

# NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children

Annual Report Card 2020-21



The NSW Government is implementing a range of initiatives to reform the domestic and family violence (DFV) service system, including those set out in the *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016–2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children (the Blueprint)*.

Throughout 2020-21, we have continued to build a DFV service system that prevents violence, intervenes early with vulnerable communities, supports victims, holds perpetrators accountable, and delivers evidence-based, quality services to make victims safer and support their recovery.

In 2020-21, the COVID-19 pandemic (COVID-19) had a significant impact on all aspects of life in NSW. With growing evidence that women were facing unique health, economic and workforce challenges because of COVID-19, the NSW Government committed to protecting victim-survivors of sexual, domestic and family violence, and to supporting frontline services to respond and adapt to these increased challenges.

The NSW Government and Commonwealth Government provided more than \$50 million between 2019-20 and 2020-21 to ensure that sexual, domestic and family violence services had the resources to adapt service delivery and support victim-survivors and their children during the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government has also committed an additional \$60 million over two years from 2021-22 to match an additional \$80 million in Commonwealth funding, bringing the total to \$140 million over two years (2021-22 and 2022-23) to boost frontline services to support more women and children.

In October 2021, the NSW Government committed \$484.3 million over four years for housing and supports for women and children experiencing DFV, which includes:

- **\$426.6 million** over four years to expand Core and Cluster to deliver and operate around 75 extra women's refuges that support women and children escaping DFV.
- **\$52.5 million** over four years towards the Community Housing Innovation Fund (CHIF) partnership with the community housing sector, to provide approximately 200 sustainable, social and affordable housing dwellings for women experiencing DFV.
- **\$5.2 million** over four years to provide dedicated supports for accompanied children and young people impacted by DFV.



## Early intervention and Prevention

The NSW Government continued to embed early intervention and prevention strategies into policy and program development under the **NSW Domestic and Family Violence and Early Intervention Strategy 2017–2021**, for example:



**39** grants awarded

through the annual small grants program for Local Domestic and Family Violence Committees to support community-level awareness raising and community education activities.

**Multi-systemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect (MST-CAN) and Functional Family Therapy – Child Welfare (FFT-CW)** is now being delivered in

**15** priority locations

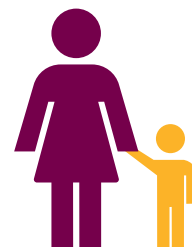
across the state, supporting

**1,762** families

including

**442** Aboriginal families,

where there has been substantiated physical abuse and/or neglect of a child or young person.



## Premier's Priority to reduce the number of domestic violence reoffenders by 25 per cent by 2023



In 2020-21, the NSW Government continued to deliver a significant and innovative program of work to reduce domestic violence reoffending:

- **Men's Behaviour Change Programs – 16 providers** have been registered to deliver programs in up to **42 locations**.
- **Community Corrections' Practice Guide for Intervention** – aims to improve corrections officers' capability to deliver cognitive behavioural interventions.
- **The Local Coordinated Multiagency offender management program** – brings together DCJ Community Corrections and Housing and Child Protection, NSW Health and the NSW Police Force to facilitate multiagency case management support to priority offenders (with a focus on domestic violence offenders) operated at **10 Community Corrections locations**.
- **Suspect Target Management Plans** – NSW Police Force officers have been trained to identify and target serious recidivist domestic violence offenders and proactively address their re-offending.
- **High Risk Offender Teams** – specialist NSW Police Force teams apply complex investigative techniques to high risk, prolific offenders and conduct intensive monitoring and engagement to prevent immediate re-offending.
- **Remand DV** – a voluntary program targeting defendants on remand being delivered across **eight correctional centres**, providing them with knowledge and skills in healthy relationships and recognising abuse.
- **High Intensity Programs Unit (HIPUs)** – **10 custody-based rehabilitation facilities** across **seven correctional centres**, providing behaviour change programs to offenders with short custodial sentences.
- **ReINVEST** – a clinical trial by the University of New South Wales (**UNSW**) examining whether treatment with a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (a class of antidepressant) is effective in reducing offending behaviour in impulsive, repeat-violent offenders, including domestic violence offenders.
- **Maitland Service Hub** – a place based collaboration at Maitland Local Court on apprehended domestic violence order (**ADVO**) list days. Key agencies have committed to attend weekly ADVO list days and provide support or referrals to offenders of DFV in line with core business, and in collaboration with the other support services. This may include access to short or medium-term housing, referrals to drug and alcohol services, legal support, interventions and men's behaviour change programs and follow up case management.

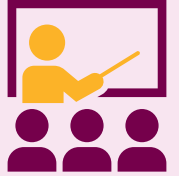
# Perpetrator accountability – stopping the violent and abusive behaviour of perpetrators

The NSW Government launched the **Avow app** as part of a package of supports to help people understand their legal obligations under an ADVO. Avow is a free mobile phone application that gives domestic violence defendants easy access to information and tools to help them prepare for court and comply with their ADVOs.



The NSW Government continued to implement **ENGAGE**. The program is aimed at increasing the voluntary engagement of domestic violence perpetrators with longer term behaviour change programs.

In 2020-21, ENGAGE operated across nine sites: Raymond Terrace, Maitland, Cessnock, Blacktown, Penrith, Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool and Wollongong.



Continued the global position system (**GPS**) tracking of DFV offenders. As at 30 June 2021,

# 420

 offenders

had participated in the DVEM program.



**What's Your Plan?** supports Aboriginal defendants with a plan to comply with their ADVOs. Across

# 69

 victims

had been provided with a victim-monitoring device to help monitor the offender's contact with the victim outside the monitored exclusion zone.

# 54

 Local Courts,

during the period of January-June 2021, there were **217 plans** made with ADVO defendants.



The delivery of **men's behaviour change programs (MBCPs)** continued through to 30 June 2021.

In 2020-21,

# 768

**men** were referred to MBCPs.

This total included

# 101

**men** who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Continued to implement **EQUIPS** behaviour change programs in custody and in the community. In October 2020, EQUIPS Domestic and Family Violence (**EQUIPS DFV**) replaced EQUIPS Domestic Abuse. EQUIPS DFV expanded the program eligibility to include all perpetrators of DFV offences, as well as both male and female perpetrators.

# 2,544

**DV offenders** participated in an EQUIPS program **in custody**, this includes **416** DV offenders who completed EQUIPS DFV in custody

# 62

DFV-specific EQUIPS programs were run in **NSW correctional centres**



# 1,129

**DV offenders** participated in an EQUIPS program **in the community**

# 63

DFV-specific EQUIPS programs were run **in the community**

# Supporting victims to be safe and choose to access supports that meet their needs and preferences

Safer Pathway is now fully operational state-wide.

NSW Police made

**154,881** referrals

to Safer Pathway for DFV victim-survivors.


Local Support Services through Safer Pathway provided support to

**6,271** male victims.

Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) assisted

**55,341** women

experiencing DFV through Safer Pathway

 a 3.4% increase on 2019-20.

WDVCAS made

**302,144** referrals

for clients.


Start Safely continues to support women escaping DFV to move into safe, secure and affordable private rental accommodation. In 2020-21, Rent Choice Start Safely assisted



**4,972** households

with

**8,332** children

 a 4% increase in the number of households over the previous year (or an additional 180 households).

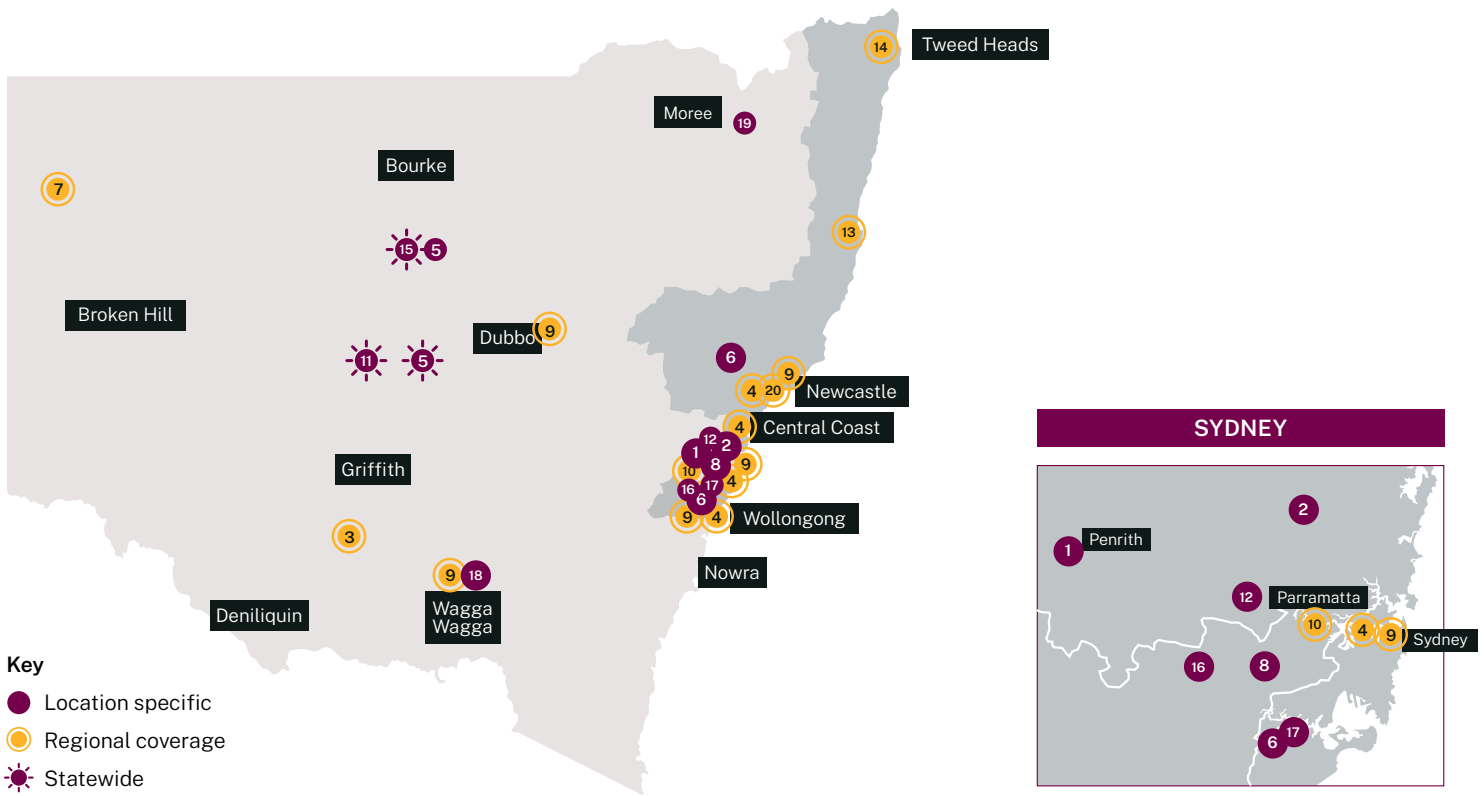


## Funding

To support the actions outlined in the *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children*, the **2021-22 NSW Budget** delivers **\$687 million** (including \$80 million from the Commonwealth Government) over four years to specialist domestic and family violence initiatives, an increase from the \$431 million commitment in the 2019-2020 NSW Budget. This investment is in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars the government spends each year to combat domestic and family violence through mainstream services in **justice, police, health, child protection, social housing and homelessness services**.

# NSW Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund

The NSW Government invested almost **\$12 million over three years**, from 2018–19 to 2020–21, in **13 projects** through the second round of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund. This is in addition to the **\$4.8 million** committed to **seven projects** through round one of the Innovation Fund in 2016–17.



Round One		Round Two	
1	<b>Leaving Prison/Leaving Violence</b> Community Restorative Centre	8	<b>From The Ground Up to Equality</b> Arab Council Australia Inc.
2	<b>Safe Families</b> RSPCA	9	<b>Early Signals. First Response.</b> Early Childhood Australia
3	<b>Linking Communities Education Van</b> Linking Communities Network Ltd	10	<b>Firmer Foundations</b> Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand
4	<b>Respectful Relationships Peer Educators</b> People with Disability Australia	11	<b>Black Box Parenting</b> Grand Pacific Health Limited
5	<b>Building Access for Women with Disability</b> People with Disability Australia	12	<b>Finding Safety: Asylum Seeking and Refugee Women Free From Violence</b> Jesuit Refugee Service Australia Incorporated
6	<b>Toolbox Talks</b> Sutherland Shire Family Services	13	<b>Fixed Address</b> Kempsey Families Incorporated
7	<b>Kalypi Paaka Mirika Healing Program</b> Maari Ma	14	<b>The Men's Accountability Project</b> Men & Family Centre Inc.
		15	<b>Let's Talk: mitigating the risk and responding early to elder abuse</b> Relationships Australia (NSW) Limited
		16	<b>Building Stronger Families (formerly: Safety Without Borders)</b> Relationships Australia (NSW) Limited
		17	<b>ReThink! Anti-Violence Project</b> 2Connect Youth & Community Incorporated
		18	<b>the DV project: 2650</b> Wagga Women's Health Centre Inc.
		19	<b>The Key to End Violence: Young men and boys promoting respect and equality</b> White Ribbon Australia
		20	<b>Stronger Families, Better Communities</b> Children Australia Inc (OzChild)

## Getting help:



For information and support call the **NSW Domestic Violence Line** on 1800 656 463 or **1800 RESPECT** on 1800 737 732



For crisis accommodation and referral call **Link2Home** on 1800 152 152



For men wanting to address violence behaviour call **No To Violence Men's Referral Service** on 1300 766 491