



SAFE+EQUAL

Standing strong
against family
violence

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Safe and Equal acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional and ongoing custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded and recognise First Nations peoples' rights to self-determination and continuing connections to land, waters and community.



HONOURING VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS

Safe and Equal honours the strength and resilience of adults, children and young people who have experienced family violence and recognises that it is essential that responses to family violence are informed by their expert knowledge and advocacy. We pay respects to those who have not survived and acknowledge the lasting impacts of this preventable violence on families and communities.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

At Safe and Equal we value different perspectives, ways of thinking and ways of knowing. Our diversity is our strength.

We welcome people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, including people with disability and people with different cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, lived experiences, gender identities, sexual orientations and religions.

Together we foster a culture where everybody can belong, connect and succeed. We endeavour to be flexible and meet people where they are with openness and curiosity. We respect and honour First Nations peoples' rights to self-determination and cultural safety, and we work in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are bold in our advocacy for a more just world. We are an Equal Opportunity employer, an accredited Rainbow Tick workplace and do not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment.

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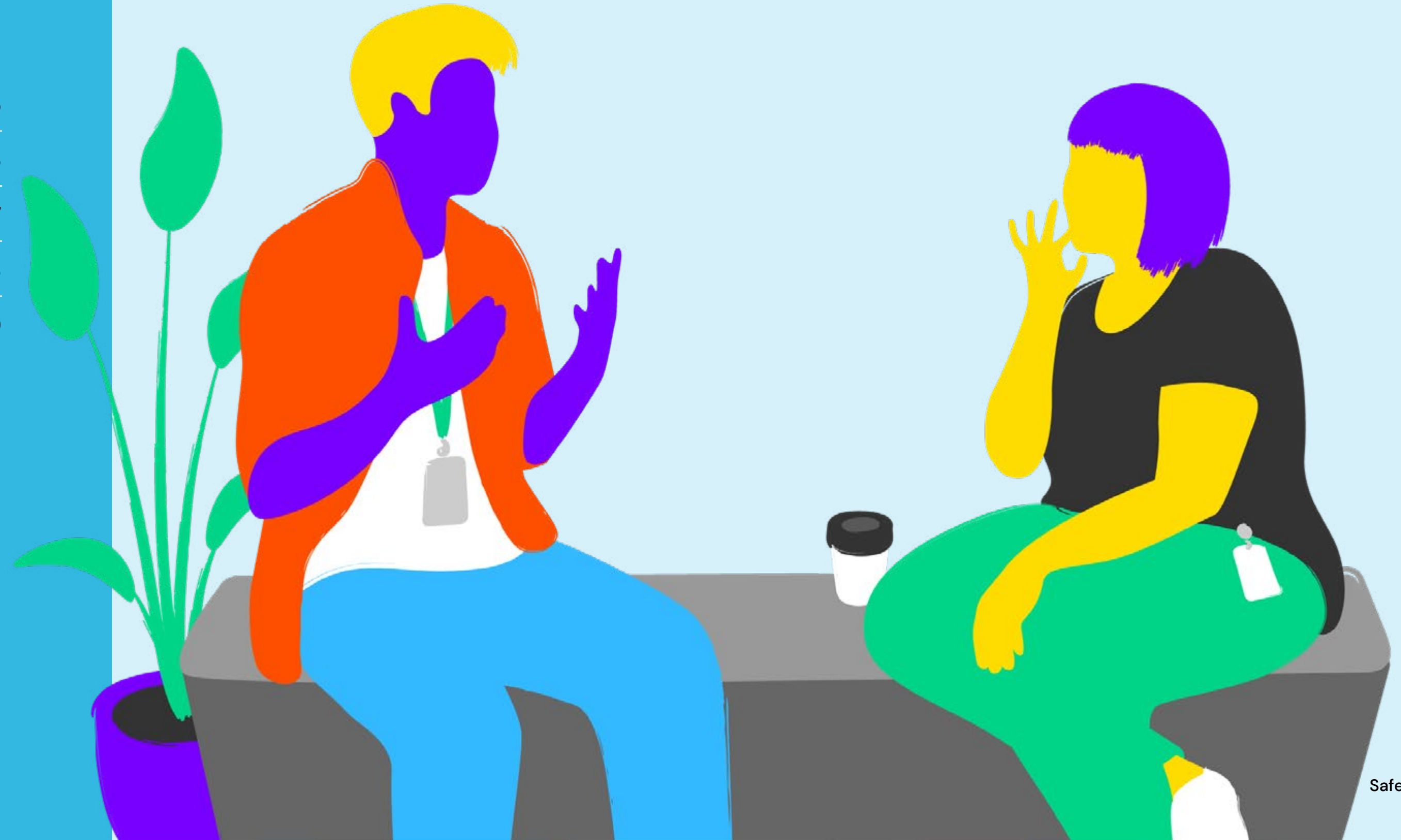
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ABOUT US

Safe and Equal is the peak body for specialist family violence services that provide support to victim survivors in Victoria, across the continuum from prevention through to response. The interest of people experiencing, recovering from, or at risk of family violence is at the heart of everything we do.

OUR VISION

A world beyond family and gender-based violence, where women, children and all people from marginalised communities are safe, thriving and respected.

OUR VALUES



We are accountable, act ethically and have integrity



We are independent, expert and trusted



We are curious and courageous, we learn, and from this we create opportunities



We work with care, compassion and kindness



We create our own future

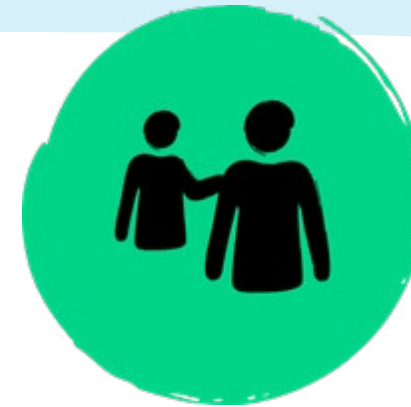


We strive for gender equity and a socially just world

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2021 — 2024

PRIORITY 1



Developing practice and supporting workforces

We develop family violence practice and support workforces to ensure that victim survivors are safe, their rights are upheld, and their needs are met. The prevalence and impact of family and gender-based violence will be reduced because we are building a strong and effective workforce responding to victim survivors that can meet the needs of the community we serve, while also having a growing and impactful workforce working to prevent violence.

PRIORITY 2



Strengthening and connecting organisations, sectors and systems

We work to strengthen and connect organisations, sectors, and systems to achieve safe and just outcomes for victim survivors irrespective of entry point, jurisdiction and individual circumstances. Joining efforts across prevention, intervention, response and recovery, we work to ensure the family violence system is informed and supported by a well-resourced and sustainable specialist sector. Our contributions to primary prevention workforces, initiatives and alliances contribute to social change for a safer and more respectful community.

PRIORITY 3



Building momentum for social change

We are building momentum for social change that drives meaningful action across institutions, settings, and systems for a safer and more equal society. Our workforce and practice development efforts are coupled with a partnership approach that builds community awareness and commitment to change. Our expertise and efforts enable citizens across the community to recognise and respond to family and gender-based violence, hold perpetrators to account and support the ongoing recovery and empowerment of victim survivors.

PRIORITY 4



Building a strong peak organisation

We are a strong peak organisation providing sustainable and influential leadership to achieve our vision. The work we do and the way we work are integrated and align with our values. This is achieved through inclusive culture, and a safe and accessible workplace supported by robust systems and processes.

CHAIR'S REPORT



Maria Dimopoulos
Board Chair, Safe and Equal

Merging two long-established organisations is no easy feat. Stepping into the role of Chair for the newly re-launched **Safe and Equal** in February 2022, I was impressed with the strategic, considered and values-driven approach that had so clearly underpinned the joining together of **Domestic Violence Victoria** and the **Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria**.

Six years on from the Royal Commission into Family Violence, we find ourselves at a critical juncture in Victoria and nationally.

The building blocks of major reform are in place, but there remains a great deal to be done to ensure our system is responsive, accessible and inclusive for all people experiencing or at risk of family violence.

Against this backdrop, it's no understatement to say the past few years have been incredibly challenging for the specialist family violence sector. As we continue to adjust to a new 'COVID-normal', victim survivors and specialist services are still reeling from the impacts of the pandemic.

The ever-increasing demand for our services and escalating complexity of risk to victim survivors has underpinned all our work at **Safe and Equal** this year and will continue to do so as we call for a more sustainably funded, accessible service system; one that responds to the needs and experiences of all victim survivors, with workforces that are appropriately supported to do this critical, specialised work.

The merger of DV Vic and DVRCV and the articulation of new strategic priorities, along with the current reform landscape, has created the opportunity for **Safe and Equal** and our sector to define our own agenda, responsive to while expanding beyond current government priorities.

A nuanced intersectional analysis must be embedded within this agenda, recognising the ways that all systems of power and oppression intersect with and compound gender inequality to increase family violence risk and create barriers to safety.

I'm excited about the work that **Safe and Equal** can do, collaboratively with our many partners across communities and sectors, to strengthen our intersectional lens as it applies to preventing and responding to family violence.

Also of critical importance are the partnerships we are building with First Nations communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Safe and Equal has a leading role to play in bringing together the broader specialist family sector to strengthen our approaches and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to culturally safe service responses, no matter which part of the system they engage with.

I am consistently impressed with not only the quality and depth of the work that the team at **Safe and Equal** engages in, but also the breadth and diversity.

As we take time to reflect on **Safe and Equal's** achievements across the past 12 months, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board for their ongoing hard work and dedication.

I want to acknowledge and farewell Belinda Lo, Helen Bolton, Julie McQueen, Leah van Poppel and Sally Thompson, who all served on the Transition Board, and to welcome Felicity Rorke and Libby Jewson, who joined **Safe and Equal's** Board in November 2021. I also particularly want to recognise Stacey Ong's leadership, as Interim Chair from July 2021 – January 2022.

I wish to thank our CEO Tania Farha for her leadership this past financial year, particularly during a time of organisational change and complexity. I'd also like to commend all the staff at **Safe and Equal** as well as the broader specialist family violence sector for their unwavering commitment to ending family and gender-based violence.

I am truly excited for the next 12 months.

CEO'S REPORT



Tania Farha
CEO, Safe and Equal

It has been another huge year at **Safe and Equal**, and for our members. Demand for specialist family violence services continues to increase as we grapple with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and our stretched specialist workforces are feeling the strain.

These issues have underscored our advocacy at the state level throughout the year. Specialist services need more funding, for longer terms, in order to deliver safe, effective, best-practice support. The **Measuring Family Violence Demand** project, commenced in 2021, sought to build the evidence base for a funding uplift, reflecting increasing demand, and this evidence building work continues.

Building a sustainable specialist workforce requires concerted efforts not only to attract and train up new workers, but also to improve working conditions, expand development opportunities and strengthen career pathways to reduce turnover and maintain a healthy workforce.

Sector and workforce development is at the heart of so much of what we do at **Safe and Equal**. With a broad focus across the continuum from primary prevention to family violence responses, this year we supported 12 communities of practice, hosted 14 webinars, took our annual **PreventX** conference national, partnered with specialist service providers to produce a suite of practice resources on providing tailored and inclusive family violence supports, and continued to deliver training, with more than 3,635 people participating in **MARAM** capability building from 2021-22.

This year we secured new multi-year funding from the Victorian Government to continue delivering statewide primary prevention workforce development activity. Our prevention training programs are gaining pace, and we continue to see the benefits of engaging in formal partnership processes to inform and strengthen our work. We have been preparing a **Primary Prevention Strategy** to guide our focus in this area over the next two years. I am excited to see this develop further into the future.

Our work to embed lived experience across the organisation and family violence system reached new heights this year. **Safe and Equal's Expert Advisory Panel**, established in June 2021, is a cornerstone and this group, along with a broader network of survivor advocates, has informed, influenced and lead activity across the organisation, from our re-brand to policy submissions, **Rainbow Tick accreditation**, and the powerful online forum focused on **improving responses to children and young people experiencing family violence**.

This year, we increased our focus on awareness raising activity and grew the reach of this work significantly. This included expanding the **Are You Safe at Home?** Initiative with an updated website and the first **Are You Safe at Home? Day** on 10 May. We're excited to continue this work, in recognition of the critical frontline role that friends, family, neighbours and colleagues play in recognising and supporting people who may be experiencing abuse.

Another key priority for us this year has been finalising the merger and re-launching as **Safe and Equal**. After operating as **DV Vic / DVRCV** for more than a year, I was thrilled to unveil our new brand in November 2021. The vision, purpose and strategic priorities of **Safe and Equal** are a true testament to the legacies of **DV Vic** and **DVRCV**, and we will continue building on this rich history.

As always, our aim is to support, represent and advocate for the needs of our members, to improve outcomes for all victim survivors, and ultimately, to end family and gender-based violence in Victoria. These efforts would not be possible without the support of the Victorian Government, our philanthropic funders, and our many collaborators across the sector and beyond. It would also not be possible without **Safe and Equal's** member services, whose continued dedication to the safety and wellbeing of victim survivors is why we do what we do.

I'd like to extend a warm thank you to our Board for their ongoing governance and support, with a very special thank you to our Interim Chair, Stacey Ong, and our new Chair, Maria Dimopoulos.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge and thank our hard-working staff for their commitment and dedication to our organisational values, and to acknowledge all victim survivors of family and gender-based violence, who are at the heart of everything we do.

A NEW PEAK

Merging two legacy organisations

For more than three decades, Domestic Violence Victoria (DV Vic) and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (DVRCV) were two key organisations in the establishment and coordination of the specialist family violence sector in Victoria.

In 2019, after the Royal Commission into Family Violence and as the sector moved into a new phase of systemic reforms, the boards of both DV Vic and DVRCV identified that a merger would lift the ability of the peak to listen to and support the work of frontline services, reflect members' experience and the voice of lived experience in policy, advocacy and systems reform work, connecting strengths and resources for greater impact.

After comprehensive consultation with staff, members and other stakeholders, the Boards and members of DV Vic and DVRCV voted to merge in March 2020, representing an exciting new chapter in the extensive histories of both organisations.

FINDING OUR NEW NAME

In mid-2020, a detailed research project was undertaken to determine the merged organisation's name and brand.

The findings, together with advice from branding experts, allowed us to establish a set of criteria against which to assess potential names:

- ➔ Simple and succinct
- ➔ Memorable
- ➔ Unique in the sector
- ➔ Connected to the work
- ➔ Not exclusionary
- ➔ Reflective of key attributes including independence, authenticity, trustworthiness, intersectional feminism, courage

DV Vic and DVRCV staff engaged in a series of three broad, blue-sky workshops, with a principle of 'no bad ideas'. From this, more than 120 ideas were generated and refined to a list of 26 options. The Board then selected a shortlist of four preferred options. Consultation on the four shortlisted options included a focus group with victim survivors, a survey of staff and members, and informal interviews with key stakeholders including other peaks and government partners.

From this, one name emerged as a unanimous preference among survivor advocates, and the majority preference of key stakeholders: **Safe and Equal**.

Key themes in the feedback on this name were that it was a positive, future-focused and emotive option, and that it was also the clearest, most succinct and had strong branding potential.

A NEW PEAK

Merging two legacy organisations

The roles of DV Vic and DVRCV have always been highly complementary, with closely aligned visions, purpose and values, and frequent collaboration in advocacy and campaigning. This merger provides the specialist family violence sector with a peak organisation that has more reach than ever before, across the continuum of prevention to recovery.

– Tania Farha, CEO, Safe and Equal

THE LAUNCH

Victorian domestic violence groups unite for greater impact.

Pro Bono Australia, 23 November 2021

On 17 November 2021, we launched our new visionary name, brand and website with our Board, members, key stakeholders and partners.

Hosted by comedian Nelly Thomas, the virtual launch featured an opening address from The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP, a poetry reading by survivor advocate and Expert Advisory Panel member Rebeca Carro, and a performance by Warnindhilyagwa artist Emily Wurramara

As part of the launch, we published *Our History*, a short overview of the rich history of both DV Vic and DVRCV, and the significant roles they have played in the sector.

Combining over thirty years of experience in advocacy and innovation for change in the family violence sector, we are proud to unite as **Safe and Equal**, the peak body for specialist family violence services supporting victim survivors in Victoria.

Following the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the Victorian specialist family violence sector has been subject to a number of significant reforms. It became clear that by bringing together the skills and expertise of both organisations, we could be adequately and appropriately prepared to support specialist services through these changes.

– Stacey Ong, Acting Chair, Safe and Equal

DEVELOPING A NEW WEBSITE

As part of the re-branding process, we engaged Studio Binocular to lead the development of a new **Safe and Equal** website.

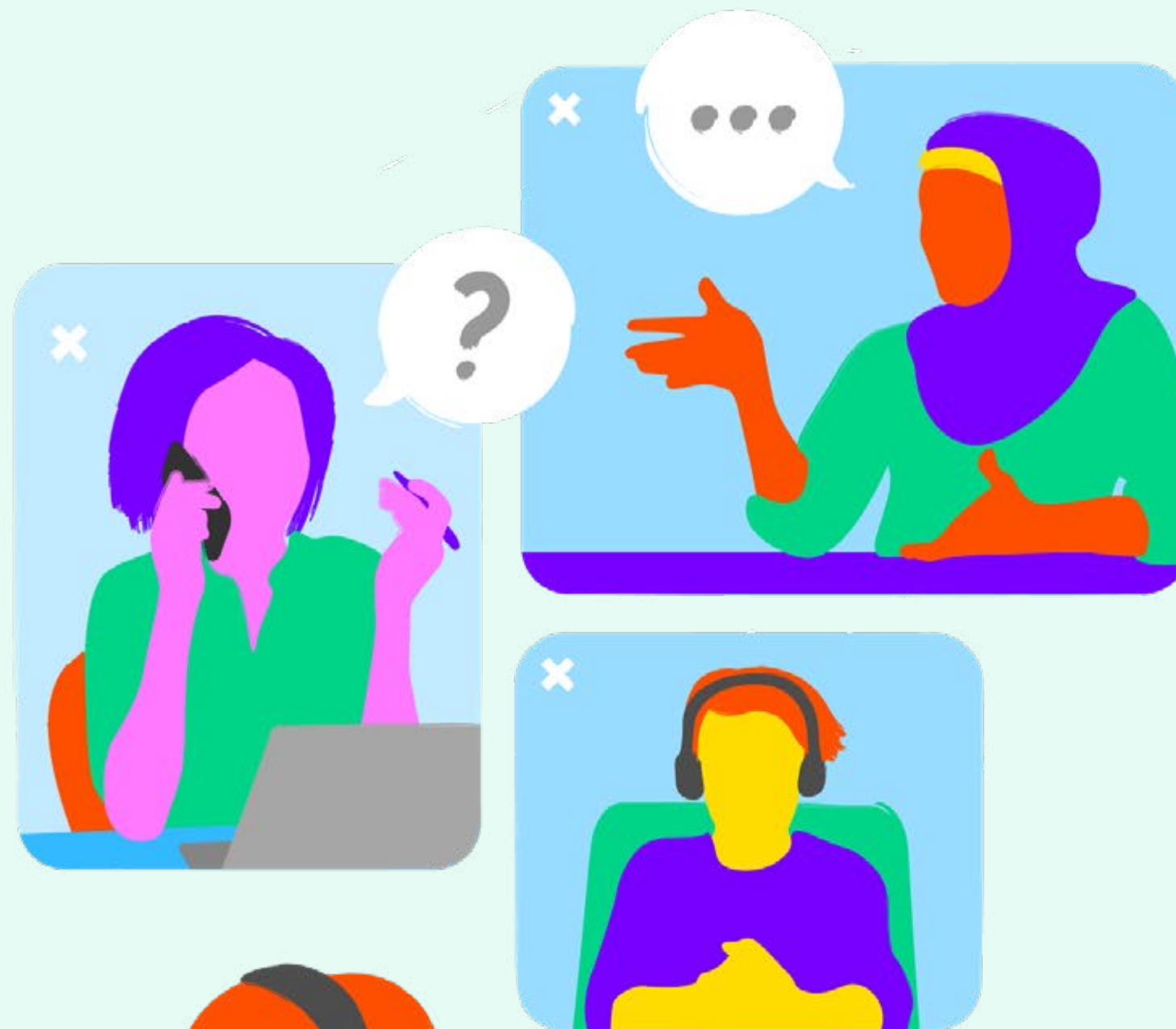
The redevelopment project was approached in three phases: research, scoping and planning, and the initial build.

It took an incredible amount of work to amalgamate several existing websites, including DV Vic, DVRCV, Partners in Prevention, and The Lookout. Following consultation with members, our Board, staff, key stakeholders and survivor advocates, our new **Safe and Equal website** launched in November 2021.

PRIORITY 1

Developing practice and supporting workforces

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We support effective, high-quality practice and innovative approaches. We build the capability, sustainability and connectedness of the specialist family violence workforce, the prevention workforce and broader workforces whose work intersects with family violence. We advocate for more comprehensive approaches to building workforce capability, including a broad suite of professional development programs for our workforces.

This year has seen an array of workforce support and capacity building led by **Safe and Equal** that includes research, consultation and advocacy across varying industries.

The depth and breadth of our work has spanned the development of tailored training, through to the delivery of our award-winning **Fast Track** leadership program.

Collaboration has been at the heart of this work, including vital partnerships such as with the **Essential Services Commission**, as well as producing a suite of practice resources on providing tailored and inclusive family violence supports.

TRAINING

TOTAL DAYS OF TRAINING DELIVERED
400

REACH
6,357
PARTICIPANTS

Building the capability of individuals, organisations and systems across specialist family violence and allied sectors is integral to achieving a united response to family violence.

Our training is designed to fit the needs of organisations and professionals from a wide range of workforces, equipping them with the skills to effectively play their part in preventing and responding to family violence.

Over the past year, we have worked collaboratively with organisations and practitioners across Victoria to understand their learning objectives and develop contextualised content. We have delivered training to employees who may need to recognise and respond to family violence in their work, or who play a role in preventing violence.

Our experienced trainers have facilitated family violence training for a range of organisations and groups, from large retailers to local councils, with outstanding results.

Our training courses reflect current research and best practice. They seek to increase participants' understanding of family violence and to improve their skills in challenging the drivers of violence against women and safely supporting people who have experienced family violence. With pandemic public health measures remaining in place during 2021-2022, most of our training was delivered online. This had the effect of increasing geographical reach as well as the number of expected participants.

TRAINING

Since it was my first time learning about the content of gendered violence, responses and intersectionality, everything was quite valuable to learn.

– Training Participant

Really helpful training that not only improved my knowledge of risk factors and risk frameworks but also increased my confidence in being able to incorporate new practices into my work.

– Training Participant

SPOTLIGHT ON: ACT GOVERNMENT

ACT Government Family Safety Hub
Project lifespan: July 2020 – June 2022

Following an initial enquiry in July 2020, we developed and delivered a bespoke Risk Assessment and Management Module for the ACT Government.

Development

We developed a training package based on the ACT risk management framework. The objective was to provide consistency across the ACT's specialist domestic and family violence services across processes, forms and understanding of risk assessments.

This would allow for a consistent approach and shared understanding of family violence across the territory's sector.

Delivery

We delivered the ACT Risk Assessment and Management course online to 67 organisations.

The training included the following core learning outcomes:

- ➔ To strengthen shared understandings, practices and language about risk assessment and risk management
- ➔ To confirm and/or build confidence and skills in relation to undertaking risk assessment and risk management
- ➔ To confirm and/or build confidence and skills in relation to undertaking safety planning

LIST OF TRAINING COURSES

Case notes, Family Violence and the Law

Fast Track Intensive Leadership Program – Prevention

Fast Track Intensive Leadership Program – Response

MARAM – Brief and Intermediate

MARAM – Identification and Screening

MARAM – Leading Alignment

MARAM Comprehensive – Renewing Practice from CRAF to MARAM

MARAM Comprehensive Risk Assessment and Management Module

Prevention in Practice

RAMP

Responding to Disclosures

The Orange Door Induction – Working with Victim Survivors

Unpacking Resistance

PARTNERSHIP

Essential Services Commission

The 2016 Royal Commission into Family Violence recognised the long-term financial costs of family violence and made a series of recommendations to improve responses within the private sector. This included making key changes to the ways water and energy providers respond to customers experiencing family violence.

Over the past three years, the **Essential Services Commission (ESC)** has commissioned **Safe and Equal**, in partnership with the **University of Melbourne's Safer Families Centre** and the **University's WEAVERs lived experience group**, to provide practical guidance to the ESC to inform the way that essential services engage with survivor advocates and customers experiencing family violence.

This project took a three-phased approach, consisting of a project report, guidelines for better practice responses and an **Experts by Experience Implementation Plan**.

To deliver this project, **Safe and Equal** and the ESC engaged advocates in **Safe and Equal's Expert Advisory Panel**.

The commissioned reports were published from January to May 2022 and promoted through an external launch event and internal information sessions for ESC staff.

The collaborative engagement with survivor advocates deepened the impact of the project. By embedding the lived experiences of consumers and customers, the ESC is better equipped with the richest information about the efficacy of services and can ensure accountability from services to the people they serve.

This collaboration has opened opportunities for further work with an alliance of survivor advocates to provide guidance to essential services and the private sector.

Furthermore, the project showcased the demonstratable value of engaging lived experience to improve service and safety outcomes for staff and customers experiencing family violence.

FAST TRACK

Intensive leadership program

41
MENTORS

40
GUEST
SPEAKERS

87
GRADUATES

Fast Track is a 10-week leadership development program. It is designed by experienced practitioners for new and emerging leaders in the specialist family violence response and primary prevention workforces.

The program aims to meet the urgent need to grow the pool of skilled professionals for management and leadership roles within the sector, informed by findings in the Workforce Census and in alignment with the Victorian Government's *Building From Strength 10-year Industry Plan*.

Fast Track uses multiple modes to build the capability and confidence of emerging leaders: building feminist leadership, advocacy, creating effective partnerships and program design.

The response course builds the knowledge and skill capabilities of Victorian specialist family violence managers and senior workers wishing to transition to senior level roles, or who are new to senior leadership. The prevention course is designed for practitioners in mid-level roles, as well as mid-level response professionals interested in moving into the prevention space.

In March 2020, with a short turnaround, the course was successfully transitioned to an online format in partnership with Reality Learning, with no impact to program delivery timelines. In recognition of this feat, Fast Track won a Diamond award at the 2021 LearnX learning design awards for 'Best Pandemic Response- Shift it Online'.

In 2021-22, we completed four additional cohorts, bringing the total number of Fast Track graduates to 127. These graduates participated in weekly online workshops, mentoring sessions, and an end of program forum where they presented their workplace projects.

We thank Sarah Johnson for facilitating the weekly sessions for all six cohorts, and the 40 featured guest presenters for providing knowledge and insight on topics tailored to prevention and response.

We have undertaken a rigorous evaluation of the 2021-22 program and have found that Fast Track contributes to the sustainability of a thriving, supported sector. The program has demonstrated the need and appetite for professional development opportunities to assist participants to progress within the workforce in a supported, practice-informed way.

[Fast Track has] given me a renewed sense that I can make a difference in this space.

- Fast Track Participant

FAST TRACK

Intensive leadership program

I have been able to transition following Fast Track into team leader and management roles and the main barriers for me in career progression have been in balancing this with caring responsibilities ... I found having the mentor that I was assigned through Fast Track to be extremely valuable to supporting my development in my career.

– Fast Track Participant

The program has proven to also have benefits on an individual and organisational level, including:

INDIVIDUALS

- ➔ Career progression to leadership roles
- ➔ Skills and knowledge development
- ➔ Increase in confidence
- ➔ Connection for practitioners working in isolated roles
- ➔ Reconnection to the sector
- ➔ Developing supportive relationships

ORGANISATIONS

- ➔ Reduction in burnout and attrition
- ➔ Workforce retention
- ➔ Strengthening capability within their organisation
- ➔ Cross-sector collaboration and partnerships between organisations
- ➔ Implementation of the workplace project can improve systems, services and programs

The evaluation shows that the mentoring component has been a real hallmark of Fast Track.

Early in the program, participants were allocated a field expert based on their needs, goals, and preferences. The mentors supported participants to take the weekly workshop learnings to their workplace project design, and to implement their learnings in the workplace.

Benefits of the mentorship extended far beyond this, with participants feeding back that they were given space for reflective practice, the opportunity to discuss challenges in this sector, and support with their career pathways and goals.

There is clear, continued demand for Fast Track. Across the six courses, Fast Track received a total of 207 applications for 150 places. We look forward to supporting the continued strengthening of cross-sector connections, collaborations and partnerships, as well as participants' progression as we continue to deliver Fast Track in the coming years.

REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

Supporting the specialist family violence sector to implement mandatory minimum qualifications

Recommendation 209 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence called for:

...the Victorian Government to include in the 10-year industry plan for family violence prevention and response a staged process for the introduction of mandatory qualifications for specialist family violence practitioners, so that no later than 31 December 2020 all funded services must require family violence practitioners to hold a social work or equivalent degree.

This policy aims to strengthen the specialist family violence workforce, by equipping Victoria's practitioners to provide high quality and culturally appropriate support and responses.

In July 2021, the policy was rolled out for new specialist family violence practitioners in Victoria, commencing a five-year transition period. This transition period gives people starting their careers as practitioners several options for meeting the new mandatory minimum qualification requirements.

Across 2021–22, Safe and Equal were a key resource for the sector, building the capability of employees and employers to understand and implement the policy. This has included 57 public and in-house information sessions, as well as regular consultation calls.

We developed a **series of tools** to help current and prospective employees determine whether they're eligible to apply for specialist family violence practitioner roles, and what pathways are available to them. These tools have been viewed by 1,127 website visitors since February 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing workforce shortages have created additional pressure across the sector, including challenges to implement this policy for many organisations.

As the transition period continues, we are monitoring and collecting data on the impact of mandatory minimum qualifications on the sector.

Our advocacy and recommendations to improve the policy through the transition monitoring advisory group are ongoing.

DISABILITY PRACTICE LEADERSHIP

Safe and Equal provides resources, support and consultations to build knowledge within and between the disability and specialist family violence sector. Our aim with this work is to build the capacity of frontline workers working with victim survivors and people using violence, as well as working with people with disability or using the NDIS.

In October 2021, three **Disability and Family Violence Practice Leader** roles were established to support specialist family violence services in the North Eastern Metro, Gippsland and Barwon regions of Victoria.

These roles were the result of long-term advocacy by **Women with Disabilities Victoria**, as well as outcomes from the **State-wide Disability Inclusion and NDIS Workforce** projects.

These **Practice Leaders** educate and guide specialist family violence and disability services on the critical intersections and challenges that people with disability who are experiencing family violence might face. **Safe and Equal** provides statewide coordination support for the roles.

The approach has an emphasis on supporting frontline workers to deliver accessible and inclusive specialist family violence services.

We support **Practice Leaders** to build capacity in family violence services to support victim survivors with a disability.

Safe and Equal further supports **Practice Leaders** through the **Disability and Family Violence Practice Leader Community of Practice**. Here they share practice challenges, training and resources, build strong connections with each other and lessen feelings of isolation due to being the only person working in that role in their local region.

Five additional **Disability and Family Violence Practice Leader** roles will be rolled out across Victoria in 2023. We expect this to improve outcomes for people with disability who are experiencing family violence.

PRACTICE RESOURCES

Providing tailored and inclusive family violence support

While family violence can impact anyone, there are social factors that can create additional barriers for people trying to access services, support and safety. Responses to family violence must be inclusive, tailored and flexible.

In 2021, we partnered with Djirra, Switchboard, inTouch, Women with Disabilities Victoria, Seniors Rights Victoria, Flat Out and Berry Street's Y-Change Lived Experience Consultants to develop a suite of practice resources to support tailored and inclusive responses to family violence occurring across diverse communities and contexts.

SUPPORTING TRANS WOMEN TO ACCESS SPECIALIST FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICES WEBINAR

In May 2022, in recognition of LGBTQIA+ Domestic Violence Awareness Day, we partnered with Zoe Belle Gender Collective and Switchboard to host a webinar for the specialist sector centring on the voices of trans women of colour.

Facilitated by Zoe Belle's Starlady, trans women of colour shared their lived experience to start a conversation about men's violence against trans women and the disproportionate levels of violence experienced by trans women of colour and sex workers, as well as how specialist family violence services can provide culturally safe and inclusive services for trans women.

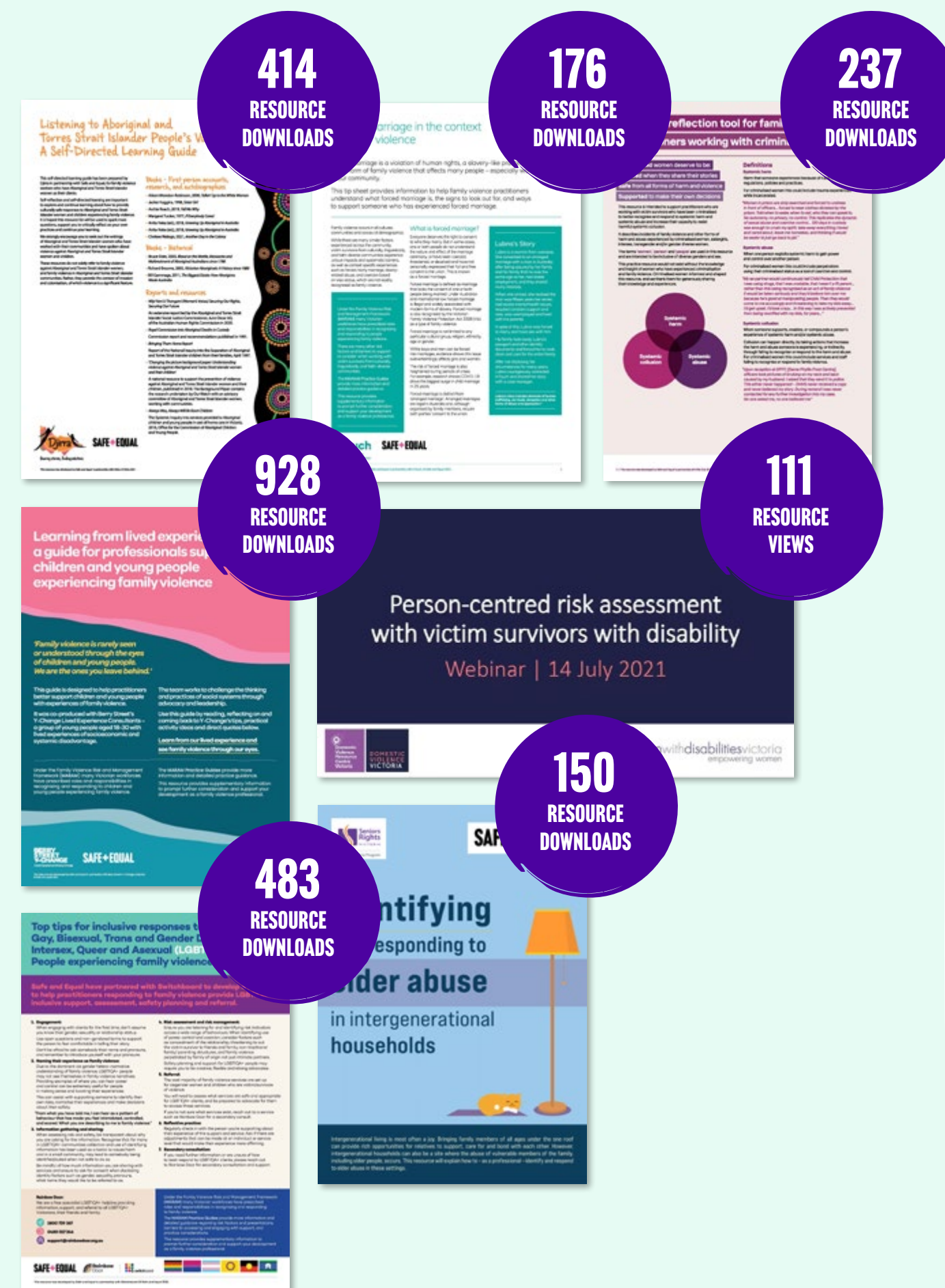
I don't want to be engaged or entertained. I want a platform to speak my truth and make changes that will help other kids who have been through what I have.

– Y-Change Lived Experience Consultant

PRACTICE RESOURCES

Providing tailored and inclusive family violence support

RESOURCE DOWNLOADS



RESOURCES DEVELOPED

- ➔ Djirra's **Listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's Voices: A Self-Directed Learning Guide** to support practitioners working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
- ➔ Berry Street Y-change Lived Experience Consultants' **Support for children and young people** to help practitioners better support children and young people with experiences of family violence.
- ➔ Switchboard's **Tip sheet to help practitioners responding to family violence for LGBTIQ+ people** to guide LGBTIQ+ inclusive support, assessment, safety planning and referral.
- ➔ InTouch's **Forced marriage in the context of family violence** to inform practitioners about forced marriage, the signs to look out for, and ways to support someone who has experienced forced marriage.
- ➔ Women with Disability Victoria's **Person-centred risk assessment with victim survivors with disability** to explore the compounding risk factors and barriers to safety that people with disability experience.
- ➔ Seniors Rights Victoria's **Identifying and responding to elder abuse in intergenerational households** to help practitioners identify and respond to intergenerational elder abuse.
- ➔ Flat Out's **Providing safety and support for criminalised victim survivors** to support services and practitioners to empower criminalised women they are working with.

NEW RESOURCES

Supporting prevention in practice

I have it [the Fast Facts resource] with me all the time. That has been gold. I used it to put together my presentations and I have it with me all the time in case I get questions about 'where'd you get that figure from?'...I have a high degree of confidence in the material that Safe and Equal develops and promotes.

– Prevention Practitioner

To better support the prevention workforce in their practice, we developed and published a series of resources over the course of the year.

These resources translated complex evidence into accessible and digestible information for practitioners to incorporate into their practice. It includes research, practice evidence and lived experience.

TALKING ABOUT CHANGE

Talking About Change brings together research and good practice techniques for those working to promote gender equality and navigate resistance in their work, both locally and globally.

FAST FACTS

Fast Facts brings together key data on family violence, gender-based violence and gender equality in a way that provides clarity, depth and messages for action.

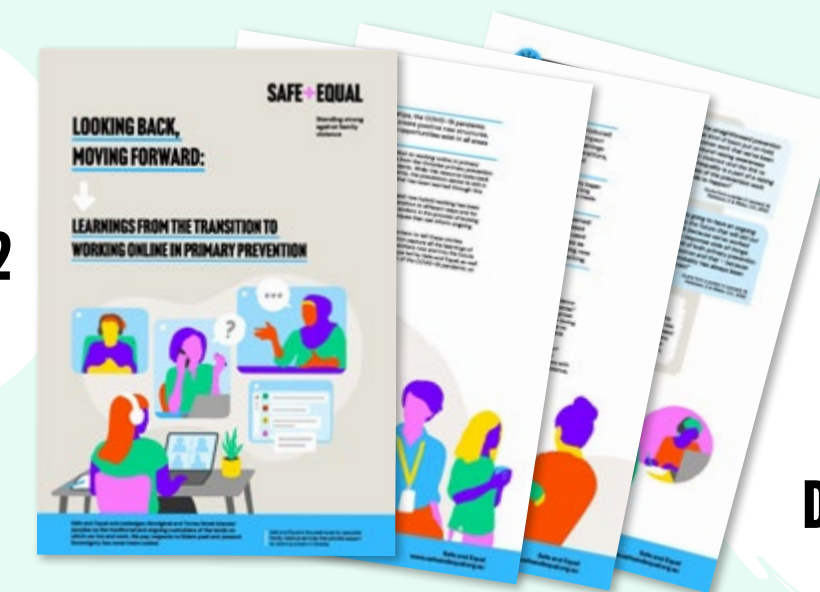
The Fast Facts resource was originally developed as part of the **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence** toolkit released by Respect Victoria in partnership with Safe and Equal.

LAUNCHED
MAY 2022



474
RESOURCE
DOWNLOADS

LAUNCHED
MARCH 2022



986
RESOURCE
DOWNLOADS

MARAM

CAPABILITY

BUILDING

This year, we continued to support specialist practitioners and allied workforces to align practice and implement the Victorian Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (MARAMIS).

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

We convene a range of communities of practice, develop resources, and facilitate network meetings, in addition to providing direct support to people working within our member services. This is all with the focus of alignment, including enhancing state-wide consistency in best practice.

Safe and Equal also represented the specialist family violence sector on various working, project and advisory groups to support MARAMIS implementation across sectors.

ACROSS 2021-22, WE DELIVERED

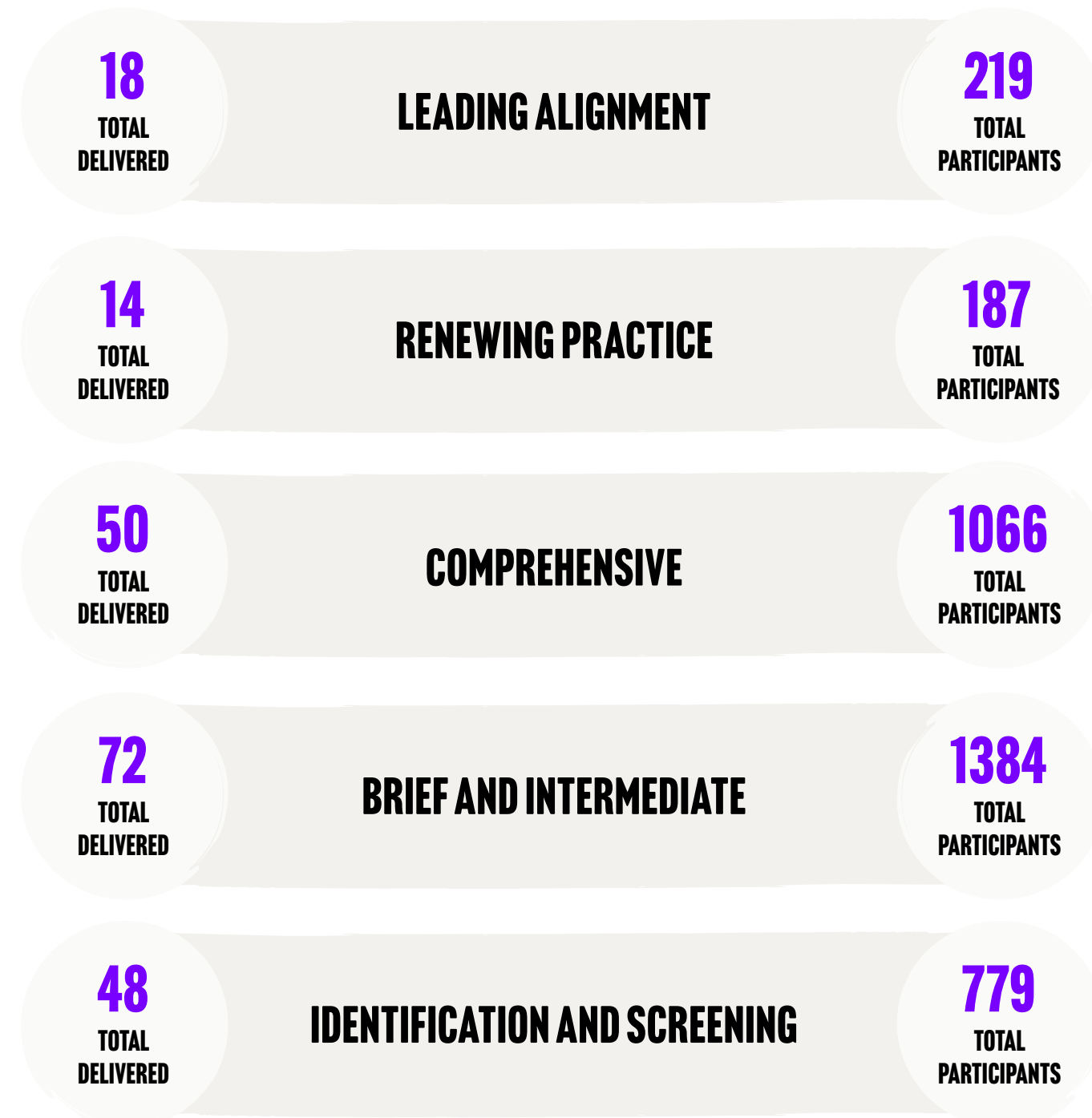
- ➔ **10 x Practice Lead Communities of Practice sessions**, including supporting older victim survivors, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) victim survivors, working in rural and regional areas, and responding to pets experiencing family violence.
- ➔ **5 x Implementation Champion Group sessions**, delivered to individuals in specialist family violence services responsible for the implementation of key frameworks and for quality assurance processes.
- ➔ **4 x Collaborative Sector Network meetings** in partnership with the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, and No to Violence.
- ➔ **11 x Family Safety Advocate Communities of Practice sessions** in partnership with No to Violence including misidentification, working with victim survivors with a disability, Family Law Courts, and substance use and family violence.
- ➔ **5 x Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Communities of Practice sessions**, covering areas such as the nuances of working with victim survivors, and the commencement of embedding the Adult Person Using Family Violence Practice Guides.
- ➔ **3 x webinars** addressing sexual assault within a family violence context.
- ➔ **50 instances of MARAMIS alignment advice** such as feedback on resources, responding to complex information sharing queries, or support to understand mapping MARAMIS responsibilities.
- ➔ **Two scripts for an FSV-developed video series**, showcasing how a narrative style comprehensive risk assessment looks in practice.

MARAM CAPABILITY BUILDING

MARAM TRAINING

This year, we delivered 202 sessions across the suite of MARAM training courses, including:

A range of sectors engaged in MARAMIS training, including:



COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

We convene communities of practice for people working across the primary prevention and specialist family violence response sectors, which provide an opportunity to connect and share learnings and expertise, improve practice and promote wellbeing.

Following our transition throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to convene all communities of practice online. Online delivery has provided capability building opportunities for practitioners across the state.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE IN 2021 - 22

- ➔ Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMP)
- ➔ Specialist Family Violence Practice Leads
- ➔ Implementation Champions Group
- ➔ Specialist Family Violence Advisors
Family Violence Child Protection Partnership
- ➔ Personal Safety
- ➔ Flexible Support
- ➔ Disability Inclusion
- ➔ Regional and Rural Prevention Practitioners
- ➔ Respectful Relationship Education
- ➔ Emerging Prevention Practitioners
- ➔ Senior Prevention Practitioners
- ➔ Embedding Lived Experience

The participants of the community of practice are taking to running it themselves, I think that's really great and a really good sign of the kind of environment that was cultivated through it...

– Community of practice participant

344
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

PRIORITY 2

Strengthening and connecting organisations, sectors and systems

Forum	26
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We strengthen the ability of organisations, sectors and systems to provide effective, coordinated and comprehensive responses to family violence and its intersections with other forms of oppression and discrimination.

We do this by developing the capability and sustainability of specialist family violence services. We advocate on behalf of the specialist family violence sector. We influence other parts of the family violence system to ensure a family violence specialist informed response and recovery system.

We contribute to the development of primary prevention initiatives, particularly through workforce development, and alliances to help shape safer and more respectful communities.

This year, we facilitated an array of coordinated responses and recommendations on behalf of the sector. From cross organisational collaboration through to engagement with member services and a focus on a data-driven, survivor-centred systems view, the year encompassed essential consultations and submissions to demand meaningful change for our sector and most importantly, for people experiencing or at risk of family violence.

FORUM

Specialist family violence services leadership group

We hosted this forum virtually across three mornings in August 2021, during Melbourne’s sixth COVID-19 lockdown. This was a chance for senior leaders in the specialist family violence sector to come together and set the agenda for our work, during a time of intensive system reform and expansion.

Opening with an address from then-Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams, the Forum featured sessions on:

- ➔ Future visions for Victoria’s specialist family violence sector
- ➔ Rural and regional responses to family violence
- ➔ Embedding lived experience
- ➔ Workshopping key advocacy priorities for the peak

The discussions and feedback generated from the forum have informed our ongoing policy and advocacy work, including [feedback for the Draft National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032](#), and our [2022 State Budget Submission](#).

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SESSION

A follow up session in November 2021, ‘Responding to Children and Young People’s Experience of Family Violence’ provided an opportunity for sector leaders to hear directly from young people with lived experience of family violence. It focused on exploring what it really means for our sector to recognise and support children and young people as victim survivors in their own right, and to consider future directions in inclusive policy and system reform.

The session featured a keynote address from Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People Liana Buchanan, who noted that the event was the first-time children and young people had been brought together with the specialist family violence sector in this way.

This was followed by a panel of young advocates, facilitated by a young adult from the Safe and Equal Expert Advisory Panel. Developed in collaboration with the young advocates, the panel provided unique insight into how systemic responses can evolve to be more inclusive and responsive to children and young people, based on their experience and expertise.

To close the event, attendees were joined by Safe and Equal CEO Tania Farha and Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare CEO Deb Tsorbais for a reflective conversation on how services can better respond to children and young people’s experience of family violence.

We will continue to engage with our members on this significant issue, as we build on our practice and policy expertise to provide children and young people with safe and responsive support and services.

Children and young people should see themselves reflected in the look and feel of an organisation. They should be employed as peers, they should be on your Board, they should be involved across your organisation.

– Youth survivor advocate

PREVENTX

296
ATTENDEES

55
SPEAKERS

Hosted online over two days on 3 and 4 May 2022, PreventX – What’s Next? brought together 296 attendees for livestreamed plenary panels and workshops.

PreventX – What’s Next? expanded the flagship conference’s reach from Victoria to Australia through a partnership with **Our Watch**, a national leader in the primary prevention of violence against women and their children.

Facilitated once again by the Clothing the Gaps team, Sarah Sheridan, Laura Thompson and Lena Charles, PreventX – What’s Next? energised and inspired primary prevention practitioners across Australia.

The conference built on the current momentum and public discourse on primary prevention of violence against women and family violence, and built the skills, knowledge and confidence of professionals and organisations engaged in primary prevention. This year’s conference had a deep emphasis on meaningful intersectionality, diversity, and accessibility; a focus on practitioner wellbeing and collective care, and a commitment to supporting practitioners to build positive and productive connections and partnerships.

PreventX attendees had the opportunity to tune into a range of deep dives, workshops, masterclasses, and panels. The two-day program included sessions on lived experience, prevention of violence against women with disabilities, prevention of violence experienced by LGBTQIA+ communities, trans-led prevention, co-design with multicultural communities, and multiple sessions on prevention in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The conference speakers included people of diverse cultural backgrounds, sexuality, gender identity, ability, age and more. Lived experience was highlighted in sessions including a lived experience panel and a powerful closing speech from survivor advocate Rebeca Carro.

I loved the diversity of conversations covered and perspectives offered throughout the conference. The session on lived experience and Day 2 opening plenary in particular really opened up new ideas, resources and conversations that I feel are so relevant for prevention, (that) we just don’t have in the sector.

– PreventX Attendee

POLICY ADVOCACY

Each year, Safe and Equal produces submissions, position papers and key policy publications to influence policy design and implementation. These are developed with a view to improving systemic responses to people experiencing family violence, as well as preventing this violence from occurring in the first place.

We take an intersectional, whole-of-system approach to policy and advocacy. Our view of the policy landscape includes the ability of organisations, sectors and systems to provide effective, coordinated and comprehensive responses to all victim survivors of family violence, as well as how policy and practice across intersecting systems impacts victim survivors.

Our policy and advocacy priorities are informed by evidence, practice expertise and lived experience.

SUBMISSION TO THE SUCCESSOR NATIONAL PLAN TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children is Australia's federally driven, national response to family and gender-based violence. In August 2021, we made a submission to the Australian Government articulating key priorities and focus areas for the second National Plan.

Reducing violence against women and children is a long-term goal requiring sustained and coordinated actions across all levels of government and a whole-of-system approach. We emphasised this throughout the initial submission, as well as in feedback to the draft National Plan released for consultation in January 2022, and responses to later drafts before the second National Plan was finalised in October 2022.

Alongside empirical evidence, our input into this process drew heavily on the practice knowledge of members, and the lived expertise of the Expert Advisory Panel.

To reduce, and ultimately end, family violence and violence against women and children, we need all parts of our community and all levels of government to commit to tangible, measurable actions, and for these to be backed by dedicated funding.

– Feedback on the draft National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032

POLICY ADVOCACY

SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN AFFECTED BY PARENTAL INCARCERATION

Most women and gender diverse people in prison are survivors of violence and trauma. Up to 70% of women in prison are parents.

Victoria is experiencing a dramatic and unacceptable increase in the number of women being incarcerated (137.82% over the previous decade), including a sharp rise in the number of unsentenced women entering the prison system on remand.

Even short periods of imprisonment can result in catastrophic implications for women and their children, furthering the legacy of family violence, trauma and structural disadvantage.

Submitted in April 2022, our response to the Victorian Inquiry into Children Affected by Parental Incarceration focuses on the devastating and long-term impacts of family violence on children and their incarcerated family members.

We recommended immediate action to reduce the number of women who are held unnecessarily in Victorian prison facilities as a critical step towards ensuring that their children are cared for and remain connected to family and community. We also recommended the development of robust systemic levers and data collection strategies to ensure that the children of incarcerated parents are visible and connected to the supports that they require. It is essential that, where safe, children are actively supported to stay connected to their parent in prison as well as their broader families, communities, and culture.

As part of the submission process, Safe and Equal resourced Elizabeth Morgan House to support their clients to provide feedback directly to the inquiry. This approach, which aimed to centre the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, would not have been possible without support from Flat Out.

OTHER KEY POLICY ACTIVITY ACROSS THE YEAR:

Submissions:

- [Response to the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement \(NHHA\) Issues Paper](#)
- [The Social Housing Regulation Review Interim Report and the Social Housing Regulation Review](#)
- [Current Scheme Implementation and Forecasting for the NDIS: Response to the Terms of Reference](#)
- [Our 2022 State Budget Submission](#)
- [The National Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority \(ACARA\) Curriculum Review](#)
- [Victoria's Free from Violence Second Action Plan](#)
- [Victoria's Workplace Gender Equality Act](#)
- [Safe and Strong Victoria's Gender Equality Strategy Refresh](#)

Consultations:

- [Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor's reports](#)
- [Victoria Police Code of Practice for the Investigation of Family Violence](#)
- [Crimes Act amendments \(Affirmative Consent Legislation\)](#)
- [Escaping Family Violence Payments implementation and evaluation](#)
- [MARAM implementation](#)

MEASURING DEMAND

While there has been significant investment in the Victorian family violence system, there is an urgent need to uplift funding for specialist family violence services.

These services are under-resourced and working under immense pressure to meet increasing demand, particularly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To make significant changes to our current funding model, we need evidence. Having a whole-of-systems view of service demand requires strong data. However, in Victoria, a complete data set inclusive of all family violence cases and clients does not exist.

We identified that as a peak body, Safe and Equal was in a unique position to drive and coordinate the development of a data-driven and survivor-centred family violence systems view, in collaboration with the family violence sector, government, academics and victim survivors.

Phase One of the Measuring Family Violence Service Demand Project commenced in July 2021, in partnership with family violence data specialist Dr Kristin Diemer, and with support from Family Safety Victoria. This phase of the project aimed to estimate demand for case management from specialist family violence services – both in terms of the volume of people accessing services and how services are working to meet client support needs.

In consultation with Safe and Equal member organisations, we developed five demand indicators to be used as a framework for collecting data:

- ➔ Identifying and managing risk
- ➔ Identifying unallocated clients
- ➔ Meeting the needs of children and young people
- ➔ Support and access complexity
- ➔ Family Violence Crisis Accommodation

This framework was tested by 28 member organisations from across Victoria during two data collection periods in October and November 2021. This captured 6,029 records of case management activities.

To support analysis, we facilitated an insights workshop with team leaders from specialist services to explore preliminary findings, before the [Phase One Outcomes Report](#) was released in March 2022.

I think it's becoming harder and harder. The more that the demand increases the more that the expectation is that the clients wait. Your case load becomes really challenging. You're managing a lot of high-risk cases and you know there's lots of coordination, lots of safety planning...how much of that work can one person do well?"

– Specialist Family Violence Service Team Leader

MEASURING DEMAND

Our service was *‘full’* and unable to allocate clients to a case manager, however we keep accepting case management cases are *‘actively holding them’*. Therefore, we are managing many more case management clients than it appears. Technically we are never *‘full’*.

– Specialist Family Violence Service Team Leader

The report highlights that within the current funding model, practitioners are frequently unable to fully respond to the needs of victim survivors in a timely way. This was evident in the data, which showed services are consistently providing case management support above their funded targets with understaffed teams.

Other key learnings from the data collected include:

- ➔ Practitioners are holding high caseloads with greater risk and complexity of support
- ➔ There are significant barriers and under-resourcing in additional areas such as housing, therapeutic support for adults and children, and disability services, creating risk for client safety and wellbeing
- ➔ Clients are re-presenting to services repeatedly over time, with perpetrator behaviour, housing shortages and other systemic limitations key contributing factors to this

We also learned about gaps in the data, including:

- ➔ No consistent measure for client outcomes
- ➔ Inconsistency of data collection for children and young people
- ➔ No singular approach to managing waitlists for clients

Phase Two of the project, which commenced in March 2022, has focused on taking the data and learnings from Phase One to strengthen and address data gaps into the future.

To progress this, Safe and Equal has begun consulting with the sector to measure client outcomes and map client journeys to better understand what works to support safe and just outcomes for victim survivors across the system and at different access points.

We are especially grateful to the member organisations who have contributed data to this project, and the team leaders who have participated in consultations throughout both phases.

Their passion, commitment and expertise has underscored the real human impacts of the current funding model – both for victim survivors and practitioners.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with our members and partners in government to achieve a whole-of-system view that can show us whether we are providing and achieving safe and just outcomes to victim survivors and holding perpetrators to account.

PRIORITY 3

Building momentum for social change

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We partner with other organisations and individuals to help build community-wide understanding of the nature, impacts and drivers of family and gender-based violence and other intersecting forms of oppression and disadvantage.

We work to create environments that enable friends, family and the community to intervene appropriately to address violence, maintain perpetrator accountability and support victim survivors.

Through our comprehensive approaches to workforce development, the creation of strategic resources, and a range of other opportunities, we work to generate commitment and meaningful action across institutions, settings and systems to effectively prevent and respond.

This year, we prioritised the voice of lived experience in our work, developed and delivered media commentary and campaigns on behalf of the sector and delivered public facing events with the core aim of driving awareness and social change.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Safe and Equal provides expert commentary on issues related to family and gender-based violence, both in the Victorian context and beyond.

We aim to create awareness about family violence and raise the profile of the specialist sector, while also highlighting that family and gender-based violence is preventable.

Everyone has the right to be safe at Christmas

Tania Farha op-ed, *The Herald Sun*, 21 December 2021.

Over the past year, we have provided commentary and background information for 40 news items, across print, online, radio and television, covering issues such as:

- Effective responses to coercive control
- Affirmative consent legislation
- Family violence and the COVID-19 pandemic
- Family violence in rural and regional Victoria
- Housing and homelessness
- The role of the broader community in recognising and responding to family violence
- Police responses to family violence
- **The 16 Days of Activism to end Gender-Based Violence**

LIVED EXPERIENCE

Our sector was founded on lived experience, with family violence specialisation emerging from the work of grassroots feminist women’s liberationists.

In recent years, the Royal Commission into Family Violence clearly identified the need to embed the voices of victim survivors in every aspect of the family violence system.

Across the year, we have been working to develop best practice engagement strategies with survivor advocates including:

- ➔ Research and resources to support specialist family violence services
- ➔ Embedding the voices of victim survivors across the continuum from organisational governance to the design, delivery and evaluation of family violence responses
- ➔ Embedding the voices of victim survivors in public conversations and media reporting about family and gender-based violence

Our work aligns with our new **Strategic Plan** and is guided by the **Experts by Experience Framework** and the **Family Violence Code of Practice**, which recognises the inclusion of lived experience as a fundamental element that underpins all work undertaken by the sector.

Following the establishment of our **Expert Advisory Panel**, we began work to co-produce an **Experts by Experience Framework Implementation Plan** in July 2021. This plan identifies key activities across the organisation to increase and monitor best practice engagement with survivors. Finalised in October 2021, the plan was developed by survivor advocates from the **Expert Advisory Panel** and a group of staff from across the organisation, supported by the **University of Melbourne** and the **WEAVERS**.

IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

In partnership with the **Expert Advisory Panel**, we co-designed a suite of resources to support engagement with survivor advocates, including a self-reflection tool, project brief template and feedback template. All implementation resources can be accessed via [Safe and Equal’s Resource Library](#).

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CLIENT OUTCOMES ADVISORY GROUP

We commenced work with a group of five survivor advocates and consultants from **Think Impact** on initial scoping of a client outcomes measurement framework for specialist family violence services.

The framework aims to support the sector to identify and prioritise areas for improvement, enable a systemic response, and track efforts to improve outcomes over time. Importantly, this is a key opportunity to embed lived experience and client voice within all specialist services and to strengthen state-wide consistency.

The **Client Outcomes Advisory Group** was convened for five three-hour workshops across May and June 2022, equivalent to a total of 225 hours of engagement.

LIVED EXPERIENCE

When knowledge has been learned it can be patriarchal in nature and can be defined as right and wrong, but in this space, we have knowledge that is lived. There is no right and wrong. It is an experience of many things coming together.

– Expert Advisory Panel Member

OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE PROGRAM OFFICER

In March 2022, we established a new peer coordination position in the team. Our Lived Experience Program Officer provides valuable support and coordination for program activities and the survivor advocates on the Expert Advisory Panel.

EVENTS, FORUMS AND WORKING GROUPS

Across the year, Safe and Equal facilitated a number of events and groups which centred the voices of lived experience, including the [Responding to Children and Young People’s Experiences of Family Violence Forum](#) in November 2021, our annual Prevention conference [PreventX](#), our [Rainbow Tick Working Group](#), and the first [Are You Safe at Home? Day](#).

Survivor advocate participation in events and groups across the breadth of the organisation is integral to embedding the voice of lived experience in our work and provides significant opportunity for our sector to ensure our work is responsive and inclusive.

Expert Advisory Panel members also participated in several state-wide groups, including the [Essential Services Commission partnership](#) and the Victorian Government’s Social Services Regulation Taskforce.

Ensuring representation from survivor advocates in groups like these brings a unique perspective and an in-depth understanding of the needs of service users in the design, delivery and evaluation of safe, quality and effective services.

EMBEDDING LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

During this year we convened a community of practice for people who have a role in enabling best practice engagement with lived experience in the design, delivery and evaluation of family violence services. Co-facilitated with a survivor advocate, the community of practice provided a space to reflect, share learnings and resources, and problem solve with peers.

The community of practice recognised the creative and innovative work of organisations that have been leading in this space for some time, as well as those that are in the earlier stages of explicitly embedding lived experience.

EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE BULLETIN

Safe and Equal distribute a regular bulletin for survivor advocates and people working to coordinate and support survivor advocacy in the specialist family violence system. *The Experts by Experience Bulletin* aims to keep survivor advocates up to date with the implementation of survivor advocacy at Safe and Equal, as well as to share emerging research, sector resources, and opportunities.

We look forward to continuing to evolve and grow our work with survivor advocates in the coming year, including expanding our approach to acknowledge and naming different sources of lived experience, including clients, workforce and survivor advocates.

Our embedding lived experience program of work is generously supported by The Barlow Foundation, The Melbourne Women’s Fund, the Sidney Myer Fund, and Transurban.

ARE YOU SAFE AT HOME?

Safe and Equal developed the 'Are You Safe at Home?' initiative in 2020, in response to an increased risk of family violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initiative is designed to provide victim survivors with information about what family violence is, ways to stay safe, and where to find support. It also aims to provide friends, family and community members with information about how to respond appropriately to warning signs that someone might be experiencing abuse.

ARE YOU SAFE AT HOME? DAY

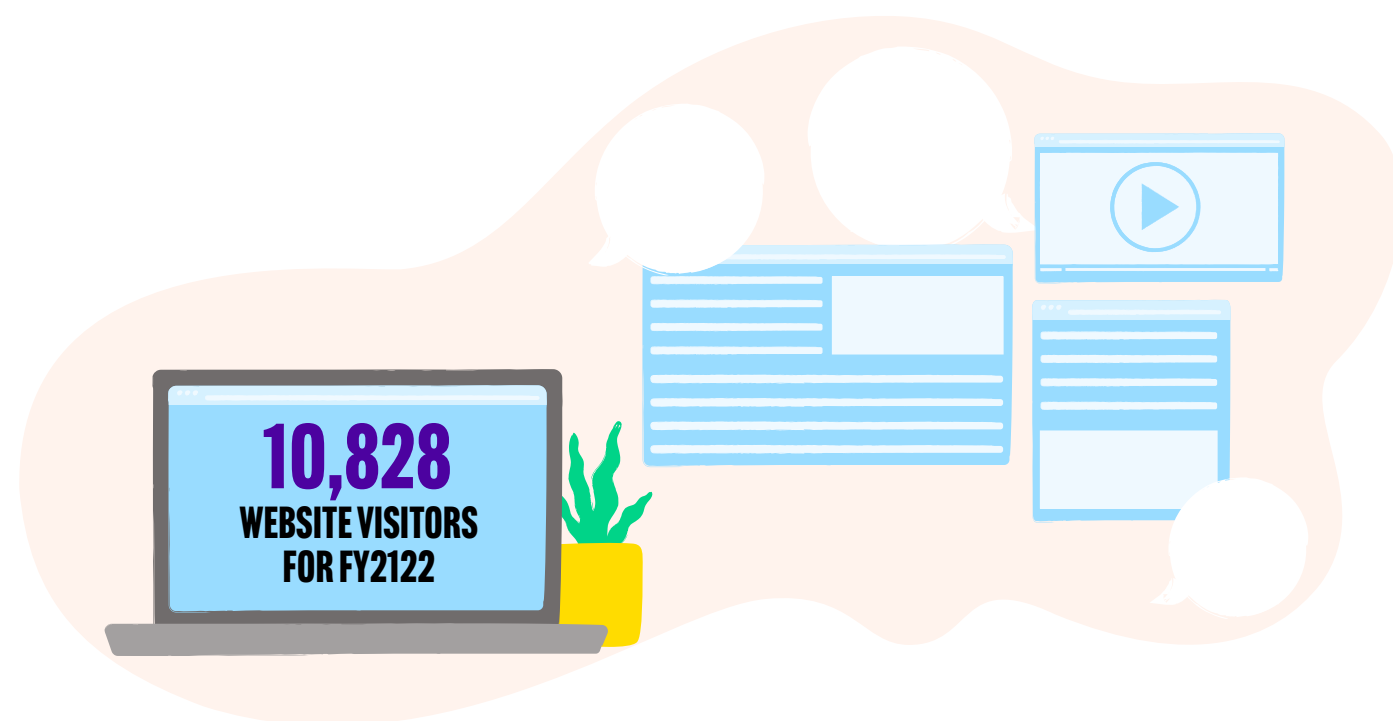
On 10 May 2022, we launched the first Are You Safe at Home? Day. The day included a live media event hosted by AFLW Richmond player Akec Majur Chuot. It featured an address from the then Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, Gabrielle Williams, and a discussion between survivor advocates about what it meant for them to be asked by loved ones, 'are you safe at home?'

WEBSITE

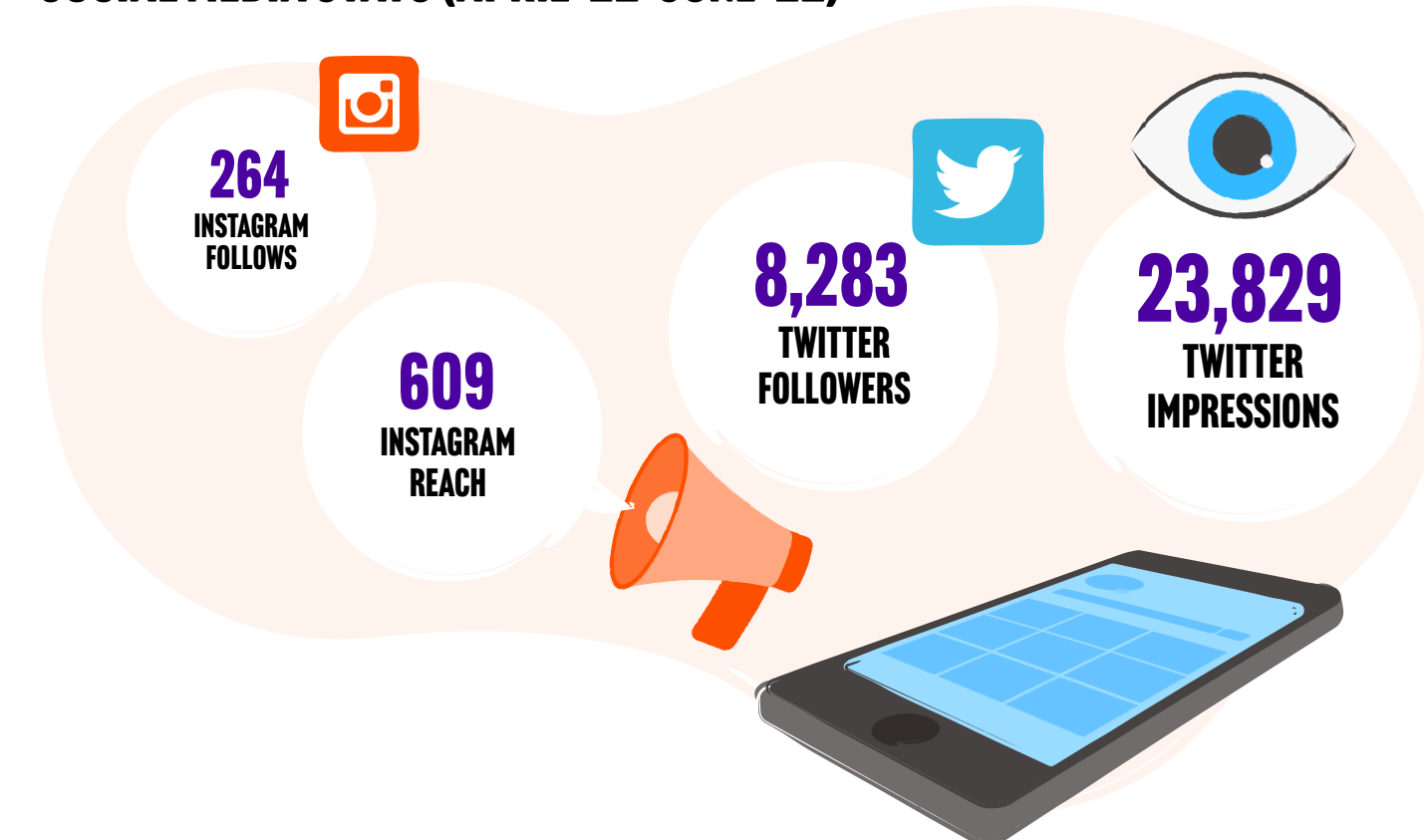
The **Are You Safe at Home? website** was refreshed in April 2022 to include more information for friends, family and community members. The new **Are You Safe at Home? website** also provides people experiencing abuse with information about what family violence is, ways to stay safe, and where to find support.

CAMPAIGN ENGAGEMENT

Covered by ABC News, ABC Radio, 7 News, Mamamia, news.com.au



SOCIAL MEDIA STATS (APRIL '22-JUNE '22)



For anyone experiencing abuse, having someone ask about your safety can be incredibly meaningful. To have someone actually name what you're experiencing as violence, believe you and offer non-judgemental support can be life-changing.

– Tania Farha, CEO, Safe and Equal

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

Engaging local communities in the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence campaign



Over the past two years, we've partnered with Respect Victoria to deliver the 16 Days of Activism 'Respect Women: Call It Out' grassroots initiative.

The United Nations' 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence begins on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November) and ends on International Human Rights Day (10 December).

In a collaborative effort to expand the reach of the 16 Days campaign across Victoria, the grassroots initiative supports and funds community organisations, community health organisations, and local councils to participate in Respect Victoria's 'Respect Women: Call It Out (Respect Is)' campaign.

In 2021, we partnered with the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Council of Social Services, No to Violence and the Women's Health Services Council to leverage our respective membership bases and expand the reach of the campaign across councils and the community sector.

GRASSROOTS INITIATIVE

In 2021, on behalf of Respect Victoria, we distributed 113 small grants to a wide range of community organisations, who delivered activities and events designed to engage their communities in preventing and responding to gender-based violence.

Some examples of how these community organisations applied their grant funding include:

- ➔ Social media campaigns
- ➔ Print/traditional media campaigns
- ➔ Webinars, seminars, and workshops
- ➔ Public art installations and exhibitions
- ➔ Trainings on primary prevention and other topics
- ➔ Video creation and screening
- ➔ Arts/cultural events and activities

Additional to the support fund, we supported all Victorian community organisations and councils wanting to engage with the 16 Days campaign through an informative webinar series, weekly campaign supporter bulletins, campaign toolkit and collateral, and access to our 16 Days help desk.

These events, tools and resources equipped organisations to confidently engage with the 16 Days campaign in their local communities.

PRIORITY 4

Building a strong peak organisation

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We are building a strong, sustainable, responsive, and influential peak organisation that is focused and delivers consistent, high-quality work. We are building a culture that fosters excellence, innovation, flexibility, and inclusion.

Our staff are supported with robust and inclusive organisational systems and processes. The work we do and the way we work reflects our values.

This year set some critical foundations for our newly formed peak organisation. Consultation commenced for the groundwork of our prevention focus, we applied ourselves to applications for both Rainbow Tick and RTO accreditations and we explored what an ongoing financial sustainability strategy for our peak organisation could look like.

Knowing that we are only as strong as the people within our organisation, we invested in the ongoing learning and development of our team, to ensure we nurtured a culture reflective of our values.

PREVENTION STRATEGY

After decades of activism, advocacy, and hard work, we are at an inflection point in our common efforts to end family violence in our community... For the first time, the peak organisation for the specialist family violence sector will provide leadership on family violence ranging from prevention to response and recovery.

– Safe and Equal Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024

This year we set the foundations for a Primary Prevention Strategy, to guide our prevention focus across the organisation over an initial period of two years.

The strategy will provide clarity and consistency in how we describe our role in primary prevention, and how we intend to advance our work.

It will align with Safe and Equal's [Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024](#), providing a distinct focus on consolidating and expanding our role and influential leadership in primary prevention.

Consultation is underway with key stakeholders leading primary prevention work both in Victoria and nationally. Discussions amongst staff and leadership have set the groundwork for the strategy, with a plan to engage members and the Board to help us to define our unique role – and how this role complements and enhances work being done by others in the family violence sector.

Primary prevention is critical to achieving the vision in our [Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024](#) of a world beyond family and gender-based violence, where women, children and people from marginalised communities are safe, thriving and respected. This is a shared vision supported and underpinned by a national strategy for preventing violence against women, [Change the Story](#), and the Victorian strategy, [Free from Violence](#).

Safe and Equal's primary prevention work has evolved from a shared history of prevention advocacy, workforce development and capability building, inherited from both DVRCV and DV Vic.

Now united, we continue to pursue a significant focus on providing specialist expertise in prevention and have significant reach and a respected role in the sectors engaged with primary prevention. Our aim is to be a force for connection and collective action in support of ending family and gender-based violence.

In the ongoing development of this strategy, we will consult widely and read extensively to develop greater clarity about our role and responsibilities, and to avoid duplication or competition with others engaged in the work.

Our strategic direction over the next two years is to grow our leadership role in representing and developing the primary prevention workforce and building and sharing innovative practice. Ultimately, we are focused on strengthening our role working across the continuum of prevention through to response.

RAINBOW TICK ACCREDITATION

Safe and Equal is well placed to raise awareness and advocate for inclusive and accessible family violence responses for LGBTIQ+ communities.

We can also demonstrate our organisational commitment to the celebration and affirmation of LGBTIQ+ staff and stakeholders. With these strengths in mind, we decided to work towards achieving **Rainbow Tick Accreditation**.

To guide the organisation's accreditation journey, we formed a **Rainbow Tick Working Group** in September 2021, which included a member of our **Expert Advisory Panel**.

The rainbow tick working group led the implementation of several key pieces of work, including:

- ➔ An organisation-wide audit of **Rainbow Tick** standards with an intersectional lens
- ➔ An LGBTIQ+ and accessibility site audit
- ➔ The creation of a **Rainbow Tick Action Plan**
- ➔ The creation of an organisation-wide **Rainbow Tick** survey to capture skills and representation in our workforce, as well as feedback on LGBTIQ+ inclusion at **Safe and Equal**

As part of the accreditation process, all internal policies and procedures were reviewed to include LGBTIQ+ considerations, including an audit of all data collection forms to align with our **Data Management Framework**.

Furthermore, over 80% of our staff and Board participated in LGBTIQ inclusion training, we implemented a **Gender Affirmation Policy and Procedure**, and introduced 10 days' paid gender affirmation leave entitlement.

The formal accreditation took place in June 2022, by external assessment body **Quality Innovation Performance Limited (QIP)**. This included the submission of hundreds of documents, as well as interviews with **Safe and Equal** Board members, staff and stakeholders.

We were thrilled to receive confirmation later in 2022 that we are now a **Rainbow Tick accredited organisation**.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Continuous learning opportunities for staff

As part of building a strong peak organisation, we aim to build a workplace culture that fosters excellence, innovation, flexibility and inclusion. Part of this work includes ensuring staff have access to continuous learning opportunities that reflect our intersectional feminist values.

Across the 2021–22 financial year, we held several in-house professional development sessions for staff, including:

SAFE AND EQUAL ACCESS AND INCLUSION LEARNING CIRCLES

Held between March and July 2022, **Safe and Equal's Access and Inclusion Learning Circles** were an opportunity for staff to have an open conversation around important topics such as:

- Inclusive language
- Intersectional feminism
- Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sovereignty, decolonisation and allyship
- Lived experience in the workforce

These conversations were facilitated and attended by staff from across the organisation, who together created a space that was inclusive, dynamic and generative.

The discussions captured in these sessions will inform a report on access, inclusion and equity at Safe and Equal, including an action plan for how we can continue to support this work within our workplace and amongst our members.

I just wanted to thank you for these incredible sessions. Thank you for showing up with such sensitivity and inclusiveness. Thank you for creating such a safe and rich space for discussion.

– Access and Inclusion Learning Circle Participant

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Continuous learning opportunities for staff

ADDRESSING PORNOGRAPHY'S INFLUENCE

As part of the Addressing Pornography's Influence project delivered in partnership with Maree Crabbe, Safe and Equal staff were offered a tailored training package in February 2022 from Maree's signature violence prevention initiative, It's Time We Talked.

This two-day workshop supported our team to analyse pornography's prevalence, nature and influence, and explored how this may be addressed as part of broader efforts to prevent family and gender-based violence.

DISABILITY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION WORKSHOPS

Hosted by Women with Disabilities Victoria, this workshop series explored inclusive prevention practice in the context of violence against women with disabilities.

Held across several dates in 2022, this engaging series highlighted the drivers of violence against women with disabilities, and how organisations can take essential actions to become more gender and disability inclusive.

RAINBOW HEALTH AUSTRALIA LGBTIQ INCLUSION TRAINING

As part of Safe and Equal's Rainbow Tick Accreditation, all staff had the opportunity to participate in LGBTIQ Inclusion Training, run by Rainbow Health Australia.

An important part of ensuring we provide a safe and inclusive workplace for LGBTIQ+ staff, clients and stakeholders, this training is now embedded into our induction process for new people at Safe and Equal to complete within their first year of employment.

YARNIN' ABOUT CULTURAL SAFETY

Facilitated by Djirra and run across multiple virtual sessions in 2021-22, Yarnin' About Cultural Safety provided staff with an opportunity to learn about the impacts of colonisation on First Nations people, and to discuss strategies and approaches to strengthening cultural safety for Aboriginal people in the workplace.

I think it is great to have opportunities for Safe and Equal staff to deepen their knowledge on various issues in order to foster a culture of continuous learning and professional development.

– Staff member, Safe and Equal

RTO ACCREDITATION

Delivering high quality, nationally recognised education and training is one of the foundational ways in which Safe and Equal is able to lead, shape and resource the family violence sector workforce in a meaningful and consistent way.

Following the merger and rebrand, Safe and Equal sought accreditation as a **registered training organisation (RTO)** with the **Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)**.

Registration by VRQA confirms that a training provider is capable of meeting rigorous government standards and is permitted to issue nationally recognised qualifications.

Being an RTO provider allows us to lead in the delivery of specialist family violence competencies that align with skill sets required in a variety of roles across the state. The process for RTO accreditation commenced in February 2021, involving over 12 months of preparation and planning.

Throughout this time, we continued to offer non-accredited training under the DVRCV brand.

Our application for accreditation was submitted in January 2022, with the audit completed on 15 and 17 June 2022.

The audit involved two phases; first a financial viability assessment, followed by an assessment of compliance completed as a desktop audit with staff interviews and hundreds of documents uploaded to an online portal for review.

We were extremely pleased to receive our RTO accreditation on 14 September 2022, following a rigorous 18-month process.

We are excited to continue the role originated by DVRCV as a specialist provider and leader in family violence workforce development across the continuum, delivering high quality outcomes to all participants and the wider community.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

This is a concern for all specialist family violence organisations, as the sector faces waning government investment after the concerted efforts of the Royal Commission reforms.

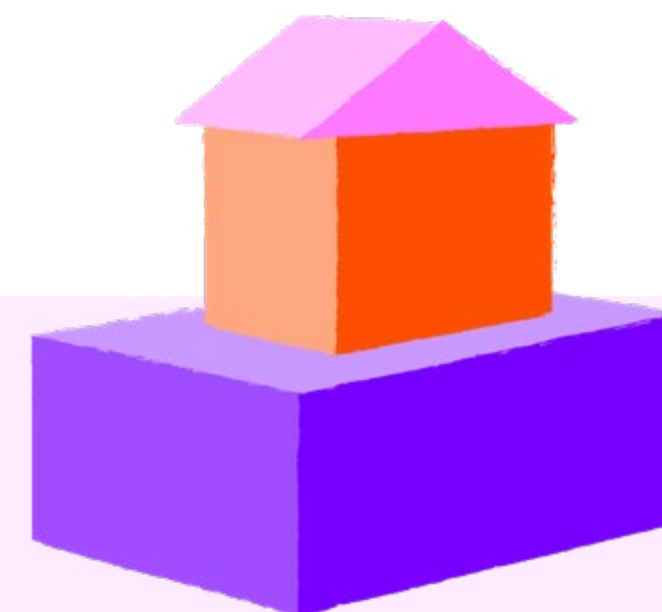
In 2021, we identified the need for a sound financial sustainability strategy to connect our strategic goals with a viable operating model. It was critical that we created a plan focused on increasing sustainability through continued reach, influence, and impact in our sector.

The Board commissioned EY to support the development of this strategy. The strategy identifies six building blocks as key to the ongoing financial sustainability of **Safe and Equal**, which represent different capabilities that can be added or removed to create future operating models. Of the six, three were identified and endorsed by the Board as the focus points for the next two years.

BUILDING BLOCKS IDENTIFIED AND ENDORSED BY THE BOARD

- ➔ **Business Development**
Robust business development processes and expertise to enable more cost-effective service delivery.
- ➔ **Profile Building**
Advocating and communicating critical messages for community and government to extend reach, influence and impact of the organisation and sector.
- ➔ **Measurement and Evidence Building**
Data, research, monitoring, evaluation, evidence building and supporting budget bids.

The next phase of development for the Financial Sustainability Strategy will be an **Implementation Plan** that will look at specific steps to ensure reach, influence and impact become sustainable for our organisation.



FINANCIAL REPORT

In November 2022, the transfer of all assets from DVRCV to Safe and Equal took place, marking the final stage of the merger between DVRCV and Safe and Equal (formally DV Vic).

This means that the 2021-22 annual report will be the final time that DVRCV's financial statements are presented as separate to Safe and Equal's.

It will also be the last time they will be read alongside each other for an accurate interpretation of Safe and Equal's merged and consolidated financial position. We look forward to sharing a consolidated audited report for the 2022-23 financial year.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTRE VICTORIA (DVRCV) 2021-22 FINANCIAL REPORT

[View DVRCV financial report here](#)

Statement of Comprehensive Income (page 3)
Statement of Financial Position (page 5)

SAFE AND EQUAL 2021-22 FINANCIAL REPORT

[View Safe and Equal financial report here](#)

Statement of Comprehensive Income (page 5)
Statement of Financial Position (page 6)

MEMBER SERVICES

Full members in 2021–22

Anglicare Victoria	Emma House Domestic Violence Services Inc	Quantum Support Services
Annie North Inc	Family Life	Refuge Victoria
Australian Muslim Women’s Centre for Human Rights	Flat Out	Safe Steps
Baptcare	Gateway Health	The Salvation Army Victoria
Berry Street	GenWest (formerly Women’s Health West)	South East CASA
Bethany Community Support	Georgina Martina Inc	Sexual Assault & Family Violence Centre
Better Health Network	Good Samaritan Inn	Switchboard Victoria
Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Services	Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand	Uniting Vic Tas
Brophy Family and Youth Services	Grampians Community Health Centre	VincentCare
Centre Against Violence	Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative	WAYSS Ltd
Centre for Non Violence Inc	inTouch Multicultural Centre against Family Violence	Wellsprings for Women
Child and Family Services Ballarat	Juno	Western Health
Cohealth	Kara Family Violence Service	Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation
Colac Area Health	Mallee District Aboriginal Service	Windermere Child and Family Services
Djirra	Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc/Mallee Domestic Violence Services	Women’s Housing Ltd
Drummond Street Services	McAuley Community Services for Women	Women’s Information & Referral Exchange Inc
EDVOS	Nexus Primary Health	Women’s Liberation Halfway House Inc
Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women’s Services	Peninsula Health Primary Care Connect	WRISC Family Violence Support
Emerge Women & Children’s Support Network	Project Respect	

OUR TEAM

Safe and Equal staff in 2021–22

Aishwarya Vishwanath	Claire Marshall	Helen Batho	Kit Catterson	Melanie Burns	Robyn Stone
Alison Roberts	Courtney Wamala	Helena Jordan	Krista Seddon	Melanie Scammell	Sam Meeks
Amanda Johnson	Elizabeth Yared	Hilary Glaisher	Kristy-Lee Loots	Melissa Whalen	Sangwon Lee
Amar Freya	Ella Longhurst	Isabel Venables	Lauren Zammit	Meredith Eldridge	Sara Burgess
Amelia Ditcham	Ellen Perriment	Issara Saeyim	Lesly Zambrano Moreno	Michelle Ginnivan	Savanna Koene
Anastasia Chung	Ellen McGregor	Izabela Drwecki	Lisa Zilberpriver	Mishelle Kerr	Sherin Maxwell
Ann Raouf	Elvis Martin	Jacky Tucker	Louise Simms	Mishka	Solmaz Yavari
Anna Wark	Elyce Sandri	Jane Garnett	Lucia Prinzi	Monaliza Bucud	Stephanie Penna
Aoibheann Catherine Fallon	Emily Sporik	Jelena Djurdjevic	Lucy Peckham	Montana Agustin	Tania Farha
Arielle Milecki	Emma Morgan	Jennie Child	Luke Burgess	Naomi Bellingham	Tania McKenna
Ashley Gregoratos	Emma Hardley	Jessica Boccia	Maheen Maheen	Nicole Bechard	Tash Anderson
Aviva Minc	Erica Wastell	Jessica Maxwell	Maria Murray	Nina Storey	Tehreem Chaudhry
Belinda Bannerman	Esther Lee-Scott	Jessica Wilson	Marie Allen	Olivia Franklin	Tess Moodie
Beth Mooney	Fulya Torun	Julie Lane	Maryanne Clarke	Preethi Martin	Tharaka Tennekoon
Bianca Hunter	Gaye Ealy	Kate Stannard	Maureen Smith	Rebeca Carro	Tyra Rochecouste
Bianca Bindi	Glenn Davies	Kelly Finch	Maureen Schleiger	Rebecca Chong	Violeta Maritcorena Politoff
Cassie Phu	Glynis Harris	Kelly Alexander	Meg Barber	Rebecca Yeomans	Yesica Kidd
Chani Simpson	Hannah Dwyer	Khyaati Acharya	Megan Kelly	Renae Leverenz	
Claire Bauska	Hayley Williamson	Kimberley Hay	Meghan Cooper	Roberta Foreman	

BOARD LIST

TRANSITION BOARD 2021 (UNTIL 2021 AGM)

Helen Campbell (Chair, until July 2021)

Stacey Ong (Acting Chair, August 2021 until 31 January 2022)

Belinda Lo

Deb Bryant (Secretary)

Helen Bolton

Julie McQueen

Leah van Poppel

Margaret Augerinos

Michal Morris

Sally Thompson

Tania Rose (Treasurer)

CURRENT BOARD (2021 AGM-2022 AGM)

Maria Dimopoulos (Chair from 31 January 2022)

Margaret Augerinos (Deputy Chair)

Tania Rose (Treasurer)

Deb Bryant (Secretary)

Felicity Rorke

Libby Jewson

Michal Morris

Stacey Ong

THANK YOU

We would like to acknowledge and thank the organisations and government agencies who generously continue to support and fund our work:

Family Safety Victoria

Office for Prevention of Family Violence and Coordination

Department of Education and Training

Department of Health and Human Services

Johnson Winter and Slattery

Respect Victoria

RMIT

Edward Wilson Estate

Erdi Foundation

The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

The William Buckland Foundation and Trusts managed as part of the Sector Capacity Building Fund at Equity Trustees

Tanarra Philanthropic Advisors

The Ian Potter Foundation; and The Myer Foundation

We wish to give a heartfelt thank you to the many individuals, companies and funds that donated to support our work over the 2021–22 financial year. Your generosity has enabled us to continue working towards our vision.

We also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the many people who have contributed to DV Vic, DVRCV and now Safe and Equal over the decades. Your legacy has paved the way to the organisation we are today.

We extend our deep gratitude and thanks to our current and former colleagues, without whom we could not create this level of impact, year in and year out. We acknowledge your exceptional passion, intelligence and commitment to creating a world in which all people can be safe and equal.



SAFE + EQUAL

**Standing strong
against family
violence**

safeandequal.org.au

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