

Perth
Rotary



Path of Hope

Perth Rotary
support



Path of Hope Annual Report

*Prepared by The Salvation Army for the
Rotary Club of Perth*

FY 2022-23

A Snapshot of our Western Australian FDV Services over the previous 2022/23 FY

Below is a summary of accomplishments and challenges faced by our services across the 2022/23 financial year.

Stakeholder Engagement

During the reporting period, the team have been working towards establishing and solidifying collaborative relationships with stakeholders within The Salvation Army and external services. These partnerships have allowed for seamless referral pathways for clients and improved communication between local service providers. The service has established a relationship with Homeless Health Care (HHC) who attends our site to provide general practice services to clients. A female GP and Registered Nurse attend weekly, and the consistency of clinicians has been extremely beneficial for clients accessing the service. It has improved relationships and ensures all medical health concerns are addressed, supported, and followed up. Having the service onsite has reduced stress for clients by removing the need to attend medical center's where there have been concerns about travelling to unsafe places, overcrowded medical center's, fear of being judged, and inconsistent responses when accessing multiple GPs. Positively, clients accessing the service has increased and HHC have requested additional hours to attend and provide their services.

During the reporting period, Graceville Community Outreach team have commenced working in partnership with Doorways Perth to support the increase in women presenting for Emergency Relief support who are experiencing FDV and or financially unstable due to leaving an abusive and controlling relationship. This partnership is already proving to be a huge success and both services have been motivated by the support they are able to offer the women presenting to the service and each other. Having an additional funding for our outreach service has made this partnership possible to manage the current service demands and provide reach to women who may not be ready to present at FVD services. The focus is to provide initial intervention and support based on risk and need. The FV Case Manager's conduct risk assessments with the women, work on safety plans, provide emotional support, FDV awareness and referrals to other specialist services.

The service also engaged Services Australia who attend the site fortnightly to support the clients with accessing Centrelink, Medicare and My Gov services. Many women often present to our service who have experienced financial abuse which results in a lack of confidence and understanding in navigating their finances. Having access to this onsite promotes financial independence and provides awareness and education around financial stability.

Karratha Safe Places - Current Progress

Karratha Women's Refuge is the only crisis accommodation available to the Karratha community and surrounds. Currently, the refuge does not sufficiently meet the needs of the community. Given this, TSA's FDV stream applied for a Safe Places grant in late 2019 to support the redevelopment of the site. The service has been successful in securing additional contributions from companies within the resource sector such as Woodside and Rio Tinto. These additional funds have provided us with the capacity to expand on our original proposal of 10 units to 14 units. The project is currently

progressing well with an estimated time frame of completion by June 2024. The Department of Communities have committed to ongoing operational funding towards the 14 units.

The Salvation Army Family and Domestic Violence Model of Care Launch

The Salvation Army Family and Domestic Violence Stream launched National Family Violence Model of Care at Parliament House in Canberra on December 1, 2022 with support from Assistant Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence and Social Services, the Hon Justine Elliot MP.

The Model of Care framework provides a unified and individualised approach to supporting women and children impacted by family and domestic violence. It recognises the significant impacts of family violence across a broader range of relationship contexts, meaning it recognises all intimate relationships and various immediate family, extended family, kinship and carer relationships, with focus on prevention, restoration and healing using evidence-based theories and frameworks.

Art Therapy Workshops

For clients who have experienced family and domestic violence, art therapy can play a beneficial role in holistic healing and processing of trauma. GWCC introduced an eight-week art therapy program to provide clients with a space to creatively explore inner experiences, develop awareness and support personal change. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the program with clients expressing the environment created a comfortable, non-threatening and non-judgmental space to process difficult emotions and experiences.

Staff training and development

The WA Family Violence team have completed several training courses during this reporting period. This enhanced the team's knowledge and understanding of FDV by focusing on intersectionality and the complexities faced by a diverse range of clients. The service is committed to providing our team with the opportunities to learn, grow and develop their skills to provide best practice responses to clients.

Some of the training included:

- The Safe and Together Model
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
- Supporting Children and Young People to heal from trauma
- Professional Boundaries
- Circle of Security

All staff regularly engage in clinical supervision sessions through one-on-one and bi-monthly group sessions. This additional support offers our team the opportunity to dedicate time to reflective practice, work through challenges and identify and adopt strategies and coping skills to manage the complexities of working in the space of FDV. This support reduces the risk of burnout,

compassion fatigue and overwhelming emotions when supporting people who have experienced harm and trauma.

Women's Therapeutic Wellness Group

During the reporting period, GWCC introduced a supportive, safe group program for clients to provide psychoeducation and information on FDV and help to reduce the social isolation that is often experienced by victim-survivors. The program was developed and facilitated by our counselling team. The group attracted a high number of women wanting to participate. During the 8-week block, the group was evaluated, and the feedback was positive. Some of the feedback included:

- *"The group helped me better understand how children feel when exposed to FDV".*
- *"I feel more confident in my decision making around my relationship".*
- *"The group were always very respectful of our stories"..*
- *"I have more confidence and improved self-esteem. I feel I can now better identify aggressive behaviours".*
- *"I feel more confident to give counselling a go now".*
- *"I learned about control and how abusive people can draw you in if you are not able to see what they are doing and planning".*
- *"I felt heard and understood, I didn't feel so alone".*
- *"I gained knowledge and skills to help me in the future for a happier and safe life".*
- *"I am realising I am worth more and deserve better".*

Housing Crisis

The current housing crisis continues to have a significant impact on service delivery. It has drastically increased the price of private rentals and created a competitive and unaffordable market for many of our clients. The availability of viable medium- and long- term accommodation options is also limited and wait times are lengthy. Clients are often single income families or rely on government subsidies/income which limits options and is challenging when planning for service exits. With the limited options available, clients are staying in the service for longer periods, and this has a knock-on effect for those trying to access support. On average, the service works to a length of stay of 12-weeks but for some this has been pushed out to 4-6 months. This is not only challenging for the victim-survivors ready to rebuild their lives but also for the woman and their children seeking to leave current FDV situations. With no access to services or appropriate housing options, women are often forced to remain in unsafe situations or resort to homelessness in attempt to stay safe. Both types of victim-survivors identified are at a high risk of being re-victimised and experiencing ongoing abuse. The limitations experienced leave them more vulnerable to their abusers and less likely to seek support.

For those in our service trying to plan their next steps, these challenges impact their emotional and psychology wellbeing as the uncertainty around where to live increases stress, anxiety and fear, and hinders the healing and recovery process. This also has a detrimental impact for the children who have witnessed or experienced family and domestic violence. These children often require stability

and support to heal from trauma. The lack of suitable housing options disrupts their education, social connect, and overall wellbeing.

With increased limitations for exit options, the service struggles to support the high number of referrals received from individuals and other services. Across the reporting period, Graceville Women's Centre could only cater to 8%* of the demand. Service capacity cannot continue to be a barrier for women and children seeking support when they've bravely attempted to engage support. If this pattern continues it will perpetuate the impact of FDV across generations.

*This calculation is unit heads only and therefore does not include the number of children).

Women and Children on Temporary visa's

Our service has observed an increase in women on temporary visas and in most cases their visa is attached to the person causing harm. For many of these victim-survivors, English is their second language and they have faced unique barriers when trying to access service support such as lack of knowledge about available services, distrust in authorities, language barriers, limited financial resources, limited social networks, and fear of deportation. International students, migrant workers and individuals on visiting visas all experience unique vulnerabilities and challenges that need to be better understood to provide culturally sensitive and holistic service responses. The increasing number of victim-survivors who hold temporary visas suggests the need for specialised support services specifically catering to the needs of these vulnerable victim-survivors and their children.

Family Violence - Adult children perpetrating violence

During the reporting period the service observed an increase in presentations of violence perpetrated by adult children towards their mothers. The family violence risk factors in all presentations included childhood experience of family and domestic violence and traumas associated with this included the child being removed from the mother's care at one or more point during their childhood. The prevalence of mental health issues, self-harm and/or suicidality and alcohol or drug misuse was also a common factor. In these cases, the clients identified extreme emotional distress in responding to and reporting incidents in order to keep themselves and their other children/grandchildren in their care safe. All clients reported immense feelings of guilt, especially around considering having to apply for Family Violence Restraining Orders and the impacts this has on the future relationship between them and their adult children.

2022/23 Financials

In 2021/22, the Rotary Club of Perth raised \$165,638.40 for The Salvation Army's WA Family and Domestic Violence Stream for use across the 2022/23 financial year. The purpose and direction of the funds were agreed to in partnership and funds were allocated to be used for the following programs:

Expansion of Outreach and Counselling Services

1.5 FTE Community Outreach Case Manager

The additional funding from Path of Hope has significantly expanded the response to family and domestic violence in Perth. Through increased capacity to respond, enhanced support services, community outreach, and collaboration, the funding has improved the overall support and safety for victim survivors and their families. Expanding the service has also strengthened partnerships with other organisations and agencies working to address family and domestic violence. This collaboration has enhanced the coordination of services, improved referral pathways, and maximised the impact of resources in providing comprehensive support to victim survivors.

Investing in additional specialised staff has supported the collection of data and research efforts to better understand the prevalence, impact, and patterns of family and domestic violence in Perth. This data-driven approach will inform evidence-based practices, policy recommendations, and advocacy efforts to drive systemic change.

The positive impact of this investment is reflected in the increased number of individuals accessing services, improved outcomes, and the gradual transformation of the community's response to family and domestic violence. Continued investment and support will be crucial in sustaining and further expanding these vital services in the future.

Part Time Adult Family Violence Counsellor (0.4FTE)

The Adult Counsellor provides support, trauma recovery and resiliency to a diverse range of clients including women in refuge, those living in transitional accommodation, and outreach clients. The funding has facilitated the provision of specialized family and domestic violence counselling and therapeutic groups and services for victim survivors, helping them heal from trauma, re-build self-esteem and develop coping mechanisms. The position is funded two days per week and relies on the Path of Hope donation to continue.

Part-Time Child Family Violence Counsellor (0.2 FTE)

The Child Counsellor provides counselling support and group facilitation to children in refuge and transitional accommodation at Graceville Women's Refuge. The position is primarily funded by a philanthropic donation (0.4FTE) but also relies on the Path to Hope funding for a third workday (0.2FTE). The Child Counsellor works closely with the children to provide trauma and resiliency counselling. The Child Counsellor also regularly liaises with the parents, refuge service and child's schools to provide trauma-informed responses and improve child safety and well-being.

Outcomes

- 61 clients were supported within our Graceville Community Outreach service during the 2022/23 reporting period.
- 437 counselling sessions provided to adults and children.
- 180 women and children accommodated in our WA FV crisis accommodation services.
- 54% of all clients within our accommodation services identified as Aboriginal or Torres strait Islander.
- 16 clients including children were supported with obtaining visa rights in Australia.
- Successful in obtaining Primary Prevention grant to develop and run Primary Prevention program.
- Upgrades to Graceville Women's and Children's centre Welcome Room
- WA Family Violence State Agenda developed and implemented.

Case Studies

Emily

This is Emily, a brave survivor who sought outreach support after escaping an abusive family and domestic violence situation.

Emily had been enduring years of physical, emotional, and psychological abuse from her partner within her home. The situation had escalated to a point where Emily realised, she needed to leave for her own safety and the well-being of her children. She took the courageous step of reaching out to The Salvation Army's Family Violence Community Outreach service.

Emily self-referred to the service after she had heard about our outreach program through a friend who had accessed The Salvation Army for support previously. Emily had an initial phone assessment to discuss her risk, needs and current safety. The outreach case manager helped her devise a safety plan and took note of her immediate needs, ensuring she was not alone during this difficult time.

Emily met with Sarah the outreach case manager at the service two days after the initial call. Sarah became her main point of contact throughout her journey to safety and healing. Sarah met with Emily to conduct a comprehensive assessment, taking into account her specific circumstances, strengths, and goals. This assessment allowed Sarah to create a tailored support plan.

Sarah worked closely with Emily to create a safety plan that included identifying potential risks, securing safe accommodation, and connecting her with relevant support services. Emily identified a friend who had offered to support her accommodation needs and who Emily felt safe staying with until longer term options were explored.

Recognising the importance of addressing Emily's emotional well-being, and providing Emily with options around support, Sarah connected her with a specialised counsellor at Graceville Women's and Childrens Services. Through regular counselling sessions, Emily was able to work through her experiences, heal from the trauma, and regain her self-confidence. The counsellor also provided valuable guidance on coping strategies and self-care practices.

As part of the case management process, Sarah connected Emily with legal professionals who specialised in domestic violence cases. They supported her in obtaining a Family Violence restraining order, navigating the legal system, and understanding her rights and options. Sarah acted as an advocate, accompanying Emily to court hearings and ensuring she felt supported throughout the legal process.

Sarah assisted Emily in accessing educational and employment opportunities. She connected her with vocational training programs, helped her update her resume, and supported her in job search endeavours. Sarah also provided information about financial assistance programs and budgeting strategies to help Emily regain financial independence.

Throughout the journey, Sarah encouraged Emily to rebuild her support network. She connected her with local support groups and community organisations where she could connect with other survivors and share experiences. Sarah emphasised the importance of creating a strong support system to promote long-term healing and resilience.

Sarah supported and advocated for Emily to be considered for transitional property at Graceville Women's and Children's Centre. Emily was offered a 3-bedroom unit for her and her children to move into. Emily was able to continue with case management support, counselling and her training program due to having a safe place to stay and heal from the trauma she had experienced. Emily's children were supported by the refuge team and linked in with the children's counsellor to support their emotional needs and well-being.

Liam

Liam, an eight-year-old Aboriginal child, had been exposed to ongoing family and domestic violence within his household. The traumatic experiences he witnessed and endured took a toll on his emotional well-being and overall development. Recognising the need for support, Liam and his mother sought refuge at Graceville Women's and Children's Centre.

The refuge provided a culturally safe and welcoming environment for Liam and his mother. The staff team are trained in Aboriginal cultural protocols and demonstrated a deep understanding of the specific challenges faced by Aboriginal individuals within the context of domestic violence. This created a sense of belonging and trust for Liam, allowing him to feel comfortable seeking help.

Liam was assigned a dedicated counsellor, Sandi, who had expertise in working with children impacted by trauma. Sandi employed a trauma-informed approach, recognising the impact of violence on Liam's psychological well-being. She created a safe and supportive space where Liam could express his emotions, fears, and concerns at his own pace.

Sandi prioritised building trust and rapport with Liam. She utilised therapeutic techniques that aligned with Aboriginal cultural practices, such as storytelling, art therapy, and connection to nature. These approaches resonated with Liam's cultural background and helped him feel more comfortable sharing his experiences.

Understanding the importance of safety, both physical and emotional, Sandi worked closely with Liam to develop safety plans. They explored strategies to manage feelings of fear or anxiety, and Sandi provided age-appropriate education about healthy relationships and boundaries. This empowered Liam to develop a sense of agency and control over his own well-being.

Recognising the significance of cultural healing, Sandi incorporated Aboriginal cultural practices into their sessions. They explored Liam's identity, heritage, and connection to his Aboriginal community. Sandi engaged in activities that celebrated Aboriginal culture, such as storytelling, traditional art, and learning about Aboriginal history and spirituality. This allowed Liam to develop a positive sense of self and pride in his cultural identity.

Sandi worked collaboratively with Liam's mother and engaged her in the counselling process. Regular family sessions were conducted to address any family dynamics impacted by domestic violence and to strengthen the bond between Liam and his mother. Sandi also collaborated with local Aboriginal community organisations to provide additional support and resources for the family's healing journey.

As Liam and his mother prepared to transition out of the refuge, Sandi ensured a smooth transfer of care. She connected the family with ongoing counselling services in their community and provided support in accessing other relevant services, such as educational support, healthcare, and community programs. This holistic approach aimed to foster long-term healing and resilience.

Liam's journey exemplifies the positive impact of culturally sensitive counselling support within a family and domestic violence service. By prioritising Liam's cultural identity, creating a safe space, and employing trauma and violence-informed techniques, our services can help Aboriginal children affected by domestic violence heal, grow, and reclaim their sense of self. Through collaboration, ongoing support, and a deep respect for cultural practices, we can empower Aboriginal children like Liam to thrive and break the cycle of violence.

Future Plans

Goals and objectives

- Alignment of our WA FV Agenda with the National FV Agenda ensuring continuous quality improvement and service excellence is informed by National and State Government Frameworks.
- Developing partnerships including with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, LGBTQIA+, CALD and disability organisations and services.
- Build on primary prevention and early intervention opportunities, including community and place-based education (such as workplaces and educational institutions).
- Improve exit options for clients including increased TSA long-term housing availability.
- Promoting broader social equality by ensuring all work is intersectional and collaborative through strong participation in policy, development, and design.
- Service expansion to meet the increased demand for crisis accommodation across the state.
- Repurpose the recreational kitchen (not in use) area at Graceville

We are so very grateful for the continued support of Path of Hope through the Rotary Club of Perth. We simply could not achieve nor provide the expanded level of support that we do without you!

Thank you



