

Domestic and family violence affecting children and young people from culturally and racially marginalised migrant backgrounds

This scoping review explored how children and young people from culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) migrant backgrounds experience domestic and family violence. The review also examined service responses to domestic and family violence including child protection.

SCOPING REVIEW METHODS

The review focused on the Australian context

We included 19 articles in the review

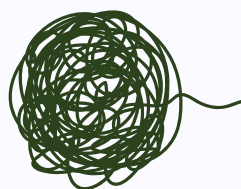
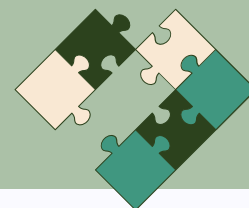
We searched articles published between 2003 - 2023

KEY FINDINGS

We found evidence that children and young people from CARM migrant backgrounds experienced multiple forms of domestic and family violence including:

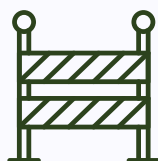
Physical violence — Emotional abuse — Coercive control — Migration-related abuse

The voices of children and young people from CARM migrant backgrounds were missing. Most research had been conducted with parents, carers and service providers who reflected on the experiences of children



Families from CARM migrant backgrounds had multiple social factors that compounded their experiences of violence. These factors also affected their access to and engagement with formal services including child protection.

Services frequently used language like children “witnessed DFV” or were “exposed to DFV.” This meant children were secondary victims, limiting appropriate options for formal support and detracting from their own lived experiences.



Studies found that mandatory reporting to child protection acted as a barrier to help-seeking for young people. Studies also presented contradictory findings on whether children from CARM migrant backgrounds were over or under represented in child protection services.

Fear shaped the way that children and young people engaged with social services. Services also had restrictive age limits that meant children and young people aged under 18 were not able to access support. Children and young people also thought social services were culturally unsafe, not affordable and not gender sensitive.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PRACTICE?

Expand the provision of training for child protection workers that highlights the importance of using a holistic approach considering the needs and wellbeing of the child and non-violent parent simultaneously.



Implement mandatory cultural safety education that also provides practitioners with key information on visa types, and highlights how certain visas affect children and young people's access to essential health, social, educational, and community services.



Design training on how to use intersectional theory and frameworks for practitioners who work with families affected by domestic and family violence. This training will build the capability of practitioners to recognise how different forms of structural discrimination interact and affect CARM migrant families.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR POLICY?

Policy must recognise children and young people from CARM migrant backgrounds as survivors of domestic and family violence in their own right. Update use of language so that children and young people are not longer referred to as "witnesses" who are "exposed" to violence.

Develop a clear definition of "CARM migrant background" that can be used consistently when collecting demographic information relating to children and young people who enter the domestic and family violence response service system.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR RESEARCH?

Design research methodology that can contribute to identifying the number of children and young people from CARM migrant backgrounds who have experienced domestic and family violence, and been reported to child protection services.



Conduct research with children and young people from CARM migrant backgrounds to strengthen understanding of their experiences of domestic and family violence and ensure their voices are heard when developing policy, practice and research recommendations.

Incorporate strength-based research questions into qualitative studies with children and young people who have lived experience of violence to identify protective factors and the strategies that children used to maintain their own safety and well being.



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