



safe steps Family Violence Response Centre: A Case for Support

In 2017, now, more than ever, safe steps needs your help to raise funds to provide essential, life-saving services to women and children escaping immediate risk of serious injury or death due to violence in the home.

How safe steps Makes a Difference

From grassroots beginnings over 40 years ago, **safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre has grown to become **the leading first response service in Victoria** for women and their children experiencing family violence.

Today, **safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre provides 24/7 expert intervention, support, advocacy and referral pathways to women and children throughout Victoria to ensure that those at highest risk receive an immediate family violence response to keep them from harm.

safe steps supports women and children at the highest risk in our community. We are the service that all other services refer to when they have reached capacity, or the risk is too high or the needs too complex. We do not turn any women at risk away.

safe steps responds to women and children at risk by:

- Providing a specialist family violence response 24/7 including public holidays and weekends when other services are closed
- Providing comprehensive risk assessment carried out by skilled, specialist practitioners
- Assisting women to develop a safety plan
- Referring and linking women and children to support options in their community, including specialist family violence services and generalist supports
- Providing safe emergency accommodation
- Supporting women into refuge or other accommodation options.

safe steps is the only family violence Victorian state-wide service that is available to help women and children 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



“Everyone has the right to be safe and live free from violence and abuse.”

Some Important Facts About the Work of safe steps

For over 40 years, safe steps has been the voice for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children. Unfortunately, the need has never been greater.

Both the incidence and severity of violence against women and children is getting worse than it has ever been recorded before. In 2016, it was reported that nearly two women a week were murdered due to family violence.

- March 2017 saw the highest number of crisis calls ever received by the **safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre’s 24/7 phone service. A staggering 10,293 calls were received – a 70 per cent increase on March 2016. That’s an average of 332 calls per day. This year, our data projections indicate that we will respond to more than 95,000 calls.
- In peak times, **safe steps** responds to a call for assistance, from women at risk every three minutes.
- In 2016-17, **safe steps** provided more than 29,000 emergency accommodation beds to women and children who needed assistance to escape immediate risk of serious injury or death - an increase of almost 15 per cent on the previous financial year. Women and children accommodated by our service are those who require high security accommodation in an undisclosed location.
- More than 50 per cent of women contacting **safe steps** have experienced more than one of the risk indicators resulting in likely serious injury or death; including threats to kill, strangulation, sexual assault, threats with a weapon and stalking.
- **safe steps** accommodates women and children for longer periods of time. In the past two years the average number of nights we accommodate women and children has increased by 99 per cent.
- Over 50 per cent of people placed in safe accommodation by **safe steps** are children.
- **safe steps** is the first point of call for women and children experiencing family violence, as well as the entry point for all Victorian women’s refuge accommodation.

www.safesteps.org.au

