

MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget commitment welcome, but flat funding will not end violence

The Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance (TFSVA) acknowledges the Tasmanian Government's commitment of \$83 million toward addressing family, domestic and sexual violence. However, in the context of rising demand, workforce pressures, inflation and persistently high rates of violence against women and children, maintaining funding alone will not be enough to meet need or drive change.

The Alliance warns that without growth in investment aligned to demand, pressure across the system will continue, with costs ultimately borne by women, children and communities.

Violence against women and children is not inevitable - but without sustained, long-term investment in prevention, early intervention and specialist responses to family violence, sexual violence and child sexual abuse, Tasmania risks continuing to respond to violence rather than preventing it.

TFSVA CEO Bree Klerck said the budget comes at a deeply distressing time for the Tasmanian community.

"In the past week, two women have died in circumstances that are before the appropriate authorities. We acknowledge the profound grief being felt by families, loved ones, communities, victim-survivors and frontline workers," Ms Klerck said.

"We continue to call violence against women and children a national crisis, yet both Federal and State Budgets don't go far enough to reflect the scale or urgency of the crisis."

"At the same time, we recognise important commitments in this Budget that provide a foundation to build from," Ms Klerck said.

The Alliance welcomes core funding for TFSVA as the peak body. This is an important step toward ensuring a strong, independent voice for the sector and victim-survivors, and supporting a more coordinated, whole-of-community and whole-of-government approach to ending men's violence.

This creates an opportunity to strengthen coordination and system accountability - but coordination must be matched with sustained, long-term investment across the full system.

The Alliance said maintaining current funding levels provides important stability, but without growth and long-term funding certainty, there is a risk that service capacity will be eroded over time as costs increase, demand continues to rise and wait times persist.

“No one should have to wait for safety, therapeutic support, or justice because the system is under-resourced,” Ms Klerck said.

The Alliance also called for urgent investment to address forensic service gaps in the North and North-West.

“No victim-survivor should have to wait hours or days for a forensic examination after a sexual assault,” Ms Klerck said. “Delays compound trauma and can impact access to justice. This is a critical gap that must be addressed.”

The Alliance reinforced the importance of maintaining momentum on the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government’s Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.

“We already know what needs to change to keep children safe,” Ms Klerck said. “This work must continue to be clearly prioritised, properly funded and implemented with urgency and integrity.”

“Children’s safety cannot be diluted through structural change - it must remain central to reform.”

The Alliance also highlighted the need to support implementation of *Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices*, including investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to lead prevention, response and healing work for Aboriginal victim-survivors.

The Alliance reiterated its commitment to working constructively with government to strengthen the system and improve outcomes for victim-survivors.

“This is complex, long-term work, and we are ready to work with government to get this right,” Ms Klerck said. “Violence against women and children is preventable - but prevention requires sustained investment, coordination and action.”

“Tasmania cannot expect better outcomes while asking overstretched services to do more with effectively the same level of investment. Women’s and children’s safety must remain a genuine funding priority, not simply a policy aspiration.”

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