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| **safe steps** has received a share of $1M in free advertising as part of Yarra Trams’ Community Partnership Program |
| **safe steps’** “*You can Live Free From Family Violence”* campaign aims to reach 1 in 4 Victorian women who will experience family violence.  |

In 2018, more Victorian women and children are contacting **safe steps** for assistance than ever before.

**For immediate release**

**safe steps’ Partnership with Yarra Trams aims to make sure Victorian women and children are safe at home.**

**A campaign reassuring Victorian women they *can* live free from family violence will be displayed on 50 Yarra Trams across Melbourne over the next three months.**

The campaign, devised by **safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre, will be featured across the Yarra Tram network as part of a new Community Partnership Program, giving eight community groups a share in $1 million worth of free advertising.

**safe steps** is the first Yarra Trams community partner to launch its campaign and have its ads displayed. From this week, commuters will be able to see **safe steps’** *“You Can Live Free from Family Violence”* campaign on the front and back of 50 trams across the iconic Melbourne network.

**safe steps** CEO, Annette Gillespie, sees the partnership with Yarra Trams as a natural fit and hopes the positive anti-family violence message will resonate with the 180 million people who board Yarra Trams each year.

“Yarra Trams’ mission is to get women and children home safely. **safe steps’** mission is to make sure they are safe when they get home,” says Ms Gillespie.

“In Victoria, unfortunately 1 in 4 women will experience family violence in their lifetime. Statistically, that’s 874,177 women who need to know how and where to get help.

“The launch of the campaign and associated tram ads coincides with Domestic and Family Violence Prevention month held in May each year, so it’s very timely.”

Ms Gillespie says that family violence is still affecting an alarming number of Victorian women and children, with calls to safe steps - Victoria’s statewide family violence response service - expected to reach over 100,000 this financial year.

“In the first three months of 2018, our phone line received an unprecedented 27,134 calls.

 “Women and children in our state are living with both the daily and the long term psychological and physical impacts of being seriously injured, sexually assaulted and emotionally scarred by someone who claims to care about them.

“As of May 2018, on any given day, **safe steps** receives an average of more than 300 calls from those seeking help. More Victorian women and children are contacting our services than ever before because they are at risk from family violence.

As the state-wide 24/7 family violence response service, **safe steps’** campaign aims to encourage Victorians experiencing family violence to contact **safe steps’** phone line 1800 015 188 or to seek information on **safe steps’** website www.safesteps.org.au.

 “If our campaign can reach and save the life of just one person experiencing family violence, it has worked.”

**safe steps** Family Violence Response Centre CEO Annette Gillespie is available for comment.

***If you or someone you care about is living with an abusive partner or family member, call safe steps Family Violence Response Centre 24/7 on 1800 015 188 or visit*** [***www.safesteps.org.au***](http://www.safesteps.org.au)

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