

## CEO's Statement

I am privileged to lead an organisation that has the safety and empowerment of women and their children at the centre of everything it does. As the 24/7 state-wide central family violence responder **safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre provides a critical pathway into the specialist family violence system.

We are particularly proud of our response to women and children living with violence, particularly women with disabilities, women with high and complex needs, and women who are further disadvantaged because they do not have permanent residency status.

It's a new world, things are changing – we are too – we are doing things differently so we can meet the ever increasing demand on our services. We are changing the way we respond to women and children accessing support. We are changing to accommodate the increase in women presenting at high risk.

As the family violence specialist in danger and lethality risk assessment, it is essential that **safe steps** maintains an immediate response to women and children affected by family violence. As such, we have enhanced our crisis response process, and upgraded our telephone and call tracking system to ensure that our clients receive an instant, focused and best practice response at all times.

**safe steps** is an evidence based organisation. Internally we collate and analyse significant amounts of data each year to identify what drives the ever increasing demand on our services. We have identified that not only are there more women accessing our service but that they are reporting a greater number of high risk factors and staying in our service for longer than ever before.

Externally, we focus on understanding national trends. Data collected in the past 12 months in partnership with other state-wide crisis lines across Australia includes increasing numbers of women accessing family violence crisis line services who do not have permanent residency.

Our vital work saves lives, empowers women and disrupts the patterns of inter-generational abuse by protecting children from experiencing or witnessing further violence.

But there is still much to do. I hope as you read this, you will consider supporting **safe steps** and commit to our goal to eliminate violence against women and children. There are many things you can do to help: spread the word amongst your friends; make a financial donation; participate in one of our events or invite us to speak at your community group or workplace gathering.

Your support will make a difference, and possibly even save a woman and her children from serious injury or death. Thank you.

### **Annette Gillespie**

Chief Executive Officer

safe steps Family Violence Response Centre