



Herald Sun (Melbourne)

Friday 18/04/2014

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# MAKE IT A CRIME AGAINST STATE

**MATT JOHNSTON,  
SHANNON DEERY AND  
BRIGID O'CONNELL**

A CHILD protection expert has called for tougher family violence laws and a renewed push to convict more men who break intervention orders.

Australian Childhood Foundation chief executive Joe Tucci said changes to the law were needed, to treat family violence as a crime against the state rather than against an individual.

Dr Tucci said this would put the onus on police to pursue a case through to prosecution, and put less pressure on victims to be at the centre of proceedings.

"The impetus moves from the victim to the state, to prosecute these forms of violence," he said.

"It's not up to the victim to press charges, they become witnesses."

Dr Tucci also said "there should not be discretion in convicting men for even the

smallest of failures to comply with intervention orders".

The *Herald Sun* understands authorities are still examining approaches to family violence and intervention orders after the death of Luke Batty, killed by his dad in Tyabb.

The Department of Human Services, police, and the Department of Justice are meeting fortnightly to examine connections between parolees, intervention orders and child protection orders, in a bid to improve responses to the issue.

Police are grappling with a big increase in reported family violence, with court figures showing that there has been a 42 per cent increase in intervention orders in the past five years.

Police statistics released earlier this year showed there were 20,418 breaches of intervention orders in 2013, up by 40 per cent from the previous year.



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(Clockwise from far left) Stabbing victim Fiona Warzywoda; her alleged killer, de facto partner Craig McDermott, under arrest yesterday; investigators at the scene of the incident in Sunshine on Wednesday; floral tributes left at the scene; and a note attached to one bouquet.

Pictures: NORM OORLOFF, NICOLE GARMSTON