



STRATEGIC PLAN


JULY 2019-
JUNE 2024

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DVRCV acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

DVRCV is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the longest continuing culture on earth, in our work.

DVRCV would like to acknowledge the many women, children and young people who have survived family violence and recognise their courage, strength, acts of resistance and resilience. We also acknowledge the practitioners, services and organisations whose work is to walk alongside victim survivors on their journey to safety and recovery, and those whose work is to prevent violence before it occurs.



C O N T E N T S

Who we are	P2
Strategy context	P4
Our vision, mission and 5-year strategic plan	P7
Our priorities and strategic areas of focus	P8
Principles that underpin our strategy	P10
Our theory of change	P12



W H O
W A R E



“Now it is time to build on our strengths, and make informed strategic choices to increase our impact.”

For over 30 years, the Domestic Violence Resource Centre of Victoria (DVRCV) has been working to prevent and respond to family violence, with a focus on men’s violence against women in intimate relationships. We acknowledge the passion, leadership and dedication of the countless women of DVRCV over many years who have created the organisation we are today.

With strong feminist roots, we have a proud history of advocating for systemic and social change, and of building the capability of practitioners and service providers who work with women, children and young people who have experienced family violence. Our work has always been informed by the experiences of those who have lived with family violence.

Once one of Victoria’s only statewide family violence organisations, we are now one of many across the state. Over three decades ago, we started as a single person phone line and we have grown to be a significant thought leader working to support a range of sectors through our training, tools, resources and advocacy.

More recently, we have taken a statewide leadership role in the workforce and industry development and primary prevention focussed reforms of the Royal Commission into Family Violence, and worked collaboratively with partners and government to support the implementation of a wide range of reform activity.

Now it is time to build on our strengths, and make informed strategic choices to increase our impact. We are excited to launch our comprehensive five-year strategic plan. This strategy paves the way for the next step in our journey as part of the growing efforts across Victoria to end violence against women.

STRATEGY CONTEXT

Violence against women is an issue of national importance. It is prevalent, but preventable and we know that change is possible. As a complex social issue, there are a myriad of ways to address violence against women and to stop it from happening in the first place.

The national and Victorian landscape within which we operate is undergoing significant change. There are many organisations doing incredible work, from prevention of violence against women through to responding to all forms of family violence. In order to achieve significant, long-term change, there are multiple pieces of the puzzle that need to come together. As an agency with expertise in advocacy, training and leadership across both prevention and response, we believe the unique role we play is in building the capability of professionals, organisations and systems. As a result, women and children living with violence will receive the best possible support and efforts to

prevent this form of violence from happening at all will, in the long term, be more successful.

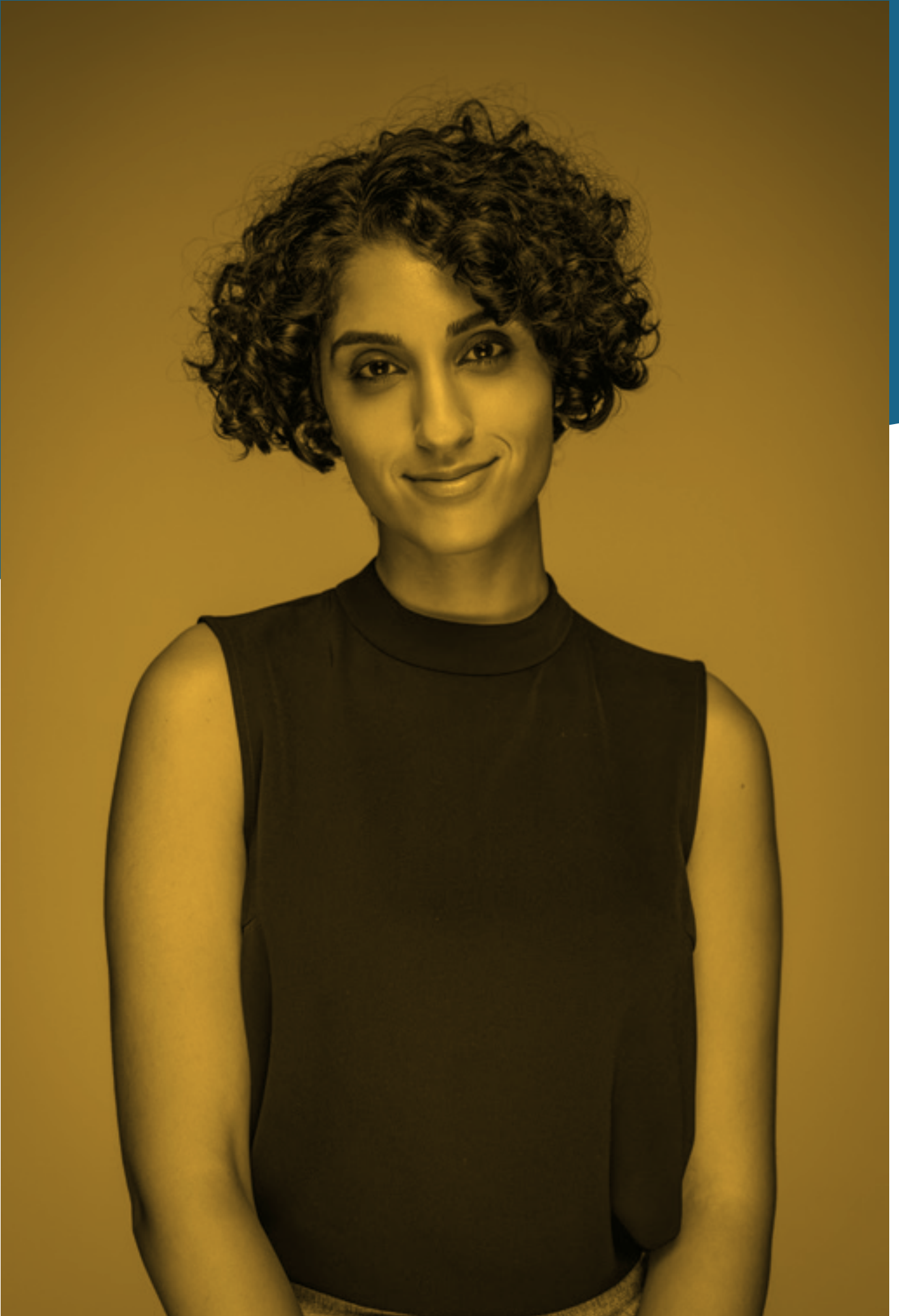
This strategy has been developed in consultation with a wide range of key stakeholders. We listened and responded to the insights gained through this process to ensure we are directing our efforts where they can achieve the greatest impact for women and their children. Through the process of developing this strategy, our stakeholders told us that:

- Our feminist lens enables the work of others and we need to build on our strong feminist history;
- We should step more deeply in to our leadership role in

workforce and industry development across both prevention and response;

- Our advocacy efforts around systemic reform are imperative and must continue;
- We must build on our strengths in training and extend these to building the capability of a range of audiences to facilitate greater sustainable impact;
- We can't be all things to all people so need to focus where we can have greatest impact; and
- Partnerships and collaboration are important and should continue to be a feature of how we work under the new strategy.

“We listened and responded to the insights gained through this process to ensure we are directing our efforts where they can achieve the greatest impact for women and their children.”





OUR VISION, MISSION AND **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

The strategic frame for our next five years is one of building on our strengths and innovating for change as we focus not only on what we do well but on what will ultimately have the most positive and sustainable impact on ending violence against women.

As part of this, we adopt a dual approach to the prevention of and response to violence against women, focusing on levers with deep sector and system-wide impact, namely capability building, advocacy and leadership.

By equipping professionals, organisations and systems with practice-informed and evidence-based approaches, we are enabling effective prevention in all organisations, and improving support to women and their children through co-ordinated, skilled responses.

By advocating based on specialist sector leadership and feminist principles, we are working towards systems that are safer and more accountable to women and their children, and which ultimately contribute to reducing rates of violence against women in Victoria.

OUR VISION

The future we want

A world where women and their children are thriving, respected and free from violence.

OUR MISSION

Why we exist and for whom

To build the capability of systems, organisations and professionals to prevent and respond to violence against women.

OUR VALUES

How we approach all that we do

We are independent, expert and trusted. Our work is courageous and creative. We operate with integrity.

OUR PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

We have developed four priority areas on which we will focus our efforts over the next five years of this strategic plan. These are detailed below, with specific strategies outlined under each.

To achieve these strategies, we will need to build on our reputation as a leader in the family violence field, and will focus internally to ensure that we remain a sustainable, independent and resilient organisation with staff who hold wide ranging expertise and who are enabled to play a role in the delivery of this strategy.

PRIORITY 1: SUPPORT BROAD SOCIAL AND STATEWIDE STRUCTURAL CHANGE TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BY:

- 1.1** Influencing the social and political conversation around violence against women to build commitment for long term social and structural change.
- 1.2** Collaborating to proactively address social and political resistance and backlash to ending violence against women, and uphold the importance of specialisation.
- 1.3** Advocating for the integrity of the vision outlined in the Royal Commission into Family Violence report to remain in the work of all sectors involved in the reforms.
- 1.4** Fostering understanding about the important role friends, family and colleagues have in supporting women and children living with violence, and advocate to ensure these people are better equipped in their roles as part of the system.

PRIORITY 2: SUPPORT EFFECTIVE REFORM OF VICTORIA'S SPECIALIST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PREVENTION AND RESPONSE SYSTEMS BY:

- 2.1** Expanding the design and delivery of infrastructure, networks and systems to support a mature prevention sector and well-resourced response system.
- 2.2** Establishing DVRCV as a centre for leadership in workforce capability and industry development to enable and encourage effective reform.
- 2.3** Leading advocacy to ensure specialist violence against women practice expertise informs policy, service design and education/training.
- 2.4** Leveraging our unique position as a statewide organisation to facilitate sharing of on-the-ground practice wisdom into policy, and simultaneously supporting the translation of evidence into practice.
- 2.5** Taking a leadership role in the design and implementation of sustainable and effective statewide family violence reform.

DVRCV'S CAPABILITY BUILDING APPROACH



PRIORITY 3: BUILD CONNECTED AND COORDINATED SECTORS THAT LEAD EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRIMARY PREVENTION ACTIVITY AND PROVIDE EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE THROUGH:

- 3.1** Improving outcomes for women and their children by advocating for specialisation, a feminist framework and cross-sector collaboration to inform policy, service delivery and system design.
- 3.2** Leading prevention sector development to forge a strong, cohesive sector identity and ensure that practitioners are supported to lead evidence based activity.
- 3.3** As a centre for leadership in workforce capability and industry development, working across a range of settings and sectors to:
 - Facilitate organisational and practitioner connections
 - Strengthen networking and collaboration
 - Support the effective use of frameworks, standards, tools and resources

PRIORITY 4: DEVELOP EXPERT, HIGHLY SKILLED AND WELL-RESOURCED PROFESSIONALS AND ORGANISATIONS WORKING TO PREVENT OR RESPOND TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BY:

- 4.1** Designing and implementing a capability building model to support learning and improve systems and practice through:
 - Education, training and professional development
 - Organisational development and policy advice
 - Communities of practice, coaching and mentoring
 - Frameworks, standards, tools and resources
- 4.2** Leading the design of evidence informed, multi-mode training and leadership development programs for professionals across a range of sectors.
- 4.3** Creating connections between professionals and across a diverse range of organisations through leading communities of practice, professional networks and cross-sectoral forums and events.
- 4.4** Building pathways into prevention and response work to support a sustainable and expert workforce of the future.

PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN OUR STRATEGY

These guiding principles will act as a lens through which we filter the execution of this strategic plan, and will not only inform *what* we do but *how* we work as individuals and as an organisation. More detailed explanations of these guiding principles can be found on our [website](#).

GUIDING PRINCIPLE ONE: AN INTERSECTIONAL FEMINIST APPROACH

For us, being guided by an intersectional feminist approach in our work to address violence against women means:

- Ensuring the safety, freedom and equality of women and their children is at the heart of everything we do, and considering the relationships between gender and power in all of our work.
- Working collaboratively to identify and transform systems of power and privilege that oppress and marginalise.
- Recognising that there is diversity within individuals, communities and identities, as well as between them and centring the diversity of these experiences, voices and leadership in our work.
- Actively reflecting on and addressing our own relationships to power and privilege, and embedding inclusivity, diversity and accessibility across all of our work.

In aiming to embed this principle within all our work, we acknowledge that we still have internal changes to make around diversity, inclusion and intersectionality and we are committed to continual learning, reflection on and development of our approach.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE TWO: INFORMED BY EVIDENCE, PRACTICE EXPERTISE AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

We recognise the importance of ensuring different kinds of evidence and knowledge inform our work in capability development, policy, advocacy and primary prevention.

Our work is informed not only by traditional research and data but by the practice experience of the professionals who work in this field, and by women, children and young people's lived experiences of gender, discrimination, harassment, oppression and violence.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE THREE: PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Working collaboratively means connecting or partnering with individuals, organisations, and networks to achieve our vision of a world where women and their children are thriving, respected and free from violence. Ending violence against women requires large-scale, long-term effort and we recognise that we are but one agency that has a role in working to achieve change.

Partnerships and collaboration will benefit our work and our staff, and will support other agencies to build their knowledge. Most importantly, partnerships will ultimately aim to benefit the women and children whose lives we aim to have a positive impact on.





T H E O R Y O F C H A N G E

We have developed a theory of change that articulates the connection between our five-year strategy, and the short-term outcomes and longer-term changes we want to achieve.

WE BELIEVE THAT IF WE SUCCESSFULLY DELIVER ON OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY AND ENSURE THAT OUR WORK IS INFORMED BY OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES, OVER THE SHORTER TERM WE WILL SEE THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

1. More professionals, organisations and sectors will adopt a shared, feminist, practice informed, evidence based understanding of violence against women and will have access to the right skills and knowledge to deliver prevention and response work.
2. Reform activities will be informed by specialist practice expertise, the evidence base and a feminist approach.
3. Networks and relationships across professionals, organisations and sectors will become more robust and effective.
4. Social resistance and backlash to ending violence against women will be reduced in broader social and political conversations.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE ABOVE OUTCOMES ARE A NECESSARY PRECONDITION FOR THE FOLLOWING CHANGES OVER THE LONGER TERM:

1. Organisations are more sustainable and enable professionals to provide a more effective response to women experiencing violence and to undertake primary prevention activities informed by evidence, practice expertise and a feminist framework.
2. The range of interconnected systems that have a role in preventing and responding to violence against women are more mature and effective.

When these changes have occurred, we hope that fewer women and children in Victoria will experience violence and those who do experience violence will have access to the support they need, when they need it.



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