



MEDIA RELEASE

-BOOK LAUNCH-

“WILL MY RABBI BELIEVE ME? Will He Understand?”

Responding to Disclosures of Family Violence in a Rabbinic Context

By:

**The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence
The Rabbinical Council of Victoria**

The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence together with The Rabbinical Council of Victoria held a book launch for the ground breaking publication, “WILL MY RABBI BELIEVE ME? Will He Understand?” *Responding to Disclosures of Family Violence in a Rabbinic Context*, on Tuesday, November 15, 2011.

This was the first official function for Chief Commissioner Ken Lay, APM, who gave the keynote address emphasising his commitment to improving the response of Victorian Police to incidents of Family Violence. He paid tribute to his predecessors’ work in this area and declared his intention to follow their lead. He stated his intention to work closely with community organizations such as the JTAFV and RCV to address the devastating realities of Family Violence.

The book was launched by the Hon. Andrea Coote, MP who quoted excerpts from the book she found particularly valuable in the understanding of the difficult and sensitive issues of Domestic Violence. She said, “All those in leadership roles will find this book helpful and supportive, not only spiritual leaders.” She then applauded the partnership between the two organizations, saying, “I want to commend the Rabbinical Council of Victoria and the Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence for their courage and far-sightedness in tackling this issue. Together, they have produced a handbook that every Rabbi should find valuable in dealing with some very difficult issues.”

Ms. Debbie Wiener, Chair of the JTAFV welcomed the guests by quoting from the book of Ecclesiastes, “For everything there is a time, and in particular a time to rend and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak.” The Rabbis by their commitment and dedication show that they understand when to be silent and when to speak. They show that they are prepared to speak out and have zero tolerance to issues of family violence.”

Rabbi Yaakov Glasman, President of the RCV paid tribute to the work of the JTAFV by stating that JTAFV are not unsung heroes as their praises have been sung by the Rabbis, by communal leaders and most importantly by the victims of Domestic Violence and sexual abuse.

Rabbi Meir Klugant, RCV Liaison to the Jewish Taskforce stated, “It is encouraging that Rabbis In our community have embraced the opportunity to

take a leadership role in this matter. Rabbis across the state, have from their pulpits been sending out a clear and unequivocal message – “Yes it does happen and no you don’t have to put up with it.” This in and of itself is a tremendous achievement – as it validates and empowers victims while exposing and disempowering perpetrators.”

Sheiny New, JTAfV Board member and spokesperson addressed the audience on behalf of the JTAfV. She outlined the history of how this groundbreaking book came to be published, referring to the historically unique relationship between Rabbis and their congregants and how vital a Rabbi’s response is to the healing of victims disclosing family violence and sexual assault.

The guests included Mr. David Southwick, Member for Caulfield, Mr. Clem Newton Brown, Member for Prahran, Cr Claude Ullin representing the City of Stonnington, Murray Mcinnis, Vice Chair of White Ribbon Day, members of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Commander Ashley Dickenson, Assistant Commissioner Luke Cornelius of Victoria Police as well as many of the dedicated police officers who have worked closely with the JTAfV and RCV. There was a large representation from the Jewish community including John Searle, President of The Jewish Community Council of Victoria, members of the Rabbinate as well as Victorian Family Violence Support Services, including Mr. Danny Blay, Executive Officer of “No To Violence”.

The Jewish community has swept so much under the rug that one can no longer walk on it. This treatise on abuse and violence in the Jewish family is an eye-opener.

This book should not be on the shelf. Rather, it should be in the hands of rabbis, professionals, parents, husbands and wives.

*The tragic effects of domestic abuse can be prevented, but we must be alert to it.
Dr. Abraham J. Twerski*

For further inquiries or to purchase a copy of “Will My Rabbi Believe Me? Will He Understand?” please call The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence on 9523-6850 or The Rabbinical Council of Victoria on 8517-5712.



L to R: Rabbi Y. Glasman, Rabbi M.S. Kluwgant, Chief Commissioner Ken Lay, The Hon. Andrea Coote, Deborah Wiener, Sheiny New