

Ending Family and Sexual Violence

2025 Shared Policy platform

The Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance (TFSVA) is establishing the peak body for the Family and Sexual Violence (FSV) sector in Tasmania. We aim to work across the continuum of primary prevention, early intervention, response, healing and recovery to change the culture and systems that hold gender inequity and violence in place.

Commitment to ending family and sexual violence

Tasmania has taken important steps to address family and sexual violence, including through the Third Tasmanian Family Violence Action Plan and in responding to the Commission of Inquiry. This reflects a genuine commitment to real change - and we thank the many government and community workers and lived experience advocates who have helped drive this progress. But we must continue to build on this foundation with renewed commitment to a strategic and long-term focus.

This includes acknowledging that experiences of violence and abuse are shaped by power and inequity - we must work towards addressing these structural inequalities including colonisation, which is an enduring driver of violence that crucially impacts Aboriginal people.

The Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance (TFSVA) is calling on the next government to commit to ending family and sexual violence by ensuring that the community sector is recognised and resourced to continue our work in addressing the culture and systems that enable violence to occur and in meaningfully supporting every person affected by family and sexual violence.

From consultation with services and organisations that work directly with victim-survivors and in the prevention of family and sexual violence, we are calling on the next Tasmanian government to **prioritise the sustainability of the community services industry** and:

- 1. Prioritise long-term investment in primary prevention in the next Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan**
- 2. Work in genuine partnership with the Family and Sexual Violence (FSV) sector and lived experience advocates to review and reform the community-based FSV funding system**
- 3. Commit to a comprehensive Family and Sexual Violence (FSV) Workforce Development Strategy**

1. Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence

Family and sexual violence is preventable - but only if governments commit to sustained leadership to meet cultural and systemic change.

- **95,600 women in Tasmania** (43%) have experienced violence¹
- **63,100 women** have experienced intimate partner violence, and **58,400** have experienced sexual violence²
- **28.5% of people** have experienced sexual abuse as a child³

These experiences have far reaching impacts on the health, mental health, social and economic outcomes of victim-survivors. A 2016, KPMG report identified the costs – ‘Violence against women and children costs the economy \$26 billion each year, with victim-survivors bearing approximately 50% of that cost.’⁴

To end family and sexual violence, we need effective preventative strategies grounded in a public health approach. This requires integrated strategies that build on and reinforce each other at all levels of our society. The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032 sets a clear path forward, including eight core prevention objectives - from addressing gender inequality and promoting healthy masculinities, to listening to the voices of children, ensuring that Aboriginal communities have the resources to lead, design, and implement culturally safe, trauma-aware and healing-informed prevention initiatives, and building on initiatives that hold perpetrators to account so that victim-survivors are not left with the burden of managing the risk on their own.

Tasmania must embrace these objectives and scale up what we already know works here, while addressing the specific needs of our local communities.

TFSVA calls on the next Tasmanian government to:

Prioritise long-term investment in primary prevention in the next Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan, including:

- *Scaling up local programs that are working.*
 - *Alignment of prevention activity with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032, the Change for Children Strategy and Action Plan and target 13 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.*
 - *Ensuring investment in Aboriginal-led, place-based prevention programs across lutruwita/Tasmania.*
 - *Supporting implementation through whole-of-government collaboration and community sector partnerships.*
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2. Meeting the current needs of all Victim-Survivors

Despite increases in government investment – family and sexual violence services remain under pressure. We are hearing that demand continues to grow, and victim-survivors are waiting weeks or even months and years for support. These delays put people at risk, and impact on all areas of their life.

- Family violence incidents increased by **60%** from 2015-16 to 2023-24⁵
- The number of recorded child witnesses to family violence increased by **80%** from 2017-2024⁶
- **158%** increase in reported sexual assault from 2014 to 2023⁷

Services report people needing more intensive and longer-term assistance, alongside a focus on meeting the specific needs of children, Aboriginal communities, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and those who are acutely vulnerable – for example people on temporary visa permits who have no access to Centrelink and unable to pay for transport, groceries, housing or healthcare - they face the impossible choice of staying with their abuser.

As a service system we must acknowledge that experiences of violence and abuse are shaped by power and inequity – including colonisation, racism, ableism, poverty, sexism, homophobia and transphobia. An effective system must be grounded in an equity framework that actively redresses these structural inequalities and centres the autonomy and needs of those who are most marginalised within our communities.

Meeting service needs at the community level is complex and intersects with housing and crisis accommodation, health, mental health, AoD, legal, Aboriginal services, Multicultural services, LGBTIQ+ services, disability, childcare, youth and financial services, alongside government services and departments.

The DFSV Commissioner’s yearly report identifies the critical need to address the capacity of our service systems through reviewing funding levels and identifying new ways to fund services to ensure effective responses and outcomes.⁸

TFSVA calls on the next Tasmanian government to:

Work in genuine partnership with the FSV sector and lived experience advocates to review and reform the community-based FSV funding system, this must include

- Mapping of funding against predictors of service demand - including regional and cultural needs, and wrap around services that support victim-survivors

- Ensuring funded services and organisations align to evidence-based quality frameworks grounded in addressing power and inequity.

- Enable greater flexibility in funding agreements so that organisations can determine effective service provision to meet the best outcomes for victim-survivors.

3. Building the Capacity of the Family and Sexual Violence Workforce

The FSV sector cannot meet growing needs or address primary prevention without a strong, valued, diverse and skilled workforce.

The National Survey of Workers in the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Sectors, indicates that nearly half the workforce feels emotionally drained, and many are unsure whether their roles will continue.⁹ This level of stress is not sustainable, and it risks driving skilled workers out of the sector. Tasmania is behind other jurisdictions like Queensland, Victoria, and the ACT, where workforce strategies are already underway.

For Tasmania to deliver on its commitments to address gendered violence and child sexual abuse, a coordinated, strategic and inclusive approach to workforce development is required. We need a holistic approach to workforce development that builds long-term capability across all services that intersect with family and sexual violence - from specialist support to health, education, justice, and child protection. A workforce strategy must align with future workforces spanning across specialist family and sexual violence sectors including primary prevention, health, justice and education so that we are working together to respond to the complexity and harms of family and sexual violence and in preventing it from occurring.

We must equally commit to effective attraction and retention strategies for the specialist family and sexual violence and primary prevention workforces with consideration of tailored approaches for regional and rural communities. And we must ensure that our workforce reflects the diversity of the Tasmanian community, providing services and spaces that are culturally safe, appropriate and accessible. By doing so, Tasmania can ensure that the right people are equipped with the right skills to offer effective, compassionate, and sustained responses to violence and abuse, safeguarding the future of all Tasmanian communities.¹⁰

TFSVA calls on the next Tasmanian government to:

Commit to a comprehensive FSV Workforce Development Strategy that:

- Aligns workforce capabilities with the needs of victim-survivors, priority populations and local communities.*
 - Plans for workforce growth and expansion, including in regional and remote areas and in reflecting the diversity of the Tasmanian community.*
 - Recognises the importance of a culturally strong Aboriginal FSV workforce, including cultural supervision pathways, and funding roles that support Aboriginal leadership across the system.*
 - Lifts capability across all intersecting sectors with foundational education and ongoing training.*
 - Recognises and leverages the expertise of lived experience advocates.*
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Tasmania is ready to take the next steps in committing to and ending family and sexual violence.

With strong, dedicated leadership across government departments and the community sector, and the voices of lived experience central to decision making – we can end family and sexual violence – but we need the next government to commit to a long-term focus on prevention, strengthening our service system, and support the development of a skilled and sustainable workforce.

Media guidelines:

The following media guidelines have been developed to support safe, respectful and accurate reporting on family and sexual violence:

- Our Watch - Guidelines for reporting on violence against women
<https://www.ourwatch.org.au/media-reporting/resources/guidelines-for-reporting>
- National Office for Child Safety - Reporting on child sexual abuse
<https://www.childsafety.gov.au/what-we-do/reporting-child-sexual-abuse-guidance-media-and-victims-and-survivors>

Supports and services in Tasmania:

When sharing information about family and sexual violence in Tasmania, we encourage the inclusion of the following services:

- If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000)
- Family Violence Counselling and Support Service (FVCSS) 1800 608 122
- For 24-hour sexual assault support call 1800 697 877 (1800 MY SUPPORT)
- If you are worried about your behaviour, please call the MENS program on 1300 364 27

References:

- ¹ ABS, Personal Safety, Australia. 'Personal Safety Survey 2021-2022', <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/personal-safety-australia/latest-release#data-downloads>
- ² Ibid
- ³ Australian Child Maltreatment Study: National prevalence and associated health outcomes of child abuse and neglect', 2023 <https://www.acms.au/>
- ⁴ Australian Government, 'National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032' <https://www.dss.gov.au/national-plan-end-gender-based-violence>
- ⁵ Tasmanian Government, The Tasmanian Gender Budget Statement 2024-2025 https://www.women.tas.gov.au/tasmanian_government_policy_and_programs/gender-budget-statements
- ⁶ Tasmania Police, Corporate Performance Reports <https://www.police.tas.gov.au/about-us/our-performance/>
- ⁷ Tasmanian Government, The Tasmanian Gender Budget Statement 2025-2026 <https://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/budget-and-financial-management/2025-26-tasmanian-budget>
- ⁸ Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission, 2024 'Yealy report to Parliament', <https://www.dfsvc.gov.au/resources/commission-reports>
- ⁹ University of NSW Social Policy Research Centre (as cited in Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission, 2024 'Yealy report to Parliament') <https://www.dfsvc.gov.au/resources/commission-reports>
- ¹⁰ Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance 2025/26 Budget Priorities Submission <https://www.tfsva.org.au/our-work/submissions>