

Annual Report

2013-2014



Together we are stronger

Domestic violence can happen to anyone but is mainly committed by men against women, children and other vulnerable people. It is endemic in the community and affects people of all walks of life regardless of age, culture, sexual identity, ability, ethnicity, religion or socioeconomic status.

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Support Service (WDVCS) is a voice for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children in Victoria. Working collaboratively with the police, criminal justice system and other agencies who work to prevent domestic violence, we offer a comprehensive range of quality services to support women and children.

Our values underpin the way we deliver services and engage with those who access support.

The core values of WDVCS are:

- Non violent
- Empowering
- Feminist *
- Ethical and respectful
- Collaborative
- Authoritative and evidence based

**Feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of political, social, economic equality with men.*

Our services:

- 24-hour, 7 days a week crisis response
- Safety planning
- Emergency accommodation
- Outreach services
- Information
- Advocacy
- Training

Quick Fact

1 in 3 Women suffer family violence

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Family Violence Prevention

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS) has a proud history of service delivery, but the organisation's influence in eliminating violence against women and their children is greater than that.

WDVCS is a social change organisation that actively contributes to the prevention of violence against women and their children. WDVCS ensures that the voices of women are captured and heard everywhere by everyone through:

- Contributing to media campaigns
- Engaging the public in social media debate
- Preparing submissions to government
- Presenting at conferences, sector forums and workshops
- Educating the broader community
- Providing workplace training to businesses state-wide
- Hosting international visitors
- Representation on reference groups
- Leading the Walk Against Family Violence (previously Not One More)

A key initiative that stands out as an example of creating community change by empowering women to tell their story of surviving domestic violence is the media survivor advocate project.

Women participating in the project receive training so that they can become confident to talk to the media and community groups about the consequences and impacts of family violence on women and communities.

In 2013 – 2014, our media advocates have been prominent across all forms of media and have been readily accessed by other agencies across the state to support local events and media activity. Media platforms include Channel 9 A Current Affair, Channel 7 Today Tonight, all major television news programs and print media. A particular highlight was a feature article "Behind closed doors" in the Victoria Police, Police Life Magazine and the Herald Sun Take a stand campaign.

In March 2014, we partnered with Centre for Non Violence to develop a rural media survivor advocate program in Loddon Campaspe Region. Fifteen advocates successfully completed the training, bringing the number of advocates state-wide to over 65.

The seven year project was independently evaluated December 2013 with reported outcomes confirming the project has contributed towards positive change in the way in which journalists report incidents of violence against women.

WDVCS reach goes beyond Victoria.

In May 2014, WDVCS hosted the Domestic and Family Violence Crisis Line Australia Network (DFVCLAN) annual meeting. Representatives of state-wide crisis lines from across Australia gathered in Melbourne to discuss national trends, partnership opportunities and new initiatives to support the elimination of violence against women. Speakers at the meeting included former Victorian Police Commissioner Christine Nixon and Paul Linossier, CEO of The Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children and Shirley Woods from Project Respect. We also hosted Canada's Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research.

WDVCS continues to facilitate state-wide refuge strategy forums to work towards improving consistent strong referral pathways for women and children entering the family violence specialist system.



PoliceLife Magazine 'Behind Closed Doors'.

Chair Report



The World Health Organisation 2013 global report cited family violence as the emerging greatest social epidemic of our time.

As the state-wide 24/7 first response to women and children experiencing family

violence in Victoria, Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS) has a proud 30 year history of offering an immediate family violence response that informs, protects and connects women and their children so they are safe and that their voices are heard.

As a community leader and driver of social change in 2013 -2014 WDVCS focused on continually improving its responsiveness to women and their children, and to strengthen community partnerships, promote offender accountability and courageously shine a spotlight on systemic gaps that further disadvantage women and children. The organisation has successfully achieved the balance required to deliver crisis management responses, early intervention and prevention activities that ultimately move our community towards a world where violence against women and children is no longer tolerated and gender equity is the norm.

The work is not without its challenges. An ever increasing demand for our services alongside ever decreasing referral options has put enormous pressure on the organisation as has an ever changing community services landscape. WDVCS has become adept at responding to a changing environment while not compromising the quality of service given to our clients.

WDVCS has continued to influence change through strong representation at state-wide and national forums and conferences ensuring our organisation not only responds to violence after it occurs, but works to prevent violence from occurring. Regionally, we continue to ensure that the voices of women are captured and heard by building upon the survivor advocacy program, encouraging women with a lived experience of family violence to tell their story as a way of challenging social attitudes and beliefs that sustain violence against women.

WDVCS must operate within a culture of service excellence and demonstrate strong leadership and governance to do our critical work. As Chair of the WDVCS Board I have had the pleasure of working with a Board that has shown exceptional stewardship in a time of sector uncertainty and ever increasing service demands. The Board has enhanced many of its processes including financial accountability, risk management and continues to work hard to ensure that the organisation has a comprehensive marketing and communications plan to improve client and stakeholder engagement.

I sincerely thank my Board colleagues for their time, expertise and commitment to the strategic vision of the WDVCS. In particular I acknowledge the work of Veronica McGowan who retired from the Board during the year following almost three years of dedicated service. We welcomed Gayathri Paramasivam onto the Board who brings extensive legal knowledge which will be a great asset to the organisation.

The support and safety given to women and children would not be possible without the expertise and passion of the WDVCS CEO, Annette Gillespie and her impressive team of skilled and dedicated workers. I take this opportunity to thank management, staff, students and volunteers who contributed to delivering the support services to women and their children while maintaining strong and viable management systems.

Finally, thank you to our supporters, funders and partners without whom we would not be able to continue doing our critical work. It's through your support and generosity that thousands of women and children have been able to live free from violence and abuse.

– Toni Campbell

Quick Fact

40% of all murders are due to family violence

CEO Report



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 Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS) provides a critical pathway into the Victorian specialist family violence system.

This year there have been many achievements. We are particularly proud of our response to women with disabilities, women with high and complex needs, and women who are further disadvantaged because they do not have permanent residency status.

WDVCS is an evidence based organisation and continues to strengthen its ability to collate and analyse data each year. Internally we focused on identifying the drivers of demand on our emergency funding for women and children. It was 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 focused on understanding national trends. Of note was the data collected in partnership with other state-wide crisis lines across Australia on the number of women accessing domestic violence crisis line services who did not have permanent residency.

As the specialist in danger and lethality risk assessment it is essential that WDVCS maintains an immediate response to women and children affected by family violence. As such, WDVCS has reviewed and changed its crisis response model ensuring that our clients receive an instant, focussed, best practice response.

We have introduced two new service delivery models: a Family Services Team at the organisations 'safe house' providing a consistent holistic continuum of care for the most vulnerable of women in our service and a focus on strengthening local area partnerships to provide a co-case management response to women accommodated in motels. An upgrade of the telephone system including a call tracking system and the refurbishment of the telephone crisis response work area provides a more efficient and comfortable work space.

Our business model was reviewed resulting in stronger financial and compliance accountability. The Human Resource function was also reviewed and values based performance development programs embedded to support the organisational culture of continuous growth and innovation.

WDVCS' greatest resource is our staff. Significant investment has been made during the period to ensure that each member of staff is skilled and supported. A change in staffing structure to include program managers and service area team leaders provides greater overall support to staff. Staff development included the introduction of a 3 day foundation training, external group supervision and individual training opportunities.

Our vital work saves lives, empowers women and disrupts the patterns of inter-generational abuse by protecting children from experiencing or witnessing further violence. None of this work is possible without a dedicated team of individuals who make it their business every day to work towards the elimination of violence against women. This, a steadfast Executive Team, a skilled Board of Governance, and the generosity of our many donors and supporters make WDVCS a reliable and trusted first response to women and their children whose lives have been impacted by family violence. I extend my sincere gratitude to the WDVCS team and our supporters.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Gillespie".

– Annette Gillespie

Quick Fact

Family Violence costs the Australian economy \$13.6 billion



Annette Gillespie with Natasha Stott Despoja,
Ambassador for Women and Girls

Year in Review

There have been many highlights in the 2013 - 2014 year.

WDVCS champions the voices of women and children experiencing domestic violence to influence positive changes in the sector. We advocate for policy changes, legal reform, better services, increased funding and to keep family violence high on the political agenda and prominent in the social discourse. We continue to improve and deliver an outstanding service for clients, building its family violence prevention activities, elevating media reporting of family violence, empowering women to tell their stories.

Service developments

In November 2013, WDVCS implemented its new staffing structure with four program areas:

- Client Services
- Quality Assurance and Training
- Corporate Services
- Marketing, Fundraising and Communications

In June 2013, the new crisis response model was launched, with an upgraded telephone system including a call tracking system to minimise wait times, providing clients with an immediate response.

On any given day WDVCS receives over 135 calls per day, almost 50,000 calls in 2013 - 2014 financial year. When a woman contacts WDVCS, a highly trained Client Support Advocate (CSA) completes a comprehensive risk assessment to establish risk. The CSA provides immediate support and advocacy services including critical police liaison, child protection motel, refuges and outreach. This is no small task and requires significant expenditure, organisational resources, and a dedicated professional team to ensure women and children are safe.

Advocating for social change

WDVCS is much more than a service provider. The organisation has a long and proud history of active social change including its flagship media advocate program that has not only provided women with a lived experience of violence a

platform for their voice to be heard, but has brought attention to the effects of violence on women and children through wide spread media coverage.

We have made a number of submissions lobbying for change. These include:

- Submission to the Review of the Australian Curriculum (WDVCS)
- SUBMISSION TO THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE Inquiry into Handling Of Child Abuse By Religious And Other Non-government Organisations (WDVCS)
- Joint Submission in response to the Department of Justice's Review of Sexual Offences Consultation Paper
- Joint Submission on the Department of Justice's Defensive Homicide: Proposals for Legislative Reform - Consultation Paper (2013)

The 2013 - 2014 year has been a busy one with our CEO, Annette Gillespie actively engaging with government, the family violence sector and broader community, advocating on behalf of women and children who have experience or continue to experience family violence.

Quick Fact

Family violence is a leading factor in 44% of all homelessness.

Annette has delivered a number of presentations at a variety of forums including:

- August 2013 RMIT 40 Years of Social Work Outrage Conference on homelessness, disability, racism, violence against women, refugees and asylums
- May 2014 LASM Forum bringing together practitioners from the Homelessness, Family Violence, Mental Health & alcohol and other drugs service systems
- June 2014 Crime Prevention and Community's Conference
- June 2014 Northern Family Violence Forum

Other social change initiatives include public awareness raising events such as the Walk against Family Violence (Not One More), lobbying for legislative change and representation on key community networks.

Walk Against Family Violence

The United Nations General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The premise of the day is to raise awareness of the fact that women around the world are subject to domestic violence, rape and other forms of violence; furthermore, one of the aims of the day is to highlight that the scale and true nature of the issue is often hidden.

Almost 2,000 people joined The Walk Against Family Violence (WAFV) 25 November 2013 which was also supported by Melbourne Football Club and coach Paul Roos, Phil Cleary, a long time campaigner to stop men's use of violence against women will be a key figure at the event.

The New Day Box

This wonderful initiative in partnership with Envato Pty. Ltd. was a website and social media campaign, seeking support from the broader community to fill a shoe box with cosmetics and toiletries for women in crisis accommodation over the 2013 holiday season. Through the generosity of supporters over 2000 shoe boxes filled with special gifts were donated by individuals, groups and companies and were distributed by WDVCS across the state to our accommodation partners to give to women in crisis accommodation.



Hundreds of New Day Boxes ready to be distributed to refugees across Victoria.

Community Support



Major supporter Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) presenting iPads to WDVCS

Left to right Sue Woodhams, ISV, Carolyn Moorshead and Deborah McCormack WDVCS and Lyn Cutting ISV

WDVCS is grateful for the ongoing support of so many community groups, business and individuals who either donate much needed goods or conduct fundraising activities to enable us to continue our vital work and provide a range of services to women and children in emergency accommodation.

Governance



Photo: Left to right Joan Richardson, Christine Gibbs, Jen Allen, Toni Campbell (Chair), Gayathri Paramasivam and Lyn Lanham

Absent: Wendy Steendam, Gayle King, Dorothy Carlborg & Veronica McGowan

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and is governed by a board of directors who are responsible for the strategic direction that will lead the organisation to achieving its values and goals.

Working closely with the Chief Executive Officer, the Board monitors the performance of WDVCS to achieve the strategic goals within budget and to build strong foundations that will secure long term sustainability.

The Board's primary role is to ensure that the activities of WDVCS are directed towards achieving its mission to be the voice for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children in Victoria.

The Board will ensure that this mission is achieved in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Collectively the Board Members of WDVCS bring extensive experience and diverse skills to support the Chief Executive Officer to implement the strategic plan.

Board Directors

Toni Campbell (Chair)

Jennifer Allen (Co-Deputy Chair)

Dorothy Carlborg (Co-Deputy Chair)

Christine Gibbs

Gayle King (Treasurer)

Lyn Lanham

Gayathri Paramasivam

Joan Richardson

Veronica McGowan (retired May 2014)

Wendy Steendam

Quick Fact

35% of all reported incidents have been witnessed by a child

Management & Staff



From left: Deborah McCormick; Christine Arthur, Annette Gillespie (CEO), Carolyn Moorshead

Staff and volunteers are the lifeblood of Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service. They work tirelessly to ensure that women and children have options for a safer future. As the organisation grows, so too does demand for resources.

The WDVCS Executive Management team support the chief executive officer in the implementation of the organisation's strategic plan. The team is supported by an amazing group of dedicated women whose passion and commitment for social change to end violence against women and children is second to none.

The Executive Management Team is comprised of:

Annette Gillespie: Chief Executive Officer

Deborah McCormack: Acting Manager Client Services; Manager Quality Assurance & training

Christine Arthur: Manager Corporate Services

Carolyn Moorshead: Manager Marketing, Fundraising & Communications

Using evidence based world best practice WDVCS works directly with thousands of women and children who are living with or have experienced violence.

Management and staff are committed to implementing effective family violence strategies that support women, children and communities to be free from violence and abuse. We work within a human rights framework and apply feminist principles to all aspects of our work.

Whilst we hear many stories of women and children escaping violence, progress is being

made towards the improving women and children's safety. But there is still much too do. Together, and with determination, we will improve the lives of women and their children and help them achieve safety while reaching their full human potential.

Acknowledgements

The support of the community, donors, volunteers, schools, businesses and corporations is fundamental to our ability to deliver quality services to women and children. A sincere thank you is extended to all who have generously contributed to the organisation.

WDVCS acknowledges and respects the many individual donors and supporters who prefer anonymity, but who have generously supported us throughout the year. We expressly acknowledge the following for their continued support:

Department of Human Services

Office of Women Affairs

VicHealth

Department of Human Services Eastern Region

Gifts In memoriam of Luke Batty

Jack Brockhoff Foundation

Michael and Andrew Buxton Foundation

The Chipkin Foundation The Holland Foundation

Berwick Opportunity Shop CPA

CWA Grantville Envato Pty Ltd

Encore Theatre Group

Food Bank Impact

Independent Schools Victoria

Nelson Alexander

Nailember

Phillip Island Quilters

RB Print

RMIT Business and Logistics Unit

Rosie Batty

Urban Alice

Willis

WDVCS Media Volunteer Advocates

WDVCS Partner Agencies

WDVCS Staff

Financial Summary

Summary of Statement of Comprehensive Income for year ended 30 June 2014

	2014 (\$)	2013 (\$)
Total income	3,193,124	3,120,163
Expenditure		
Client Direct Relief	563,011	352,956
Operating costs	2,244,467	2,269,391
Total expenditure	2,807,478	2,622,347
Total comprehensive income for the year	385,646	497,816
Summary Balance Sheet as at June 2014	2014 (\$)	2013 (\$)
Current assets	2,303,500	1,854,341
Non – current assets	92,023	120,538
Total Assets	2,395,523	1,974,879
Current Liabilities	361,277	248,873
Non- current liabilities	16,188	93,594
Total Liabilities	377,465	342,467
Net Assets	2,018,058	1,632,412
Equity		
Retained earnings	2,018,058	1,632,412
Total Equity	2,018,058	1,632,412

Independent Audit Report

For the year Ended 30 June 2014

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2014, there have been:

(i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and

(ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Peter Shields
PARTNER



Saward Dawson Chartered Accountants
ABN 15 698 364 348

Dated: 27 October 2014

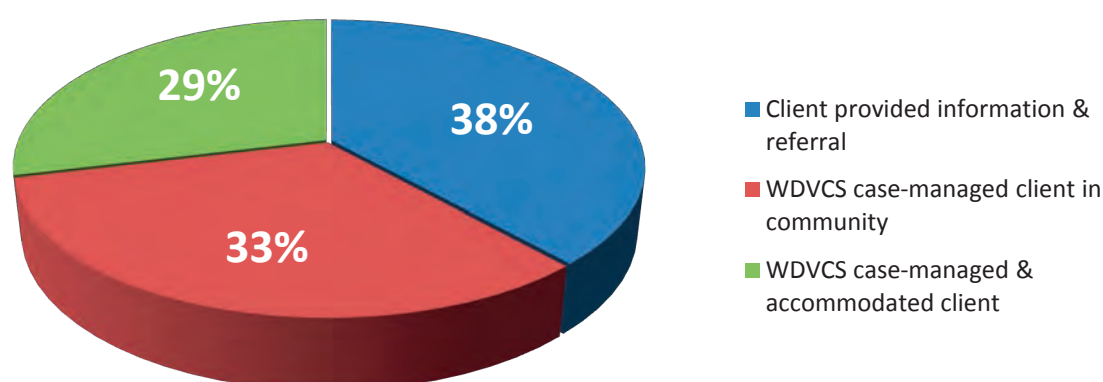
Interesting Statistics

2013 - 2014 Financial Year

The statistics are alarming. In the 2013 – 2014 financial year WDVCS crisis response line received a record number of calls and women and children who accommodation to be safe. 47% of all people supported by the crisis accommodation service were under 18 years. 45% of women and children who were accommodated by WDVCS were supported to return home safely, or to stay with friends or family in their in their community. Women reported a 16.1% increase in dangerous risk factors from 2012, and were supported by our service for on average 4 days.

The majority of women supported (51%) were born in Australia, India, New Zealand, Vietnam or China. The remainder represented 15 other countries.

WDVCS Clients 13/14



Top 10 most commonly identified perpetrator factors which increase risk of harm	Percentage of clients with a risk assessment who identified this risk factor
1. Has harmed or threatened to harm victim	82%
2. Controlling behaviours	79%
3. Obsession/jealous behaviour towards victim	59%
4. Has threatened to kill victim	49%
5. Drug and/or alcohol misuse/abuse	49%
6. Has tried to choke victim	40%
7. Stalking of victim	37%
8. Unemployed	28%
9. History of violent behaviour (not family violence)	28%
10. Depression/mental health issue	28%

Quick Fact

Intimate partner violence is responsible for more ill health or premature death for women under 45 more than any other well known risk factor (i.e.: obesity, smoking etc)



The Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS) is the Victorian state-wide service for women experiencing violence and abuse from a partner, ex-partner, another family member or someone close to you. The service is staffed by women and you can call confidentially 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For confidential support and information call:

Toll free 1800 015 188 or visit
www.wdvcs.org.au

If you are in immediate danger call Police on 000

You can help WDVCS

At WDVCS we are passionate about the services we provide. If you would like to support our work, please consider:

- Making a donation
- Regular Giving
- Leaving us a gift in your will
- Hold a fundraising event
- Becoming a corporate sponsor
- Workplace Giving
- Donate your time or service
- Becoming a volunteer

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

For further information on how to help WDVCS call our head office on the number below.

Womens Domestic Violence Crisis Service

ABN: 86 138 521 643

Head office: GPO Box 4396 Melbourne 3001

Office: (03) 9928 9600

Email: admin@wdvcs.org.au

