speaking out to raise awareness, or to join in solidarity with other victim-survivors.

In this session, Louise will chair a conversation with Leah and Patrick challenging common narratives about disclosure, the myths they represent and the way in which disclosure can be over-simplified across the lifespan. Patrick and Leah will draw upon the research evidence and their personal experiences and reflections from engaging with victim-survivors.

There will some time to examine what steps can we take across mainstream services to improve responses to disclosure for victim-survivors no matter what stage they are at in the lifespan.

They will tackle issues such as:

1. Is disclosure a one-off experience?
2. Are there circumstances in which non-disclosure can be positive?
3. Should disclosure occur when prompted?
4. What are some of the different purposes of disclosure?
5. How do life events contribute to disclosure across the lifespan?
6. Do most victim-survivors really take 20 years to disclose?
7. How do experiences of disclosure contribute to the blame-game-shame?
8. What responses to disclosure are unhelpful and/or perpetuate blame and stigma on to victims?
9. Is there any evidence that responses to disclosures are getting better?

MC Afternoon & Panel Discussion



Louise Lamont

Louise Lamont has held senior positions in the community services sector and with State and Federal Government in the fields of family and domestic violence (FDV), child sexual abuse, sexual assault, and family law for the past 35 years. Louise is an experienced trainer delivering to allied professionals, and the Judiciary. Louise was a key advisor for the 'Freedom From Fear' mass media community education campaign. While working in Canberra, Louise supported the development of Family Relationship Centres, and national social justice networks. Louise has authored publications related to FDV screening and assessment, collaborative partnerships, and best practice for working with FDV.

Louise is currently CEO of Phoenix, and her background includes earlier work as a clinician, counselling survivors experiencing complex trauma, along with perpetrators of domestic violence. Louise set up a clinical supervision and professional development program for 300 staff across 11 metropolitan and regional sites. She was a founding member and Convenor of the Domestic Violence Action Groups of WA, a peak body that successfully advocated for social justice and policy reform, collaborative practice, community education, and the funding of FDV counselling support services, helplines, and men's behaviour change programs.

Louise has been a member of State and National committees addressing social justice challenges and recently was appointed for a further two years to the Advisory Group for the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse. Louise was also a member of the Reference Group for the WA Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy and is a longstanding member of the WACOSS Children's Policy Advisory Council and a Board Director for One Tree Community Services.

Presentation | In Conversation with Professor Leah Bromfield and Professor Patrick O'Leary, Conference Host and MC for Panel Discussion

Panel Discussion | Victim/ Survivor Disclosure Across Lifespan

Phoenix CEO and Conference MC Louise Lamont has had the privilege for the past 2 years to work alongside Leah Bromfield and Patrick O'Leary on the Advisory Group for the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse. During this session, Louise, in conversation with Leah and Patrick, will discuss disclosure across the lifespan exploring the questions posed and more.

Leah and Patrick, along with Louise, will bring their insights and learning from many years working in this area in a range of roles relevant to family and domestic violence, sexual violence, and child sexual abuse. They are well versed in where there are failings in the systemic responses and where some of the solutions lay. Together they will highlight what a difference trauma informed good practice and compassionate community responses can make in the lives of victim survivors.

MC Afternoon & Panel Discussion



Julie Woodhouse

Julie Woodhouse - Phoenix Chair

Julie was appointed to the Phoenix Board in 2014 and has been Chair since 2018. Julie is recognised as a leader in the field of education and currently holds a senior leadership position as a Level 6 Principal of an Independent Public Primary School (Department of Education WA). Her primary focus in education is building capacity to ensure that all students achieve, regardless of background factors or personal circumstance. Julie has completed a Masters in Educational Management at the University of Western Australia. She also has training and accreditation in coaching and personal assessment profiling. Julie has taught at all levels and has been a deputy principal and principal in a number of primary schools.

She has been an Area Director (Midlands District), District Director (Mid-West District), Director Schools (Fremantle Peel District), Director School Review (Expert Review Group), Assistant Regional Executive Director and Regional Executive Director (South Metropolitan Education Region). Julie was involved in the comprehensive Literacy and Numeracy Review undertaken in Western Australia.

She worked closely with Kim Scott on the focus area of writing in the upper primary years on the basis of her expertise in literacy research and policy, classroom teaching, school leadership and professional learning. Whilst in the Mid-West District Julie developed and implemented a 'Building Sustainable Leadership: A Coaching Model' cross district partnership with Esperance Education District to address induction, professional learning specifically instructional leadership and succession planning for school principals. In 2008-2009 she assumed a key leadership role in harnessing the interactive and creative capability of secondary school leaders to develop, implement and embed a collaborative network to improve curriculum choice and student achievement.

Her commitment to and skill in building the capacity of others has resulted in her being invited to present to many forums including the Senior Women's Leadership Program. In 2009-2010 she conceptualised and implemented a highly successful district wide 'Women in Leadership' program. Julie has been and continues to be a highly valued representative in a range of reference groups and working parties for the Department and outside agencies.





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