



SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES

Tasmania's Family Violence
Action Plan 2015–2020

RESPONDING AND REPORTING

NOVEMBER 2019

Final Report on the delivery of
Safe Homes, Safe Families:
Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan
2015-2020



SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES

Tasmania's Family Violence
Action Plan 2015–2020



\$26 million over four years in additional funding to take action against family violence

\$27 million committed to implement our ongoing response to eliminate family and sexual violence

841 high risk family violence incidents mapped by the Safe Families Coordination Unit

8,809 at risk children identified and **5,772** notifications made by the Safe Families Coordination Unit to schools to support students experiencing family violence

970 clients provided with support, counselling and referral options by the Safe Choices service (from 1 July 2016)



Over **45 million** online views of the *Stop It At The Start!* national campaign video

3 Aboriginal Family Safety Workers appointed to Child and Family Centres to support families affected by family violence



743 additional children and young people received counselling services provided by the Australian Childhood Foundation (from 1 October 2016)

4,719 additional hours of counselling and service provision for children and young people provided by the Australian Childhood Foundation (from 1 October 2016)

4,593 additional hours of counselling services for adults provided by Engender Equality (from 1 October 2016)

50 additional houses made available for families experiencing family violence



1,311 additional clients provided with legal assistance by Women's Legal Service Tasmania and Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania (from 1 January 2017)

2,099 clients assessed and provided with information and referral through the Men's Referral Service

216 women provided with safety upgrades to support them to remain in their home or home of choice

* All data is from 1 August 2015 to 30 June 2019 unless stated otherwise

FOREWORD

Eliminating family violence remains a top priority for the Tasmanian Government.



The nation-leading *Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020* (Safe Homes, Safe Families), released in August 2015, committed an additional \$26 million over four years to fund new and direct actions to address family violence in Tasmania.

Responding and Reporting 2019 continues our commitment to publicly report against the action plan.

Responding and Reporting 2019 outlines key achievements of the final year of implementation of *Safe Homes, Safe Families*, including:

- An independent review of the Safe Families Coordination Unit;
- The Safe Choices northern site becoming operational on 1 July 2018 to create a statewide service;
- Launch of the new *Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019-2023*, the second stage of the *Affordable Housing Strategy 2015-2025*;
- Introduction of the new crime of 'persistent family violence'; and
- Launch of the electronic monitoring trial in November 2018.

In addition to the continued delivery and refinement of key services, a significant body of work was undertaken to evaluate services under the Family Violence Service System Review.

This final report follows the release of *Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's family and sexual violence action plan 2019-2022* (Safe Homes, Families, Communities), which represents the next stage in my Government's long-term commitment to prevent and respond to family violence and our new response to sexual violence. The new action plan commits \$26 million over three years for 40 actions to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence in Tasmania.

Thank you once again to everyone, especially Tasmanians with lived experience, who contributed to the development of *Safe Homes, Families, Communities*. We will continue to work together to create a safer Tasmania.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will Hodgman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

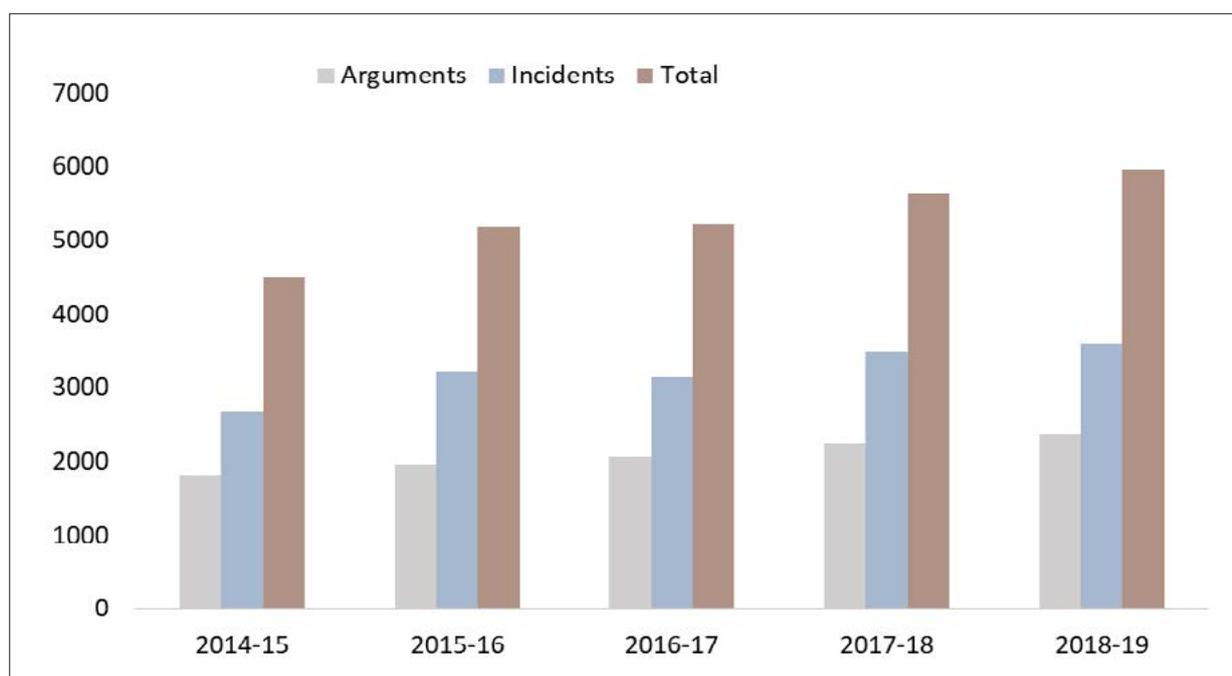
The Hon Will Hodgman MP
Premier and Minister for Prevention of Family Violence

FAMILY VIOLENCE IN TASMANIA

When *Safe Homes, Safe Families* was released in August 2015, it was acknowledged that greater community awareness and intolerance of family violence would help victims to feel more confident to report offences, which may lead to increased reporting.

In 2018-19, 3,579 family violence incidents were reported to Tasmania Police. In addition, there were 2,377 incidents classified as family arguments or family information reports (family-related incidents not involving family violence).¹

The graph below shows the reported incidence of family violence over the past five financial years.



In 2018-19, 269 family violence incidents were classified as high-risk. This represents a 12.64 per cent decrease compared to 2017-18 (303).

In addition, there was a 5.67 per cent increase in the number of Family Violence Orders (Police Issued) in 2018-19 (1,845) compared to 2017-18 (1,746), demonstrating the Tasmanian Government's commitment to hold perpetrators to account.

¹ Data sourced from the 2018-19 Tasmania Police Corporate Performance Annual Report, available at <http://www.police.tas.gov.au>



FAMILY VIOLENCE IN TASMANIA

BUILDING THE EVIDENCE-BASE IN TASMANIA

While the Family Violence Service System Review found strong delivery of service under *Safe Homes*, *Safe Families*, it also identified the need to continue building the evidence base for family violence services.

Under *Safe Homes, Families, Communities*, a data analyst has been engaged in the *Safe Families* Coordination Unit to undertake targeted analysis of raw data holdings within the Family Violence Management System and *Safe at Home* Information Management System.

The new data analyst will support better data collection and ensure our responses to family violence remain best-practice and evidence-based. They will also support an increased focus on sexual violence occurring in family violence.

Safe Homes, Families, Communities Action 35 will also introduce standardised data collection across specialist family and sexual violence services. Development of family violence data analytics capability in Tasmania will deliver practice evidence to identify outcome measurements and target interventions in our continued response to family violence.

This evidence base will continue to underpin our flexible and responsive approach and enable us to tailor programs and services to be effective and provide the best outcomes for women, men and children affected by family and sexual violence.

**Living free
from violence is
everyone's right.**

**Taking action to
prevent it is everyone's
responsibility.**



SAFE HOMES, SAFE FAMILIES: TASMANIA'S FAMILY VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

Safe Homes, Safe Families outlined 18 new and direct actions to address family violence in Tasmania. In line with our commitment to listen, learn and take a flexible approach, over time we have added 5 new actions to further strengthen our response.

Establishing Safe Families Tasmania

- 1a. Establish the Safe Families Coordination Unit
- 1b. Establish Safe Choices

Changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence

2. Develop and deliver a Respectful Relationships program in all government schools
3. Take a lead role in supporting the national campaign to reduce violence against women and their children
4. Join the national Our Watch organisation
5. Roll out White Ribbon's Workplace Accreditation Program across all Tasmanian Government agencies

Supporting families affected by violence

6. Support children affected by family violence in government schools and Child and Family Centres
7. Support children affected by family violence in non-government schools
8. Extend counselling services for children and young people experiencing family violence
9. Provide additional counselling services for adults experiencing family violence
10. Invest in crisis accommodation
11. Provide supported housing options

Strengthening our legal responses

12. Strengthen the legislative framework to address family violence
13. Extend legal assistance to people experiencing family violence
14. Appoint more specialist police prosecutors
15. Support perpetrator programs for low to medium risk offenders
16. Extend forensic medical examination to include victims of family violence
17. Develop a business case for a Criminal Justice Information Management System
18. Improve data collection and reporting

Additional actions announced in 2017

19. Develop and deliver a *Safe Homes, Safe Families* training program for frontline staff of the Department of Education (including LINC and TasTAFE)
20. Provide practical supports to enable victims of family violence to stay safely in their own homes
21. Develop a practice guide to support service providers working with clients impacted by family violence
22. Work with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community to support Aboriginal families experiencing family violence
23. Trial of electronic monitoring of high risk family violence offenders



Safe Choices Launceston workers Angela Dickson (Intake and assessment worker) and Annemarie Simms (Case manager/worker).



The Hon Elise Archer, MP, Minister for Justice/Minister for Corrections and Kathrine Morgan-Wicks, Former Secretary Department of Justice, now Secretary of Department of Health.

Tasmanian delegates at the COAG National Summit on Reducing Violence Against Women and their Children held in Adelaide on 2-3 October 2018. Back row L-R: Janet Saunders, CEO Hobart Women's Shelter and Mandy Clarke, Deputy Secretary (Children & Youth Services), Department of Communities Tasmania. Front row L-R: Kym Goodes, CEO TasCOSS, Alison Overeem, Centre Manager Leprena, Fiona Girkin, Service Manger Laurel House, Ginna Webster, Former Secretary Department of Communities Tasmania now Secretary of Department of Justice, the Hon Jacque Petrusma MP, and David Clements, Former Commissioner for Children Tasmania.



Tasmania Police Deputy Commissioner Scott Tilyard addressing correctional staff at a White Ribbon Day 2018 breakfast event held in the Risdon Prison Complex, Tasmania Prison Service.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

With the majority of *Safe Homes, Safe Families* actions now implemented, activity is largely focused on ongoing delivery or the expansion of delivery models.

Establishing Safe Families Tasmania

Key Achievements (1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019)

- The Safe Families Coordination Unit mapped 251 high risk family violence incidents (Action 1a).
- The Safe Families Coordination Unit made 2,516 notifications to schools and identified 3,574 children affected by family violence (Action 1a).
- New Safe Homes Coordination Unit Framework developed by the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies (TILES), University of Tasmania (October 2018) (Action 1a).
- A new data analyst role commenced in Safe Families Coordination Unit to increase data analytics capability to inform and build practice evidence (Action 1a).
- The northern office of Safe Choices opened in Launceston completing the statewide rollout of the face-to-face service (Action 1b).

Changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence

Key Achievements (1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019)

- 13,247 website page views for Respectful Relationships Education and 3,601 views for the Online Professional Learning Module (Action 2).
- Phase 2 of the *Stop It At The Start* national campaign was launched in October 2018 and was promoted on television, radio, online, social media and in newspapers (Action 3).
- On 15 November 2018, Our Watch delivered a pilot Bystander Action Practitioner Training, that was attended by several members of the Family Violence Consultative Group (Action 4).
- On 13 December 2018, Tasmanians Ben and Hester Brown were announced as new Our Watch Ambassadors. Ben is an AFL footballer and both Ben and his wife Hester have played active roles in driving gender equality in the North Melbourne Football Club, where Ben is a current player.
- Five Our Watch initiatives were promoted in Tasmania (Action 4).

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Supporting families affected by violence

Key Achievements (1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019)

- 1,810 students affected by family violence in Tasmanian Government schools and Child Family Centres were supported by the *Safe Homes, Safe Families* Support Team (Action 6).
- In January 2019, the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) Love Bites training was delivered to all Department of Education *Safe Homes, Safe Families* support staff (Action 6).
- An additional 2,245 hours of counselling and service provision for children and young people provided by the Australian Childhood Foundation (Action 8).
- 1,032 adults accessed counselling services through Engender Equality (Action 9).



Strengthening our legal responses

Key Achievements (1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019)

- On 18 September 2018, the House of Assembly passed the Residential Tenancy Amendment Bill which included provisions to allow a Court to terminate a residential tenancy agreement without penalty when making a Family Violence Order (Action 12).
- On 21 November 2018, the *Family Violence Reforms Bill 2018* passed through the Tasmanian Parliament to create the new crime of 'persistent family violence'. This Bill also amended the *Evidence (Children and Special Witnesses) Act 2001* (Tas) to provide that a self-represented defendant is not able to cross-examine a victim of family violence in an application under parts 3 or 4 of the *Family Violence Act 2004* (Tas), or where an order for bail is made under the *Bail Act 1994* (Tas), *Criminal Code Act 1924* (Tas), or *Justices Act 1959* (Tas) (Action 12).
- 340 family violence victims provided with legal assistance by Women's Legal Service Tasmania and Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania (Action 13).
- Employment of an additional Safe at Home legal practitioner in the North-West, as committed under *Safe Homes, Safe Families: Next Steps* (Action 13).
- 1,935 family violence matters were submitted to Prosecution Services through the Safe at Home initiative (Action 14).
- 1,316 family violence perpetrators were assessed and provided with information and referral through the Men's Referral Service (Action 15).



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Additional actions announced in 2017

Key Achievements (1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019)

- 127 clients received security upgrades to their homes or home of choice through the Keeping Women Safe In Their Homes program (Action 20).
- 1,090 Aboriginal parents and children were supported by Aboriginal Family Safety Workers (Action 22).
- The Electronic Monitoring Trial commenced on 5 November 2018, including live tracking and monitoring of perpetrators, a total of 52 perpetrators have been tracked (Action 23).

A FLEXIBLE, RESPONSIVE APPROACH

The Tasmanian Government's response to family violence continues to be flexible so that it is responsive to emerging priorities and incorporates the evidence from work being done across Australia to address family violence.

Our approach to *Safe Homes, Safe Families* was to ensure it was a living document that could be refined and updated over time and that actions continue to be based on current evidence and best practice.

This approach resulted in five additional actions being announced in 2017 to strengthen our response to eliminating family violence.

RELATED INITIATIVES

Keeping our promise to respond to emerging family violence issues, in the 2018-19 State Budget, the Tasmanian Government committed \$1.5 million over two years in additional funding for the Safe at Home service. Safe at Home is the Tasmanian Government's integrated whole-of-government criminal justice response to family violence.

In the 2018-19 State Budget, the Tasmanian Government also committed \$450,000 over three years for Big hART to deliver Project O, a family violence primary prevention project aimed at driving generational and attitudinal change by backing young women to become change-makers in their community on the North West Coast.

Supporting Project O demonstrates the Tasmanian Government's commitment to fostering societal and attitudinal change towards the behaviour that leads to violence against women and the perceptions of young women in the Tasmanian community.

FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICE SYSTEM REVIEW

To provide a comprehensive and evidence-based way forward in our next steps to eliminate family violence, in March 2018 the Tasmanian Government committed to undertake an extensive cross-agency review of the family violence service system.

The Family Violence Service System Review (the Review) evaluated actions delivered through *Safe Homes, Safe Families* and the relationship between these actions and the existing family violence services response. In addition, the review conducted targeted and community consultation including:

- service provider and client feedback about selected services through consultation with an independent consultant;
- the Hearing Lived Experience Survey, which received 500 responses from people with lived experiences of family violence;
- three regional roundtables held in Burnie, Launceston and Hobart, attended by almost 150 stakeholders;



- co-convened consultation with the Australian Government Department of Social Services to inform the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan, attended by 64 stakeholders; and
- targeted consultation with key agency and community-based stakeholders.

Review activity was undertaken through the Family Violence Cross Agency Working Group, coordinated by the Family Violence Secretariat in the Department of Communities Tasmania.

The Review has provided increased awareness and understanding of the functioning, impact and interrelationship of the family violence service system in Tasmania following the introduction of *Safe Homes, Safe Families* in August 2015.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ACTION PLAN

A commitment to evidence-based actions was extended in the development of the new Action Plan. The Review informed development of the new Action Plan along with research and consultation to provide a new response to sexual violence.

In recognition that sexual violence often intersects with family violence, the 2018 *Generational Change for Children and Families* election commitment included development of an Action Plan for sexual violence. In April 2019, the Family Violence Cabinet Committee agreed to combine the response to family and sexual violence into a single action plan.

This approach supports alignment of the Tasmanian Government's response to the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children 2010-2022* (the National Plan), which focuses on the two main types of violent crimes that have a major impact on women in Australia: family violence and sexual assault.

In addition to the key consultation activities for the Review, development of the new Action Plan included:

- a literature review of the experiences, practices and sexual violence service system responses operating in other jurisdictions;
- a research trip to examine sexual violence systems in Victoria and South Australia;
- examination of Tasmania's sexual violence service system response; and
- targeted interviews with government and non-government stakeholders to explore the structure and efficacy of the current service system.

The 2019-20 State Budget committed a further \$26 million over three years to fund a single, combined, family and sexual violence action plan. *Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence 2019-2022* (Safe Homes, Families, Communities) was launched on 1 July 2019 and includes increased investment in primary prevention and early intervention; a focus on sexual violence including addressing Problem Sexualised Behaviour and Sexually Abusive Behaviours; and improving access to information and services.

A FLEXIBLE, RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Consultation

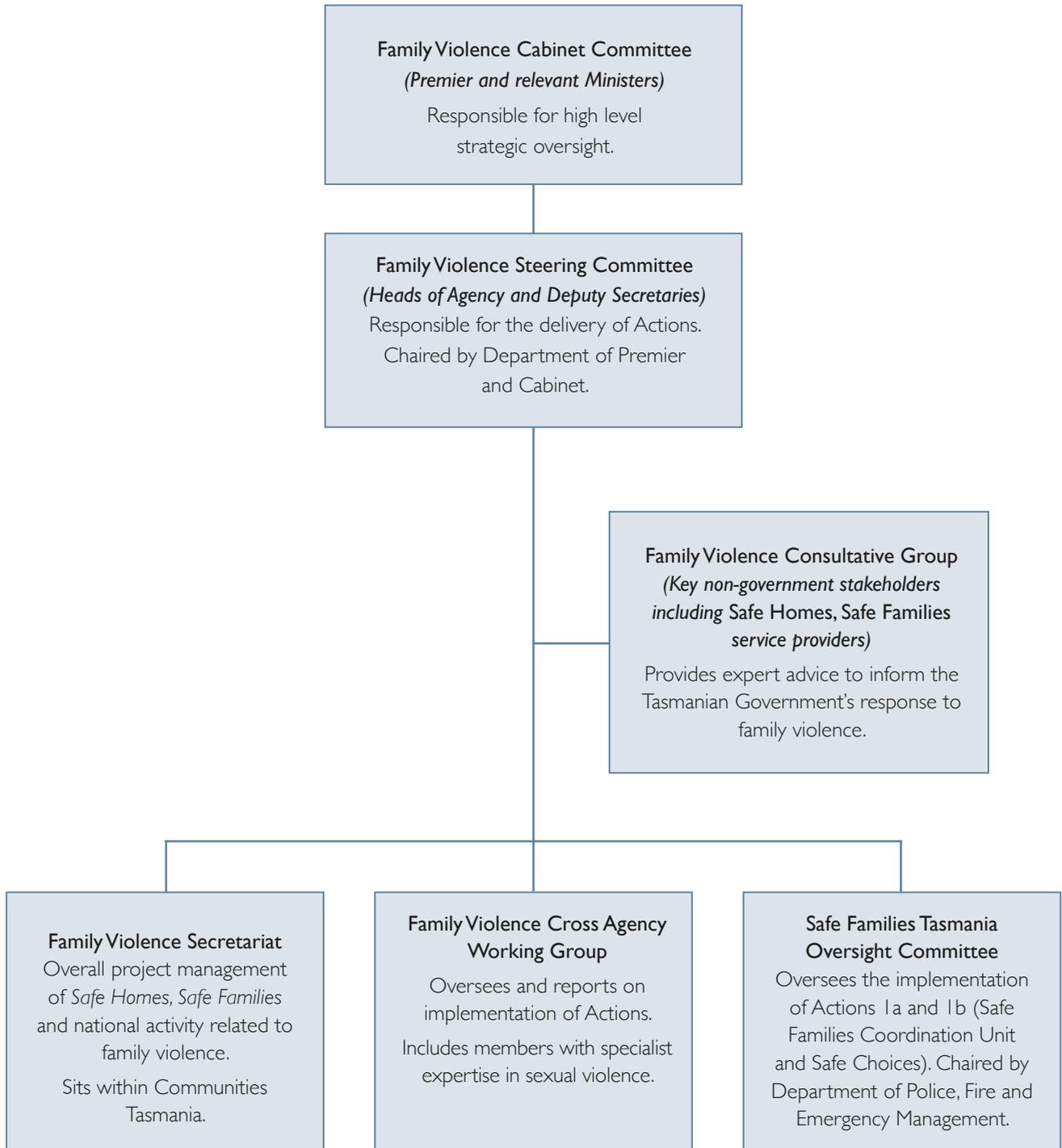
When *Safe Homes, Safe Families* was released, a commitment to ongoing engagement with stakeholders and the community was made. There was, and remains, a recognition of the value of reporting back and sharing learnings to inform a collective approach to ending family violence.

The Tasmanian Government continues to listen to and work with the Family Violence Consultative Group. Comprising of representatives from key family violence service providers and community sector organisations, the Family Violence Consultative Group has been critical to driving real change to eliminate violence against women and their children in Tasmania.



GOVERNANCE

The implementation of *Safe Homes, Safe Families* is supported by a collaborative and coordinated governance structure.



OUR COMMITMENT: SAFE HOMES, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES

On 1 July 2019, the Tasmanian Government released *Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence 2019-2022* (Safe Homes, Families, Communities). It is the vision of the Tasmanian Government that all Tasmanians are safe, equal and respected and that our homes, families and communities are free from all forms of family and sexual violence.

Under Safe Homes, Families, Communities, we will:

- create a safer Tasmania where all Tasmanians are equal and respected;
- continue to work together and take action to prevent and respond to family and sexual violence;
- build on initiatives being delivered through individual portfolios to deliver a holistic response;
- continue to listen to stakeholders, the community and people with lived experience of violence;
- strengthen our efforts to change the attitudes, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence;
- work with communities to drive generational change;
- continue to support families affected by violence;
- continue to hold perpetrators to account and help them to change their violent behaviours;
- ensure the service system is responsive, integrated and innovative;
- empower victim-survivors and provide additional support for children affected by family and sexual violence;
- be flexible, with our actions informed by evidence and best practice; and
- monitor, evaluate and report on our efforts.



Thank you to everyone who has supported the implementation of *Safe Homes, Safe Families*.

Together we are driving real change
in our community.

Together we can create a Tasmania
free from family violence.

Department of Communities Tasmania

Email: fsvap@communities.tas.gov.au | Visit: www.dpac.tas.gov.au/safehomesfamiliescommunities

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**If you or someone you
know is impacted by family violence:**

Call the Safe at Home Family Violence Response and Referral Line on 1800 633 937

or visit www.1800respect.org.au

In an emergency, always call 000



**Tasmanian
Government**