



MEDIA RELEASE

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WHAV looks forward to a Victoria free from family violence

Victoria's peak body for women's health, safety and wellbeing congratulates the Victorian government on standing strong on their commitment to all 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The **Women's Health Association of Victoria (WHAV)** believes the unprecedented investment of \$1.9B will go a long way to making the difference that is needed for women and children experiencing violence to get the service responses they need to live free from violence.

WHAV is pleased to see a strong focus on improving family violence responses within culturally diverse, LGBTI and Aboriginal populations. We are also impressed with the investment in building the capacity of the family violence and social services workforces to prevent and respond to family violence.

WHAV Convenor, Kristine Olaris says "To end violence against women we need long term, coordinated action to change the social structures, norms and cultures that enable and support violence against women and children. Gender equality is the key."

WHAV welcomes the inclusion of \$50.7M in the budget to prevent family violence, which includes the implementation of today's exciting release, the *Free From Violence* prevention strategy. It also funds a new state-wide independent Family Violence Prevention Agency to oversee the work in prevention. This is an important mechanism to ensure the longevity of this vital prevention focus beyond government cycles. The budget also includes \$5.9M to implement *Safe and Strong; A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy*.

WHAV see these investments in prevention as an important show of the State government's commitment to ending family violence in Victoria. We anticipate and will welcome additional funds in subsequent years to ensure the full implementation of the *Safe and Strong*, and *Free From Violence* strategies.

- Ends -

Media enquiries: Kristine Olaris, WHAV Convenor, 9851 3700 or kolaris@whe.org.au

Please see next page for more information on WHAV.



Who is the WHAV?

The Women's Health Association of Victoria (WHAV) is the peak body for women's health, safety and wellbeing across Victoria. WHAV represents the nine regional and two state-wide women's health organisations (Women's Health Victoria and the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health) funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. WHAV membership also includes Victorian specialist women's organisations; Women with Disabilities Victoria, Positive Women and WIRE.

In order to improve health outcomes for women, our current key priorities include the prevention of violence against women, the promotion of gender equity and women's sexual and reproductive health.

Regional women's health services have been leading Prevention of Violence Against Women Action Plans in every metropolitan and rural region across the State, with support from other WHAV members.

WHAV: The women's health peak body with specialist expertise, state-wide reach and a regional focus