

## “Flowers Aren’t Enough”

A community project by

### The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence

In February 2002 the Embassy of Israel, Canberra gifted both the Perth and Canberra Festivals with the poignant and sensitive theatrical presentation “Flowers Aren’t Enough,” a one woman show depicting the painful realities of families experiencing Domestic Violence, portrayed by the talented and highly respected Israeli actress Naomi Ackerman.

The performance was originally commissioned by the Jerusalem Ministry of Welfare and developed after many interviews with women who shared their personal stories with Ms. Ackerman. The play was highly successful and has been performed internationally receiving the highest praise from the many communities in which it has been performed. A vital part of the program takes place after the show when Ms. Ackerman steps out of character to interact with the audience, always in the presence of trained counselors, to address any personal experience which may arise.

The Taskforce was contacted by the Israeli Embassy, inviting us to host “Flowers Aren’t Enough” in Melbourne. The committee welcomed the opportunity to utilize the power of the Ms. Ackerman’s presentation to educate and sensitize the wider Jewish Community, especially the senior students of the Jewish Day Schools about family violence.

Performances were organized for years 10, 11,12 in every Jewish Day School as well as four “sold out” community performances.

It was a powerful tool to impart the positive message that healing can begin with the assistance of a caring and supportive community. The project was made possible through the generosity of The Besen Family Foundation and the dedication of the volunteers The Jewish Taskforce Against Family Violence.

Ms. Ackerman has since been invited back to Perth to present “Flowers Aren’t Enough” where it was particularly appreciated by women of the Aboriginal communities who acknowledged its relevance and insight into their experiences with family violence.

The Taskforce continues to liaise with Ms. Ackerman and three years on, we continue to hear of the impact of her powerful message.