

D O M E S T I C
V I O L E N C E
N S W



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NSW
STRATEGIC PLAN
2021-2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TO THE PEOPLE AND LAND

Domestic Violence NSW's office is situated on Gadigal land in Redfern. We pay our respects to the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation respecting all Elders past and present and emerging. We thank the traditional owners and original custodians of lands throughout NSW for their wisdom, guidance, and support to work on land that was never ceded.

We acknowledge the disproportionately high rates of violence impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, families and communities and the ongoing impacts of colonisation and systemic racism that is still present within institutions and the broader community. We acknowledge that we work in the context of generations of resilient, strengths-based, holistic resistance to violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Domestic Violence NSW strives to position ourselves as allies, to walk alongside, to listen, to give our voice and strength, to respect, to never forget and to learn from past mistakes so that we can actively support and promote the voices of Aboriginal people and organisations in all our work.

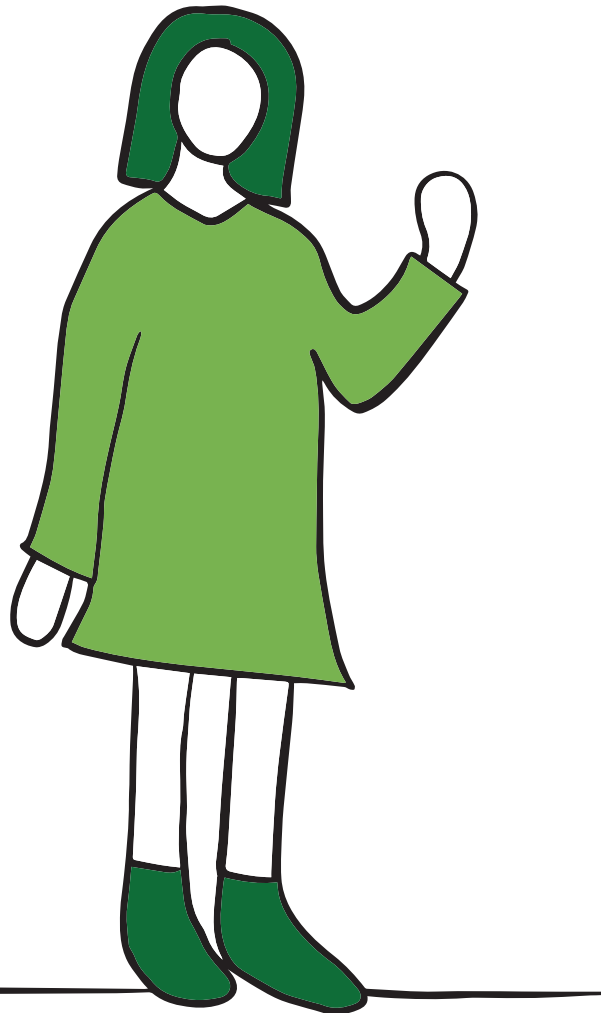
Domestic Violence NSW acknowledges that adults, children and young people experience domestic, sexual and family violence, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, sexuality and gender diverse people, people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities often experience higher rates of violence than the broader community.

We acknowledge, respect and include the advocacy of those with lived expertise of domestic, sexual and family violence, children and young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex and asexual (LGBTQIA+), people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the work to end violence.

We acknowledge the commitment of our member organisations and frontline workers to ending violence and abuse in our community, and honour their tireless work towards positive and meaningful change.



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INTRODUCTION

Domestic and family violence is a human rights violation. Every year in Australia, one woman dies per week and one child every fortnight due to domestic and family violence – and we are saying enough is enough.

We aren't just speaking up in the face of gendered violence – we are roaring. This is a national emergency, and the domestic and family violence sector exists for a reason – to save lives.

Domestic Violence NSW represents over 120 life-saving services across the state, and our strength lies in our powerful collective voice. We are a trusted source when it comes to informing and inspiring others, and we look towards what is possible in the future. We are the thought leaders who spark evidence-based conversation, collaboration and influence with a focus on action and innovative solutions to make change.

We are determined to achieve a world where all women, children and LGBTIQ+ people can live free from violence, have equal rights, equal opportunities, and the freedom to reach their potential. It's this vision that turns all our work - our advocacy, policies, submissions, programs and collaborations - into real systemic change.

Our job at DVNSW is to facilitate new ways of working, generating resources

and sustainable funding for the sector, and to strengthen our relationships with a wider audience. We connect the front line of domestic and family violence to the decision makers for a better and safer tomorrow, and to ensure the voices of the most vulnerable are heard by the people who need to listen and make change.

We are unanimous in our calls for investment in long-term, systemic change. For us it is more than a vision or a mission, it's lifesaving. To live free from fear of violence. To be equal. To have a future. And we won't stop until it is achieved.

OUR VISION

Women, families and communities in NSW live free from violence, have equal rights, equal opportunities and the freedom to reach their potential.

OUR PURPOSE

DVNSW is an independent, non-government peak organisation that provides a representative and advocacy function for specialist services and the women, families and communities they support.

We work to eliminate domestic and family violence (DFV) through thought leadership, promotion of the specialist DFV sector and promoting best practice responses and primary prevention.

OUR LEADERSHIP VALUES



LEADERSHIP

We use our intersectional feminist knowledge and platform to challenge the status quo, enable progress and innovate for change



INTEGRITY

We are accountable, evidence-based and informed by those who we serve



INCLUSION

We listen, engage and work in partnership with the community, representing diverse voices and advocating for those most marginalised



EQUITY

We create a roadmap for achieving social justice and enable others on this path

OUR HISTORY

As we build our future, we continue on the path of those who went before us. We stand on their powerful and passionate shoulders. We continue their work across every facet of ours and thus, continue to build our movement.

As we look towards 2024, our 50 year anniversary and beyond, we can see how all the steps in this journey, past, present and future will lead to a society in which women and children will live free from violence.

We hope 2024 sees increased community awareness of domestic and family violence. We hope to see true accountability at all levels of government through a whole of system approach, and we hope our work ensures sustainable, long-term funding, increased employment in our sector, recognition of the specialist workforce and commitment to its development. Ultimately, we hope to see a reduction in the prevalence of domestic and family violence.

Our work will embrace partnerships and collaborations. Respectfully, we walk this path with our members, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Steering Committee, our lived expertise advocates and reference groups, and our partner organisations, with the continued support of our funders, donors, volunteers and sponsors.

Together our voices will be louder, inclusive and will create change.



MARCH 1974

Elsie's Women's Refuge opens as Australia's first emergency safe house for women and children subject to domestic violence. The Women's Refuge Movement (WRM) is born

JANUARY 1975

Elsie's receive a \$24,000 grant to fund six positions for 12 months

DECEMBER 1976

Triennial funding is approved for all eight facilities.

JANUARY 1985

Refuges receive secure funding through the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

1986

Federal Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is established.

1989

The first government-funded Domestic Violence Line is launched.

1986

The Women's Refuge Resource Centre opens

1979

The first ever state conference on DFV is held in Bathurst, NSW

JUN 1975

8 women's refuges have been established around the country

MAY 1974

48 women and 35 children are living at Elsie's

1975

Over 18 months, Elsie's sheltered 13,500 women and children

1981

NSW becomes the first Australian government to conduct an inquiry into DFV

1983

The NSW Women's Refuge Working Party is established

1985

WRM initiates a relationship with the NSW Police Force

1987

The WRM lobbies for the funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-run specialist services



1990

The Court Assistance Scheme is founded, now known as the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS)

2013

The NSW Government launches the 'Going Home Staying Home' reform plan. Service provider members of the program are called Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS).

1999

25th anniversary of Elsie's. Over 300 similar refuges are operating in Australia

JULY 2013

Members vote to expand the membership to all specialist domestic and family violence services and adopt the name Domestic Violence NSW. DVNSW starts a long journey of reform

2014

NSW state government domestic violence program 'Safer Pathways' is piloted

APRIL 2014

DVNSW launches the No Excuse campaign

MAY 2015

DVNSW establishes a semi skills-based Board

2015

Rosie Batty becomes Australian of the Year

2019

DVNSW formally establishes the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Steering Committee

2011

2010-2022 National Plan is launched

1995

The government sets up the NSW Violence Against Women Unit, held by the Attorney General's Department

1995

The WRM forms the Women's Action Network

2012

DVNSW co-convenes the inaugural NSW Women's Alliance

2013

The WRM is divided into Domestic Violence NSW (the peak body) and Domestic Violence Service Management (the direct service)

Apr 2014

Between Easter and Anzac Day, seven women and children are killed in a single week

2014

The NSW Industry Partnership is formed linking DVNSW, HNSW and Yfoundations

2014

Our Watch and ANROWS are established

2017

DVNSW launches the 2018-2020 strategic plan

2017

Primary prevention becomes a more prominent and considered solution to domestic violence

2021

DVNSW is contracted to represent the WDVCAS's.

ETHICS OF CARE

The DVNSW strategic plan is grounded in 'ethics of care'. What that means to us is that we centre our member's voices and all our relationships throughout our work. We will strive to ensure our stakeholders are listened to, respected, and their voices centralised as we amplify them.

An ethics of care directs all work we undertake, from policy development, submissions and advocacy to member communications and social media. Further and importantly, our ethics of care means we will carefully and with consideration ensure we centre the voices of people from marginalised groups and consult with purpose.



OVERVIEW

Domestic Violence NSW presents its strategic plan for 2021 to 2024. Our plan builds on the knowledge, experience, learnings and achievements of years gone by and recognises the foundations set by our sisters in 1974.

In the next three years we will maintain our commitment to a vision where women, families and communities in NSW live free from violence, have equal rights, equal opportunities and the freedom to reach their potential.

Our plan represents and promotes the specialist domestic and family violence sector working across a continuum of change including prevention, early intervention, crisis response and trauma recovery. Their work is unwavering and our passion to represent their expertise remains paramount.

Our momentum will be built through our advocacy, thought leadership, sector development and capacity building, and a collaborative approach that includes

community mobilisation, awareness, a commitment to change and empowers victim-survivors. Our plan ensures a strong sector voice which promotes positive change, as well as the flexibility to adapt to an ever-changing landscape.

The implementation of the plan will be monitored and evaluated as part of a strong governance system with a commitment to sustainability.

While we will continue to embrace a critical leadership role across our state, our work will not be done in isolation and we will continue to be collaborative to achieve all our goals and more.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

When DVNSW set out to design and implement a new three-year strategic plan, we knew it would be no small feat. Months of brainstorming, reviewing, analysing, consultation and planning went into the designing of a strategic plan that would reflect the goals and outcomes DVNSW is striving towards.

We wanted every facet of DVNSW – our members, lived expertise advocates, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, other key stakeholders including Government and other peak bodies – to have the opportunity to provide meaningful, considered input into the planning process. The consultation and design process started in January of 2021.

Consultation was a vital element for this strategic plan so we could wholeheartedly embrace learnings from prior years, celebrate and mobilise our strengths, and ensure our stakeholders were part of the new journey into the 2021-24 strategy which would see Domestic Violence NSW turn 50 years old.



The DVNSW team participated in a 2-day strategic planning workshop with an expert external facilitator



DVNSW conducted a member survey and held an online forum to consult with members, providing an open platform to discuss a draft version of the Strategic Plan



A consultation session with victim-survivors with lived expertise of domestic and family violence was held with the CEO to ensure their feedback and insights were prioritised as part of the proposed strategy



Utilising all the insights from the consultation process and aligned with our with operational capabilities, a final strategic plan was developed and approved by the board



DVNSW's CEO consulted with the Board alongside an expert external facilitator for two further strategic planning days



Specific consultations were held with the DVNSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Steering Committee for their input and expertise on two separate occasions



A quantitative and qualitative survey was conducted with DVNSW's Key Stakeholders including government, the NGO sector, corporate partners and peaks, with responses collected and evaluated

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



Core Strategy: To sustainably deliver effective, meaningful impact and change across the domestic and family violence sector that ultimately benefits NSW communities.

Strategic Priorities: To achieve our core strategy, we will focus on five strategic priority areas for the next three years.

1.

SECTOR
DEVELOPMENT AND
CAPACITY BUILDING

2.

PRIMARY
PREVENTION

3.

PROMOTION OF
SPECIALIST DFV
SERVICES AND
PROGRAMS

4.

ORGANISATIONAL
SUSTAINABILITY AND
CAPABILITY

5.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE
AND THOUGHT
LEADERSHIP

1.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA ONE

SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING



Based on consultation with the sector and members, DVNSW's work to support sector development and capacity building will focus on five priority areas:

1. Developing tools and resources for members to enhance sector capacity
2. Advocating for sector-wide cultural safety training
3. Increasing collaboration and information sharing across the sector
4. Increasing DFV workforce development and capacity
5. Promoting best practice, trauma-informed responses to DFV

To truly put an end to domestic and family violence, we need to change the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate abuse within our communities. DVNSW is placing emphasis on a primary prevention approach in the following areas:

1. Increasing awareness of the need for DFV primary prevention
2. Delivering DFV primary prevention education to communities
3. Advocating for increased funding for DFV services to deliver primary prevention programs
4. Developing primary prevention resources and tools for members

2.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA TWO

PRIMARY PREVENTION



3.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA THREE

PROMOTION OF SPECIALIST DFV SERVICES AND PROGRAMS



Specialist domestic and family violence services are trauma-informed, client-centred and experienced in responding to the needs of victim-survivors. DVNSW advocates strongly for the recognition of specialist services and programs with a focus on the following critical areas:

1. Promoting services and programs that are intersectional, feminist, trauma-informed and embedded in community
2. Ensuring the inclusion of marginalised communities in service delivery
3. Promoting a trauma-informed focus on children and young people
4. Advocating for sustainable long-term funding and contracts for specialist DFV services and programs
5. Increasing community awareness and education concerning the importance of specialist DFV services

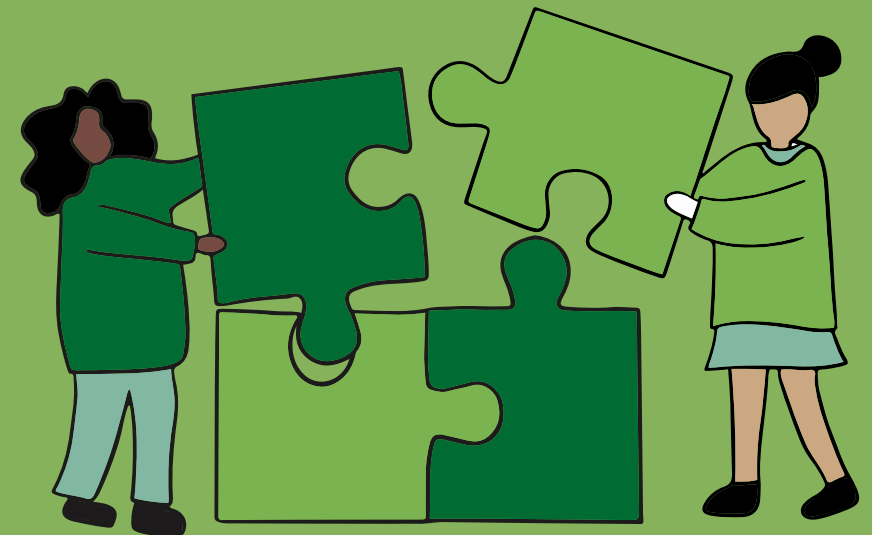
In order for DVNSW to be able to deliver the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, the organisation must be able to develop sustainably and have the necessary systems, processes and governance in place to support the work of the sector and what DVNSW delivers to its members. To do this, seven priority areas of focus have been identified:

1. Assuring sound financial management
2. Delivering value to members and developing the membership base
3. Increasing revenue through diversification and fundraising
4. Developing long-term mutually beneficial corporate partnerships
5. Designing and implementing an information and technology management strategy
6. Effective and robust reporting and governance
7. Implementing best practice HR policies, systems and workforce development

4.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA FOUR

ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPABILITY



5.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA FIVE

SYSTEMIC CHANGE AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



All our work is underpinned by an understanding of the intersectionality of domestic and family violence including disability, age, mental health, inter-generational trauma, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and immigrant status. In consultation with members and the wider sector, DVNSW has developed the following six key advocacy priorities:

1. Sustainable, non-competitive and long-term resourcing for the DFV sector
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities live safely and free from gendered violence
3. Children and young people are supported as victim-survivors in their own right and live free from gendered violence
4. Safe and sustainable housing pathways for women, children and LGBTQIA+ people experiencing gendered violence
5. A trauma and gendered-violence informed justice system
6. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities live safely and free from gendered violence



ADVOCACY PRIORITY ONE

Sustainable, non-competitive and long-term resourcing for the domestic and family violence sector.

The current domestic, sexual and family violence sector funding model leaves significant gaps in the service system, resulting in long waiting lists for services, a lack of case management services and inconsistent service availability across the state.

DVNSW is advocating to:

- Increase funding for sustainable, specialist DFV services to deliver critical support for women, children and LGBTIQ+ people experiencing violence
- Increase funding for the DFV workforce including reasonable pay and adequate support
- Promote specialist DFV services and programs
- Develop minimum standards for DFV services



ADVOCACY PRIORITY TWO

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities live safely and free from gendered violence.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are six times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to experience gendered violence. Research has shown that First Nations community-led family violence programs are more successful in helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experiencing violence.

DVNSW is advocating to:

- Increase the number of DFV services provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander controlled organisations
- Employ more specialised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-focused workers across all DFV services and establish a support network for identified workers
- Implement cultural safety training for specialist DFV services across NSW
- Support the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-led strategy to prevent gendered violence in NSW



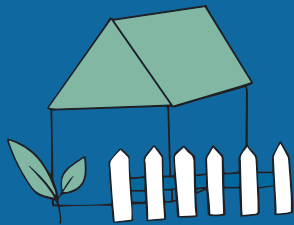
ADVOCACY PRIORITY THREE

Children and young people are supported as victim-survivors in their own right and live free from gendered violence

Children and young people who have experienced or been exposed to DFV are often overlooked as victims in their own right, even though experiencing family violence can have harmful, long-term impacts. The views and experiences of young people must be listened to when designing and evaluating DFV programs.

DVNSW is advocating to:

- Ensure the views and experiences of children and young people are considered in the analysing, design and evaluation of relevant services and programs
- Fund specialist workers for children and young people in DFV services, and specialist DFV workers in children's and young people's services and programs
- Implement age appropriate DFV awareness training and respectful relationship education in schools and preschools
- Train the DFV sector on child safe practices



ADVOCACY PRIORITY FOUR

Safe and sustainable housing options for victim-survivors of domestic violence.

Domestic and family violence is the leading cause of homelessness for women and children. The absence of appropriate exit accommodation and housing pathways can often mean victim-survivors are forced to return to their abusers. Victim-survivors cannot be truly safe or recover from trauma in the absence of safe and stable housing.

DVNSW is advocating to:

- Lobby government to deliver 5,000 new social and affordable homes every year in NSW for the next 10 years
- Invest \$500 million in a maintenance program across the existing social housing portfolio
- Increase funding for Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) by 25%
- Invest in social housing for specific marginalised communities including older women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disabilities and young people
- Ensure refuges are managed by high-quality DFV specialist, intersectional-feminist organisations



ADVOCACY PRIORITY FIVE

A trauma and gendered-violence informed justice system

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey 2016, 80% of domestic violence victims don't report abuse to the police. When they do, court matters are often delayed by up to 18 months and victim-survivors may be re-traumatised by the court experience.

DVNSW is advocating to:

- Increase long-term sustainable funding for specialist DFV services intersecting with the justice sector
- Improve DFV training for police, with a focus on appropriate responses to breaches of protection orders and correctly identifying the predominant aggressor
- Establish DFV specialisation within NSW courts, including trained police prosecutors and magistrates
- Pilot alternative dispute resolution solutions such as restorative justice, acknowledging most victim-survivors do not access the legal system



ADVOCACY PRIORITY SIX

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities live safely and free from violence

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse women experiencing violence face multiple challenges when accessing specialist domestic and family violence services. These can include language barriers, social isolation, lack of awareness of legal rights and fear of police and/or government authorities.

DVNSW is advocating to:

- Increase access to quality interpreters for DFV services and training for interpreters working in the DFV sector
- Increase support for primary prevention strategies for CALD communities
- Fund specialist DFV services working in CALD communities and funding for CALD and settlement services supporting women experiencing DFV
- Enable access to critical support for women on temporary visas (including Centrelink, Medicare and housing)

ROADMAP

ONE TO FIVE YEARS

DFV is higher on the political agenda

Government is actioning recommendations from DVNSW

Increased sector funding

Members have increased knowledge, tools and resources

Increased recognition of the need for and training on primary prevention of DFV

Improved lived experience knowledge base

Improved focus on marginalised communities

Improved focus on children and young people

Sector wide cultural safety training

Promoting best practice responses through members

Minimum standards developed

Increased collaboration and unity across the sector

Collective advocacy undertaken

FIVE TO TEN YEARS

Whole of government approach to DFV

Accountability measures in place for government on domestic and family violence initiatives

Increased DFV workforce development and capacity

Sustainable, long-term funding and contracts

Increased jobs in the sector

Increased, funded primary prevention and early intervention of DFV

Minimum service delivery standards embedded

Consistent, best-practice models across the sector

Increased community awareness and education

Reduced domestic and family violence

Reduced recidivism

Additional crisis, medium and long-term housing options available for people experiencing DFV

THE LONG TERM

Communities living free from gender-based violence

Gender equality

Women, families and communities in NSW have the freedom to reach their potential

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we build our future, we continue on the path of those who went before us. We stand on their powerful and passionate shoulders. We continue their work and continue to build our movement.

As we look towards 2024, our 50 year anniversary and beyond, we can see how all the steps in this journey, past present and future will lead to a society in which women and children will live free from violence.

We hope 2024 sees increased community awareness of the issue, we hope to see true accountability at all levels of government through a whole of system approach. We hope our work ensures sustainable, long-term funding, increased employment in our sector, recognition of the specialist workforce and commitment to its development, and ultimately, a reduction of the prevalence of domestic and family violence.

Our work will embrace partnership and collaborations. Respectfully, we walk this path with our members, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Steering Committee, our lived expertise advocates and reference groups, and our partner organisations, with the continued support of our funders, donors, volunteers and sponsors.

Together our voices will be louder, more inclusive and will create change.





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TO DONATE PLEASE VISIT:

www.dvnswnsw.org.au/donate/

With your help, we can make sure the frontline services who are supporting those experiencing domestic and family violence have the resources they need to do their critical work. Visit dvnswnsw.org.au/donate/ to get involved.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

1800 RESPECT

Phone: 1800 737 732

Website: 1800respect.org.au

24/7 National counselling helpline, information, and support

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LINE

Phone: 1800 656 643

Website: facts.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence

24/7 Domestic Violence helpline for information, support, and referral services in NSW.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IMPACT LINE

Phone: 1800 943 539

Website: www.rape-dvservices.org.au

24/7 National counselling line for anyone whose life has been impacted by domestic or family violence.

NO TO VIOLENCE- MENS REFERRAL SERVICE

Phone: 1300 766 491

Website: ntv.org.au

24/7 NSW helpline for men taking responsibility for their violent behaviour. Provides support and referrals for women and men seeking information on behalf of their male partners, friends or family members, and workers in a range of agencies seeking assistance for their clients who are men.

All content was correct at the time of publication.

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Registered Charity Logo

