

## INSECURE ATTACHMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Iana Wong (2025) from the University of New South Wales makes the following comments in the introduction to her PhD thesis on the subject of INSECURE ATTACHMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE:

*“Although the understanding of the causes of IPV perpetration and victimisation has grown extensively, the factors that contribute to and explain IPV are still not well understood (Capaldi et al., 2012). **Insecure attachment is a well-established risk factor for perpetration and victimisation of IPV** (e.g., Capaldi et al., 2012; Spencer et al., 2021; Stefania et al., 2023”.* (p.5, emphasis added).

Secure and insecure attachment (of several kinds) are patterns of interpersonal perception and of relating to others created in childhood as a byproduct of a child’s early experiences with caregivers which can persist into, and affect, personal relationships and behaviours in adulthood. One relevant enduring dimension is the level of **perceived trust** (or its absence) **in the capacity of others to provide care or security to oneself**.

Coming from an applied perspective in Clinical Psychology as a provider of psychological assessments of adult offenders for the West Australian criminal justice system over several decades, and as a psychotherapist, I have provided written summaries about my observations in regard to the childhood precursors of the disturbed behaviour of some adults who commit crimes. The explanation invokes the concept of schemas (John Bowlby's “working models”) acquired from interactions with caregivers that persist into adulthood, and the presence of childhood-acquired emotional vulnerabilities that can be triggered by life stresses in adulthood. Some of this knowledge pertaining to the childhood determinants of schemas is presented in a **Webinar on YouTube posted by TherapyRoute – “Childhood Experiences and Core Beliefs in Wellbeing and Psychopathology”**.

Some of the materials I disseminated decades ago contributed to the establishment of a national Child Sexual Abuse Issues and Psychology Interest Group in 2013, which is ongoing. More recently I facilitated the establishment of a new Interest Group, a *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Interest Group* which applies psychological knowledge to promote awareness of the developmental origins of this problem, and to highlight the need for a psychologically-informed approach as an alternative to the male-blame feminist political approach promoted and accepted worldwide, but which lacks credibility and factual evidence in modern societies.

My efforts to bring psychological knowledge into the spotlight in domestic and family violence prevention was cut short by feminist forces, operationalised via an official edict to forbid my contact with the Group I formed, for a year. So it is from virtual solitary confinement that I unrepentantly continue to promote the application of psychological knowledge to the long term task of domestic and family violence prevention. This is a viable and necessary alternative to the gender-blame approach which is currently in vogue and has had ascendancy for far too long, because that explanation is at odds with the scientific facts – particularly the adverse effects of disrupted or unsuccessful attachments with carers in childhood, and other trauma related to neglect or abuse, that persist and are at the root of domestic violence.

I recently submitted two Press Releases to journalists via **Get the word out** in an attempt to provide the community with psychological facts in the domestic violence arena:

<https://getthewordout.com.au/press-release/press-release-the-way-forward-in-domestic-violence-prevention-in-australia/>

<https://getthewordout.com.au/press-release/press-release-the-research-and-clinical-data-base-in-psychology-has-consistently-demonstrated-that-childhood-trauma-and-neglect-are-the-basic-drivers-of-domestic-and-other-violence-and-are/>

Unfortunately, and by coincidence, the second release was drafted on the day of the 2025 Bondi Massacre, and although it came a few days later to the attention of journalists, it was clearly bad timing for the subject of domestic violence to be aired. So that explains this, my third effort, to have the subject of domestic violence prevention discussed in the media from a scientific perspective - based on established psychological knowledge, as indicated in the quote at the beginning of this message.

Why the 3peat? Because I am an optimist. Decades ago I put out a press release on the prevention of child sexual abuse: “***There are ways to prevent the sexual abuse of children***”. I received a total of 1 enquiry from a journalist (out of a pool of over 100 contacts), who asked why I had put out the release at that time, given that the Pope was to visit Australia in a fortnight? I had to honestly state there was no connection between my activities and that of the Pope, as we are independent beings, and I had simply sent out my release after I finished putting it together. No publications from journalists arose, as far as I am aware.

Although that first Press Release was a dead flop the material it contained was not: at a Government Minister's suggestion, I presented it at a child protection Conference, and subsequently at around half a dozen other professional Conferences, as well as to local Psychologist colleagues. The latter decided to fund the printing of an information booklet of the contents and to distribute it to local GP's. [The booklet (2012) can be downloaded as a PDF at no cost from the webpage [www.PreventingChildSexualAbuse.org](http://www.PreventingChildSexualAbuse.org) ].

Some of the WA colleagues also formed the Child Sexual Abuse Issues and Psychology Interest Group in 2013, which I mentioned above. And in recent years the list of psychologist contacts on the web resource has been provided by police to adults charged with child Internet pornography offences in Western Australia as an aid to obtaining psychological assistance and reduce suicide risk.

I have been informed that if one journalist from a pool of about 100 responded to my first press release on the prevention of child sexual abuse, on statistical grounds about 17 enquiries ought to be expected from the current pool of Journalists who were sent my recent releases.

Sadly, the statistical prediction has yet to be fulfilled. But as I said, I am an optimist.

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