12th March 2009

Senate Select Committee on Men's Health

Senate Select Committee on Men's Health,
Department of the Senate PO Box 6100,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

To Senator Bernardi,

Submission to the Senate Select Committee on Men's Health

My name is Stuart Innes, I am a Dad, a Facilitator for a non funded (government or otherwise) support group for men/dads.

I am also a very concerned Australian man who has seen the ever dwindling spirit and future of Australian males by the simple lack of Government taking men's health, rights and well being seriously and in a manner equal and same as that of woman.

This can be clearly and evidently seen every day by the simple fact that an office for the Welfare of Woman has existed for many decades YET where and why wasn't an office for the Welfare of Men set up at the same time.

My experiences in life encompasses all areas of men's health from adolescence, divorces (as both child and adult), to fathering to emotional/mental distress of men to name but a few.

I have experienced all these and more and now try to help those men that have lost their families, self worth/esteem and more importantly reason to continue life's journey through lack of help or representation from government agencies because primarily there just isn't one eg , an Office For The Welfare of Men as a central and starting point.

I ask you, can you think of anything more disturbing than the Australian

men's population slowly but surely from one generation to the next finding such prejudicial reason's to be part of the very fabric of Australian Family life and instead stay single.

There has been an Office For the Welfare Of Woman since the Whitlam years of Government, this imbalanced , prejudicial situation has led I believe and have witnessed the decline of Australian Family life and a more importantly , equal place in Australian society for men to exist in, as can be very clearly identified by the massive increase in Family Court cases and the setting up by Australian Government of Family Relationship Centres in order to try and deal with the ever increasing number of relationships that are no longer a workable situation and are better of apart.

Men who don't get to see or spend equal and quality time with their children are an ever increasing number due to the fact they have no central government office with which to trust and consult with when their life and situation needs help.
This is a shame full situation for a country like Australia that depends so much on men in the evidenced based heavy and manufacturing industries.

I would welcome any involvement in the government's possible interest in men's issues in Australia and provide my opinions on the four areas of investigation for your information.
I point out at this time that I am just an Australian man who case deeply for the future of men in our country and the society affected by their lack of government representation.

1. FUNDING:
   Any and all funding should be at least equal to and required to help represent men in our Australian society, as we need men's input as much as women's, we share the same cancer conditions, mental and emotional needs that require the provision of a comprehensive support network and service.

   These require equal funding and support structure as that of any other; to ignore this is of great concern for the future of Australian men and their needs and rights.

2 THE EFFIENCY of EXISTING EDUCATION and PROMOTION MENS ISSUES: Including Equal Support for Groups that take up the Welfare of Men's Issues

Australian men have the same right and expectation that they will be educated and represented on such matters as Cancer/s eg Prostate, Family , Employment, Child Access, marriage and all other issues that you would expect political representation be made on their behalf as done by the Office For The Welfare Of Woman.

Yet this has never been actioned seriously by Australian government and approached in the respectful and dutiful manner that women's has, again the prejudice and imbalance of how Australia see's is male population shows through to create from one generation slowly but surely it simply is no longer safe for men in Australian Society .

This is clearly and very evidenced based a case of taking for granted that men will just put up with it and not complain and is allowed to continue happen.

Why should Australian men BEG to have equal rights and representation to that of women?

It has created an aura of distrust by men in the Australian society and in its future that it simply isn't safe to get married, to have children or even to the point of sharing a residence with a woman.

Is this not a reason Australia should hang its collective head in shame and action for positive change.

An Office for the Welfare of Men is long over due.

The record of past prejudice and lack of duty of care by Australian government in regard to the welfare of Australian men is immense, shameful and from one generation to the next continues to become more wide spread and well known amongst the population of this great country.

It is now time and the opportunity for the Australian Government to change this.

The future of Australia in very realistic terms depends on equal and well balanced representation of both men and woman, it is now time to correct this imbalance before it is too late and that which is needed to fix the situation would take even more time and resources of our country.

Failure to do so I believe would result in Australia becoming a society of “us against them” in unspoken political and societal negative interactions.

These will only serve to push Australia further behind is possible growth to becoming a leading nation in world countries and not a self destructive one.

Regards

Stuart Innes