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# Information note— Initiatives to reduce family and domestic violence in Budget 2022–23

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5 April 2022

This information notes provides a summary of new initiatives in the Commonwealth Government’s Budget 2022–23 to reduce family and domestic violence.

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## Summary

- The Government will provide \$1.3 billion over 6 years from 2021–22 towards initiatives to reduce all forms of family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV) against women and children, and to establish, enhance and expand initiatives that address the full life cycle of violence across prevention, early intervention, response and recovery. These measures will form the first phase of the Commonwealth’s contribution to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*.<sup>1</sup>
- In particular, funding includes:<sup>2</sup>
  - \$222.6 million over 6 years from 2021–22 provided to strengthening initiatives to prevent gendered violence.
  - \$328.2 million over 5 years from 2022–23 provided to extend and establish programs aimed at the early intervention and prevention of FDSV.
  - \$480.1 million over 6 years from 2021–22 provided to fund programs to support women and their children who are experiencing FDSV.
  - \$290.9 million over 5 years from 2022–23 provided to extend and expand programs that support the recovery of FDSV victim survivors.

Some of these are explored in more detail below.

## Funding for responses to violence

The Budget 2022–23 noted that the Commonwealth Government is already providing funding for a range of initiatives, including:<sup>3</sup>

- \$164.8 million over 3 years for financial assistance and support for women affected by family and domestic violence. This includes the establishment of a 2-year Escaping Violence Payment trial, to provide immediate

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Budget Paper No. 2*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Budget Paper No. 2*, pp. 67–69.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women’s Budget Statement*, pp. 15–16.



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financial assistance to women leaving a violent relationship. As at 28 February 2022, over 2500 individuals have received support through the program.

- Since 2015, \$34.6 million has been provided to states and territories to an initiative that supports victim-survivors to stay in their own home (where safe and appropriate) by improving home security arrangements. As at 30 June 2021, the program has assisted nearly 14 000 women and their children.
- Funding for the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation program, which delivers new or expanded emergency and crisis accommodation facilities for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence. These are expected to provide around 780 new safe places and support up to 6340 women and children each year.

## New initiatives on early intervention

The *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* will commence in mid-2022 and builds on the \$1.1 billion provided in the 2021–22 Budget.<sup>4</sup> This replaces the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*.

- The Commonwealth is providing \$328.2 million over 5 years for a range of activities and services to intervene early and support victim-survivors. This includes:<sup>5</sup>
  - \$100.0 million for trauma-informed counselling services to support victim-survivors and families who are experiencing, witnessing or at risk of family or domestic violence.
  - \$27.8 million to extend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family safety services.
  - \$15.2 million to support small-scale grants to trial and test innovative approaches to addressing FDSV.

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<sup>4</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women’s Budget Statement*, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women’s Budget Statement*, p. 13.



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## New initiatives on response measures

- The Budget includes \$480.1 million over 6 years for a range of response measures regarding access to justice and ensure victim-survivors receive appropriate support. The Budget provides the following new funding.<sup>6</sup>
  - \$100.0 million over 5 years to continue the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation program, to support the building, renovation or purchase of emergency accommodation for women and children escaping family and domestic violence. This will fund around 720 new safe places for women and children, bringing the total number of safe places to around 1500 when completed.
  - \$54.6 million over 5 years to support up to 30 000 victim-survivors to stay safe in their own homes through security assessments and upgrades including cameras, bug sweeps and safe phones. This improves wellbeing by maintaining connections to the local community, networks and regular places of education and employment.
  - A further \$240.0 million to extend the Escaping Violence Payment for a further 3 years. The payment provides up to \$5000 in financial assistance to establish a life free from violence and is estimated to support an additional 37 500 victim-survivors on a demand driven basis. To meet demand for the current trial, \$40.0 million is being provided in 2021-22, enabling support for an anticipated additional 6600 individuals.
  - \$10.7 million is being provided to bolster frontline FDSV services in the Northern Territory to help address increased demand for services during COVID-19 and work towards Closing the Gap commitments.
  - \$1.8 million over 3 years to provide information, advice and assistance to women who experience workplace issues, including sexual harassment, provided through a grant opportunity made available to the Northern Territory and Queensland working women’s centres.

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women’s Budget Statement*, pp. 17–18.



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## New initiatives on housing

To support new and expanded emergency accommodation for women and children escaping violence, funding includes:<sup>7</sup>

- \$100 million over 5 years for the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program.
- \$54.6 million over 5 years for the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes Program.

## Statistics on FDSV

The Women's Budget Statement noted that FDSV disproportionately impacts women and children and provided the following data:

- on average, one woman is killed by a partner every 11 days;
- one in 4 women have experienced violence by a current or former intimate partner since the age of 15;
- indigenous women are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than non-Indigenous women;
- in 2018, the rate of police-recorded sexual assaults was almost seven times higher for women (154 per 100,000) compared to men (24 per 100,000);
- 77 per cent of cases of intimate partner homicides involve a male offender killing a current or former female partner. Of the remaining cases, the female homicide offender was the primary domestic violence victim in 71 per cent of cases; and
- of women who have experienced violence from a previous partner and had children in their care when the violence occurred, 68 per cent reported that children had seen or heard the violence.<sup>8</sup>

The Budget 2022–23 also includes \$19 million over 5 years for Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) to provide data and evidence related to violence against women and children.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women's Budget Statement*, p. 54.

<sup>8</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women's Budget Statement*, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Government, *Budget 2022–23: Women's Budget Statement*, p. 24.