

AVITH Collaborative Network

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the terms of reference, and role and responsibilities of the AVITH Collaborative Network.

Background

This Network commenced in response to the lack of specialised responses to adolescents engaging in violence in the home, and the absence of an AVITH specific collaborative practice forum. In general terms the Network aims to:

- contribute to improved understandings of AVITH across the service system,
- document how best to work with adolescents engaging with violence,
- align with MARAM and tailor MARAM tools to adolescents engaging with violence, and
- advocate for a specialised and coordinated AVITH service system response.

Understanding of AVITH

Existing studies describe adolescents using violence in the home (AVITH) as a pattern (not an isolated incident) of violent or abusive behaviour used by an adolescent within their family, mostly against parents or other caregivers and siblings. Many adolescents using violence have experienced family violence themselves or continue to experience it. Responses to adolescent violence need to consider their protection, safety and developmental needs, as well as their behaviour. Some may also be experiencing problematic substance use, mental health issues and school disengagement.

Adolescents are at a crucial developmental stage, where family relationships and connection make a vital difference to their outcomes. Effective interventions therefore need to focus on maintaining family connections and on adolescent wellbeing and safety, within a context of family safety.

Members of the AVITH Collaborative Network

The Network is a multidisciplinary collaboration of professionals from a range of agencies and institutions, all with a focus in their practice, policy or research of supporting adolescents using violence in the home.

Objectives and responsibilities of the Network

Objective	Responsibilities
A. Provide a forum for members to share expertise, cases, practice challenges and emerging policy and evidence.	Share practice expertise, evidence, issues, trends in practice and challenges practicing in the AVITH space, especially during the pandemic
	Identify how and where MARAM can be applied, identify a common language and develop and share tools to use in AVITH practice & evidence, discuss referral pathways and system coordination.
B. Develop a united, multisector advocacy platform for an AVITH service system model and the resources required.	Contribute expertise, knowledge and evidence to assist with the development of the AVITH advocacy platform, wherever possible incorporating the stories and experiences of young people and their journey through the services system.
	Promote awareness and outcomes of the platform within and beyond the organisations members belong to – highlighting group collaboration and practice demonstration.

Role of the Chair & Minute taker

The responsibilities of the Network Chair are to:

- Schedule meetings and invite participants.
- Set agenda items
- Distribute the agenda and any supporting material at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting
- Encourage broad participation from members in discussion by calling on different people and perspectives
- Keep meeting to time and agenda
- Summarise key actions decided on in the meeting

-Facilitate minutes at the meeting

-Distribute minutes within one week of the meeting

Meetings

The Network may meet remotely or face-to-face, and documents may be circulated offline and between meetings for feedback to progress design work, as required. Network meetings will be held monthly.

There is an expectation that members will commit to active participation through attending meetings wherever possible. It is expected that members will engage in open and respectful conversation in meetings.

Confidentiality and sharing of information

Network members treat as confidential any information about young people and their families made available to them in meeting papers and/or discussions and must not distribute any written material beyond the Network membership. Case studies shared with the Network must be de-identified.

Meeting decisions/Conducting Advocacy

Advocacy positions/proposals should be discussed within the Network and any significant differentiation or disagreement recognised. Advocacy should be conducted on an organisational basis in acknowledgment of the particular imperatives and authorising environments relevant to specific organisations.