

SURVIVORS AT THE CENTRE

Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027

**Progress Report
1 July 2024 - 31 December 2024**



Tasmanian
Government

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Aboriginal people

We recognise the deep history and culture of this island and acknowledge and pay respect to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the past and present custodians of the land.

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the devastating impacts of family and sexual violence in Aboriginal communities and recognise the ongoing leadership role of Aboriginal communities to prevent and address family and sexual violence.

Acknowledgement of victim-survivors

We acknowledge the resilience and courage of victim-survivors of family and sexual violence. We pay our respects to victims and victim-survivors, their families and communities that all feel the devastating impacts.

Family violence services and support

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000).

If you or someone you know is experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing family or sexual violence, you can contact the following support services.

Counselling and support services

1800RESPECT National Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Counselling Service	24 hours a day, 7 days a week	1800 737 732 (1800 RESPECT) or Text 0458 737 732
Family Violence Counselling and Support Service	9am – midnight (weekdays) 4pm – midnight (weekends and public holidays)	1800 608 122

Crisis response and support for recent sexual assault

Statewide sexual assault crisis line	24 hours a day, 7 days a week	1800 697 877 (1800 MYSUPPORT)
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If you have difficulty hearing or speaking to people who use a phone, the National Relay Service (NRS) can help. For further information visit www.accesshub.gov.au.

Introduction

This Progress Report is for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024 under *Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027: Survivors at the Centre*.

Following a review of reporting needs undertaken in early 2025, a new six-monthly reporting cycle has been implemented commencing in 2024-25 and will continue until the end of the Action Plan in 2026-27.

This change aims to provide more regular, consistent and targeted data to meet the needs of key stakeholders of Survivors at the Centre, and support Tasmania's reporting against the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*.

Tasmanian Government departments will report at six-month intervals on their action progress. This streamlined approach will improve data quality and strengthen transparency and accountability to the Tasmanian community and sector stakeholders. The work and achievements during this period are critical steps in advancing our collective commitment to reducing family and sexual violence and supporting victim-survivors across Tasmania.

Achievements:

1 July 2024 - 31 December 2024

The following achievements occurred during the six-month reporting period, demonstrating the progress across the four key priority areas.

Partnership and transformation

Third Arch Centre to open in the North-West [Action 1]

Following the successful trial of Arch Centres in the North and South of the State, a third centre is now being developed in the North-West and is expected to open at the end of 2025. The Tasmanian Government has committed ongoing operational funding to support the continued delivery of services across all three Arch Centres.

Arch provides a safe and supportive environment for people affected by sexual harm resulting from sexual violence. At Arch, services and organisations work together under one roof to deliver coordinated, trauma-informed, and victim-centred support. Service providers include specialist counsellors, family violence workers, child safety officers, and Tasmania Police.



Exploring the Safe and Together Model for Tasmania [Action 3]

In 2024, Tasmania took an important step in exploring the Safe and Together Model, an internationally recognised, evidence-based approach to supporting families experiencing violence. As part of this work, a pilot of the CORE training was delivered in January 2024 to 40 staff from Tasmanian Government agencies. The training received positive feedback, highlighting the model's potential to strengthen service responses to family violence.

Further consideration of the model's scope, costs, and logistics is required before any decision on broader implementation is made.

Establish the Family and Sexual Violence Liaison Service [Action 5]

Since the last reporting period, a key focus has been on supporting recruitment processes for the Family and Sexual Violence Liaison Service. Recruitment has commenced for the three liaison positions dedicated to Child Safety Services, ensuring continued integration of family and sexual violence support across key sectors. Additionally, options are being explored for the three liaison positions intended to strengthen the service within the Tasmanian Health Service.

These appointments will further enhance the system's capacity to provide integrated, person-centred, and evidence-based responses to those experiencing family and sexual violence.

Supporting families through the Child Health and Parenting Service [Action 6]

The Child Health and Parenting Service (CHaPS) has embedded the provision of additional appointments for parents and children who identify as experiencing family violence as part of its ongoing practice and service offering. This system-level approach ensures that proactive and targeted interventions are consistently available to prevent and address intergenerational cycles of family violence. CHaPS continue to strengthen this practice, with, 89 additional appointments delivered during the reporting period to support families and children.

Legislative reforms [Action 8]

During the reporting period, several amendments were implemented for intimate partner or family and sexual violence legislative reform.

On 1 November 2024, amendments arising from the *Justice Miscellaneous (Commission of Inquiry) Act 2024* which support intimate partner or sexual violence legislative reforms became law. These changes included:

- A new section 430 of the *Criminal Code 1924* and a new section 67B of the *Police Offences Act 1935*, ensure that where the prosecution tenders no evidence for an alleged family violence or sexual offence

and the defendant is acquitted for that reason, the evidence that would have been led had that matter proceeded is capable of being used as tendency, coincidence or relationship evidence in subsequent court proceedings for family violence or sexual offences involving the same defendant.

- The *Justice Miscellaneous (Commission of Inquiry) Act 2024* also extended the operation of section 371A of the Criminal Code to include family violence offences.

On 13 December 2024, two legislative amendments arising from the *Family Violence Amendment (Protecting People and Their Pets) Act 2024* became law. These changes included:

- An expanded definition of family violence under section 7 of the *Family Violence Act 2004* to clarify that any conduct committed, or threats made by a person regarding the potential death, neglect of, or injury to an animal that directly or indirectly intimidates, coerces or controls the persons spouse or partner; or causes mental harm to or apprehension or fear in the persons spouse or partner will be considered family violence.

On 13 December 2024, section 35 of the *Police Offences Act 1935* was amended to introduce no time limit for commencing prosecutions of indecent assault.

Trial risk assessment tool with specialist providers [Action 10]

The development of Tasmania's Risk Assessment Management Framework (RAMF) and the Tasmanian and Rural Risk Assessment (TARRA) tool advanced through targeted trials led by Engender Equality. Specialist family and sexual violence services participated in this phase, applying the tool and providing feedback.

This trial promotes consistency in risk assessment practices and will help inform alignment with emerging national principles. Tasmania's experience will contribute to national reform efforts while strengthening the local service system. The overall aim is to identify risk early, prevent harm, and enhance safety through therapeutic approaches.

Capacity building

Recognition of Safe Beds for Pets Program [Action 13]

The Safe Beds for Pets Program, operated by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) Tasmania, supports Tasmanians at-risk of, or experiencing, family and sexual violence by ensuring the safety of their pets. Recognising that pets can be used as tools of control through threats and/or harm, the program establishes a coordinated network of safe bed providers and funds safe places for pets.

In recognition of the critical role pets play in the safety and well-being of individuals experiencing family violence, a \$225,000 election commitment was announced in the 2024-25 State Budget, to continue the program over three years. This funding underscores the importance of protecting



both people and their pets from harm and supports the RSPCA in its ongoing efforts to provide shelter for pets affected by family violence, helping to prevent the misuse or harm of animals in violent situations.

The Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance peak body [Action 14]

The Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance transitioned from investigating to formally establishing itself as the peak body for the family and sexual violence services sector. The aim of a peak body is to streamline engagement between Government and the community sector and to support the sector in advocacy, policy development, and system integration through more joined-up responses. This will enable service providers to focus more effectively on delivering services to the Tasmanian community.

During the period, the Tasmanian Council of Social Services (TasCOSS) assisted in the transition process, with the Alliance moving from a steering committee to a transitional board to guide its early establishment. Formal involvement of TasCOSS concluded on 31 December 2024. The Alliance will remain in the early stages of establishment during its first 12-18 months of operation from January 2025.

During the July to December 2024 period, the Alliance successfully registered as an incorporated association. It also worked with the Government to negotiate a deed of agreement for 2025, while developing an initial work program. This included establishing governance arrangements, with a focus on developing a diverse and inclusive membership model and increasing engagement with the sector to support services for those affected by family and sexual violence.

Expansion of the Family Violence Rapid Rehousing Program [Action 15]

The Family Violence Rapid Rehousing Program is being expanded from 50 homes to 150 homes, significantly increasing access to safe and affordable housing for women and children affected by family violence. This program provides victims with accommodation in the private rental market at a subsidised rent, offering stability and support during a critical time.

This 2024 Election Commitment announcement reflects the government's recognition of the urgent need for secure housing options for those fleeing family violence. By expanding the program, the Tasmanian Government is ensuring that more families have access to the safe and affordable housing they need to rebuild their lives free from violence. These additional properties are expected to start to become available during 2025.

Prevention and early intervention

Respectful Relationships and Consent Education in Tasmanian schools [Action 24]

The Department for Education, Children and Young People has embedded Respectful Relationships and Consent Education (RRCE) as a business-as-usual practice in public schools, focusing on building sustained staff capability and fostering community engagement. In September 2024, the Department launched the 'RRCE Connect' Microsoft Teams page to facilitate statewide collaboration on the program's implementation.



To support schools, a range of professional learning opportunities were delivered, including face-to-face workshops (90 attendees), online webinars (101 attendees), and self-paced training (162 participants). Key resources developed included a Roadmap for RRCE implementation, a Family and Community Engagement Package, and Curriculum Connections for Years 5-6, aligning RRCE with the Australian Curriculum.

Strengthening early intervention through the Defendant Health Liaison Service [Action 29]

The Defendant Health Liaison Service continues to strengthen its role in providing early intervention, assessment, and management services for respondents in family violence matters. During this reporting period, business processes were updated to align with legislative changes, enabling referrals to Mandatory Change Behaviour Programs. Office space has been secured within the Launceston Magistrates Court, establishing an onsite presence to improve accessibility and collaboration with court services.

The Service has also adopted the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA) V2, supporting more targeted treatment planning, intervention strategies, and supervision levels based on assessed risk. Relationships with key partners, including Safe at Home, the Magistrates Court, and the Tasmania Prison Service, have been further strengthened to enable more coordinated and effective responses for respondents.

Continuing to deliver the Men's Referral Service [Action 30]

The Men's Referral Service (MRS), delivered by No to Violence (NTV), provides early intervention and rehabilitative support to perpetrators of family violence. In the reporting period, the service delivered 101 single-session rehabilitative services to Tasmanian family violence perpetrators, through direct contact and referrals from Tasmania Police.

NTV continues to offer its Early Intervention Response, where they contact perpetrators referred through police-recorded family violence incidents. This voluntary service involves cold-calling perpetrators to discuss their behaviour and offer information and referrals to appropriate support services, such as mental health or alcohol and drug interventions. Additionally, self-referrals from men seeking to address their behaviour continue to be a significant part of the service's engagement. Throughout the reporting period, NTV contacted 574 perpetrators through the MRS Early Intervention Response, providing 41 men with referrals to further services.

Voice and diversity

Ongoing establishment of Tasmania's first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council [Action 31]

In September 2024, members of Tasmania's first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council participated in induction and advocacy training to support their involvement in this vital work. This training is part of ongoing efforts to equip members with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively engage in Advisory Council activities.



The Advisory Council's inaugural meeting was held on 28 November 2024. The early focus for the Advisory Council will be on administrative and governance matters to lay the foundations for its future operations. Members are people with diverse experiences of family and sexual violence, ensuring a broad range of perspectives inform how the Tasmanian Government can improve responses and preventative measures.

Supporting Diverse Communities [Action 32]

The Supporting Diverse Communities Grant Program directed funding to community-based projects that address the unique needs of diverse victim-survivors and help reduce barriers to accessing support.

This first grant round awarded \$675,000 across seven different organisations for projects such as:

- LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Guidelines – Engender Equality;
- Breaking Barriers, Building Strengths: Collaboratively Addressing Sexual Violence in Diverse Cultural Communities - Migrant Resource Centre Northern Tasmania; and
- Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault: A Sex Industry Perspective – Scarlett Alliance.

Status of the actions

The status of the 38 actions in *Survivors at the Centre: Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027* are reported at 31 December 2024.

Actions carried over from the *Safe Homes, Families, Communities Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019-2022* have a 'Continuing' action type. These actions are considered complete for the purposes of this reporting.

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
Partnership and transformation	1	Pilot the establishment of two Multi-Disciplinary Centres in the North and South of the State to provide survivor centred, holistic and integrated responses to family and sexual violence.	New	Completed	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	2	Expand the scope of the Safe Families Coordination Unit to undertake whole of Government data coordination and integration for family and sexual violence.	Enhanced	Progressing	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	3	Investigate the Safe and Together Model, including providing professional learning on the model for legal professionals, community sector workers, and Government officers.	New	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
	4	Provide next generation technology and instruments for forensic scientists to ensure higher quality evidence for court proceedings, and increase capacity for storage of evidence, including sexual evidence kits.	New	Progressing	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	5	Establish a family and sexual violence liaison service within the Tasmanian Health Service, which will provide Family Violence Liaison Officers statewide to support clients who identify as experiencing family and sexual violence to access services.	New	Progressing	Health
	6	Provide an additional appointment for parents and children who identify as experiencing family violence through the Child Health and Parenting Service.	New	Progressing	Health
	7	Continue electronic monitoring of highrisk family violence offenders.	Continuing	Completed	Corrections and Rehabilitation
	8	Continue to implement legislative reform to strengthen legal responses to family and sexual violence.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	9	Continue to roll out mobile phone data extraction devices to collect evidence of technology facilitated abuse.	Continuing	Completed	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	10	Continue to develop standardised risk assessment processes across government and non-government family and sexual violence services.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	11	Continue the Family Violence Liaison Officer in the Strong Families, Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line.	Continuing	Completed	Education

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
Capacity building	12	Provide historic increased core funding to Tasmania's specialist family and sexual violence services with five-year contracts to enable funding certainty.	New	Progressing	Community Services
	13	Deliver the Safe Beds for Pets program that will establish a coordinated network of safe bed providers and fund safe bed places for Tasmanians at-risk of, or experiencing family and sexual violence.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	14	Investigate the establishment of a Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Peak to improve coordination of family and sexual violence services and advice on policy development and service design.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	15	Continue to deliver the Rapid Rehousing Program.	Continuing	Completed	Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs
	16	Continue to deliver Flexible Support Packages.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	17	Continue to deliver the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes Program.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	18	Continue to provide legal assistance to people experiencing family and sexual violence.	Continuing	Completed	Justice
	19	Strengthen the Victims of Crime Service.	Enhanced	Progressing	Justice
	20	Continue to deliver perpetrator programs.	Continuing	Completed	Corrections and Rehabilitation
	21	Deliver mandated behaviour change programs, including as part of a family violence order, and for sex offenders.	Enhanced	Progressing	Corrections and Rehabilitation
	22	Continue to strengthen specialist police prosecution.	Continuing	Completed	Police, Fire and Emergency Management
	23	Continue to ensure forensic medical examinations for adult victim-survivors of family and sexual violence is a statewide service.	Continuing	Completed	Health

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
Prevention and early intervention	24	Effectively embed Respectful Relationships and Consent Education in Tasmanian schools and develop a suite of resources informed by key stakeholders and children and young people that builds understanding of consent, coercive control and grooming in the Tasmanian community.	Enhanced	Completed	Education
	25	Expand the Step Up Adolescent Early Intervention Program into a statewide program across the South, North and North-West to provide early intervention for adolescents that use violence in their families and with intimate partners.	Enhanced	Progressing	Prevention of Family Violence
	26	Continue our partnership with Our Watch through the Tasmanian Government's membership of Our Watch and continuing the Our Watch Senior Advisor Role.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	27	Continue embedding Workforce Equality and Respect Standards in Tasmanian Government Agencies.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	28	Continue to deliver the Harmful Sexual Behaviours program for children and young people.	Continuing	Completed	Education
	29	Continue to strengthen the Defendant Health Liaison Service to provide early intervention assessment and management services to respondents.	Continuing	Completed	Health
	30	Continue to deliver the Men's Referral Service.	Continuing	Completed	Justice

Priority areas	Action number	Action item	Action type New / Enhanced/ Continuing	Action status Completed/ Progressing	Responsible Minister
Voice and diversity	31	Establish Tasmania's first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	32	Deliver funding for communitybased projects to support inclusion, access and equity to support diverse Tasmanians who experience barriers for accessing support for family and sexual violence.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	33	Expand the Mothers Circle Pilot Program for culturally and linguistically diverse women to the South and North of Tasmania, strengthening individual capacity to identify and respond to family and sexual violence.	Enhanced	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	34	Continue the Safe Choices Local Support Coordinator role in the North and North-West of Tasmania, to ensure a statewide service for women with disability experiencing family violence.	Enhanced	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	35	Continue the Hearing Lived Experience 2022 Survey of Victim-Survivors of Family and Sexual Violence to inform implementation of this Action Plan, and provide a comprehensive dataset of victim-survivor experiences.	New	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence
	36	Continue to support children and families through the Safe Homes, Safe Families Support Team.	Continuing	Completed	Education
	37	Continue to support Aboriginal Families through the Aboriginal Family Safety Workers in Child and Family Learning Centres.	Continuing	Completed	Education
	38	Continue to provide increased counselling services for children and young people experiencing family violence through the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Family Violence Counselling Support Service, Children and Young Persons Program.	Continuing	Completed	Prevention of Family Violence and Health



Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence
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