To the Senate Committee on Men's Health

I write to the committee to briefly express my concerns on men's health. I am a teacher of some 27 years experience and a father for 11 years. My particular concerns relate to:

MALE SUICIDE

1. The increased number of mens suicides in recent years which are in part caused by the terrible injustices that continue to occur in custody battles where mothers persist in perjury and false allegations against dads simply in order to win a battle rather than see a child as needing both parents. Fathers experience alienation from their children as a result of these often false allegations and in many cases regrettably turn to suicide. Another related cause is the rediculous demands from CSA even when both parents have equal custody! This dept is totally biased in my 9 years dealing with them and they do not have fair and equitable guidelines with which to work with. The financial ruin of many males has been caused by outdated and gender biased rules and often lead to pyschological breakdown and suicide. If it is the intention of Family Court and CSA to reduce the number of males in Australia then they are achieving their goal with much success.

SUPPORT SERVICES

2. The lack of support provided by the Govt for men in crisis as seen in Qld recently where a women's shelter took in men who had nowhere to go but then lost funding because of this humanitarian act! I had occasion to use emergency services in recent years afte rbeing assaulted, threatened and falsely accused and the national mens helpline I rang said they could not help me and nor were they equipped to counsel me either! I have no doubt that this would not happen in the women's support area and if it did - it would hit the media quickly. These need vast improvements.

SOCIETIES PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS

3. The psychlogical and mental impacts on men in this country where they are continually portrayed as the only domestic abusers in the media. This is of course not true and I am speaking as one who has been a victim of this domestic abuse as has my child - from the same female. Many males are abusive but many females are too and as long as the media and govt depts fund and show ads where males are the only abuser they are not only affecting males but many in the nxt generation who will have a biased view of males. If you kick someone down often enough they will eventually stay down as their mental and psychological well being will be damaged.

MINSTERS FOR MENS ISSUES

4..Can I please beg your committee to consider appointing a Minister for Men's issues just as there is one for women's. I actually wrote to her in December 08 and her presponse received last week shows that she is going to push women's issues as far as she can to everyone elses detriment. Her tone was condescending and she politely told me to go away. Any phone book shows entry after entry for Women's issues and very few for men. That really sums it up. We need a Minister for men's issues that include health and wellbeing. The average male out there today is hurting especially ones in bad relationships and ones who have left them and are now being punished psychologically, mentally and financially.

Please help us and please appoint a Minister for us who is prepared to meet with fathers and their groups and actually act on these types of concerns.

I thank you for the chance to air these issues.

Yours Sincerely

Simon Styles