

2022-2023

# Annual Report



[www.southernwomensgroup.org.au](http://www.southernwomensgroup.org.au)

# Southern Women's Group



## Acknowledgements

Southern Women's Group honours the valuable work of our members & colleagues and we thank them for the many ways they support us.

We acknowledge the valued contribution of our funding partners NSW Department of Communities & Justice & Legal Aid NSW

## Acknowledgement of Country

Southern Women's Group acknowledges Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People as the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and celebrate their continuing culture.

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# About

## Southern Women's Group

Southern Women's Group is dedicated to creating opportunities for women from all walks of life, with a special focus on those who are disadvantaged. They strive to promote equality and bring an end to gender-based violence through their campaigns.

Southern Women's Group was established In 1984, a group of women identified a shortage of services available for women in the Bega region. In an effort to address this issue, they founded the Southern Women's Group. The following year, the NSW Department of Youth and Community Services awarded SWG a grant to support the operation of a Women's Resource Centre.

One area of identified need was support for women who were experiencing domestic violence and were seeking legal assistance through court ordered Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders. The Women's Resource Centre organised a roster of seconded workers from local community services (Bega Women's Refuge, Family Support Service & Southern Women's Housing) to support women at Bega Court. This initiative was later recognised and in 1999 Southern Women's Group first received funding support from Legal Aid NSW to provide the Far South Coast Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (SCWDVCAS). This service expanded over time to include courts in the Eurobodalla & Bega Valley Shire, and later the Shoalhaven area, so the service is now active from Nowra to the Victorian border.

Over time SWG has evolved to meet the changing needs of the women we support while maintaining its commitment to empower women by providing information, support, referral, education, and advocacy. Today, Southern Women's Group manages the Women's Resource Centre (WRC) and the South Coast Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (SCWDVCAS).

**Naomi Brown**  
**Business Operations Manager**



# A Message From the Chair

The past year has been one of evolution for Southern Women's Group (SWG) adapting to significant expansion in our service delivery at the Women's Resource Centre (WRC) and South Coast Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (SCWDVCAS), all of which are described in detail in this Annual Report.

SWG Management Committee members have been extremely industrious over the past 12 months, undertaking a comprehensive overhaul and update of our organisational policies and procedures to ensure consistency and compliance with the regulatory and operational environment in which we operate. The work involved in this process was considerable and highlighted the need for some organisational restructure to reduce the burden on Management Committee volunteers. Committee members engaged in governance training with Judy Daunt and Tessa, project workers with Community Industry Group. A new Strategic Plan was developed and from that an Operational Plan was prepared by Kerry Moore and subsequently endorsed, to guide our activities over coming years. I would also like to express my appreciation to Pradhima Shyamsunder who freely gave of her time and financial expertise.

At a Special General Meeting in February 2023, we adopted a revised Constitution which was forwarded to NSW Fair Trading. The new Constitution establishes fixed terms for Executive positions and allows for the appointment of two Deputy Chairpersons. In other regards the SWG Constitution accords with the Model Rules for Incorporated Associations in NSW.

Between January and September 2023 SWG employed Nalla Burk to provide administrative assistance for Jane Hughes, Manager of the Women's Resource Centre. Nalla's contributions to the work of the WRC and her immersion in the varied activities at the Centre are immensely appreciated, as is the support she offered to Jane in her role. Thankyou Nalla!

In 2023 SWG also promoted Naomi Brown our, erstwhile part-time bookkeeper, to the full-time position of Business Operations Manager, in recognition of her skills and the increasing complexity of her work managing a large payroll, multiple budgets and corporate compliance. Thankfully Naomi accepted the position and SWG has profited (in a not-for-profit sense) from her expertise, commitment, and enthusiasm for her new role.

# A Message From the Chair

Sadly, we lost Wendy Hunter, former Treasurer and long-term member of SWG, who passed away in April 2023. Wendy was a former presenter of the Women's Radio Show on Edge FM, a strong feminist, member, and supporter of the LGBTIQ+ community, entertainer, and a fabulous MC at so many SWG functions. Our sincere condolences go to her daughter Amy, son Rowan and grandchildren Kiera and William. Philanthropic grants, donations and in-kind contributions are a major source of financial support for the programs offered by SWG. We thank and acknowledge the contributions made by Clubs NSW, CWA, Merimbula VIEW club – beautiful hand-made blankets- Mumbulla Foundation, Rotary, Well Thumbed Books, Strangers in Paradise and other donors who wish to remain anonymous for their continuing support for our vision – “that all women are safe, respected, empowered and supported to flourish.” SWG would also like to thank and acknowledge the support of our local MPs', Dr. Michael Holland, the Hon Kristy McBain and the Hon Fiona Phillips. With Dr. Holland's support the WRC was successful in obtaining a Community Infrastructure grant to install solar panels at the WRC. Hopefully this measure will reduce some of our operating overheads at the WRC in the future, given so many women come to the WRC in winter just to keep warm.

Finally, my personal thanks to all the SWG staff, volunteers, students, other service providers and my colleagues on the Management Committee for your valued input and continuing support throughout the year. SWG gratefully acknowledges the funding contribution of Legal Aid NSW and NSW Department of Communities and Justice, our principal service funders, without whom we could not achieve what we have.

**Andrea Powell- Chairperson**





# Wendy Hunter

5/1/1951 - 7/4/2023

SWG would like to pay our respects to our longstanding committee member Wendy Hunter who sadly passed away in May this year.

Wendy was a staunch activist for so many people and causes within our community, including children's rights, women's rights, LGBTIQA+, the marginalised, animal welfare and the environment to name just a few. Wendy always had a sharp mind and a strong heart and fought with passion. Wendy was an inspiration to so many.

Wendy, your legacy will live on in the community for eternity. .



Rest Easy x



# Our Values

Southern Women's Group (SWG) is dynamic, hardworking, feminist organisation that has been working since 1984 to empower women of the South Coast.



Respect



Equality



Justice



# Southern Women's Group

## Strategic Plan



2023 -2027

### Purpose

To provide quality services, support and advocacy that empower women on the South Coast to live free from violence and discrimination, and to achieve their personal goals. We operate in accordance with our values of respect, equality and justice.

### Vision

All women are safe,  
respected, empowered,  
and supported to flourish.

# Strategic Plan

We act with compassion and courage to foster these values by committing to the following goals and strategies:



*Strategic*

*Plan*



Maintain a strong organisational structure by ensuring we have:

- » Effective governance and a skilled board
- » Diversified income streams and demonstrated financial prudence
- » A team culture which aligns to our feminist philosophy in an inclusive and supportive work place
- » Leadership which drives our vision
- » Flexibility in a changing environment

A STRONG  
DYNAMIC  
SUSTAINABLE  
ORGANISATION

*Strategic*

*Plan*



Provide the  
best programs  
and services to our  
communities by:

COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT &  
SUPPORT

- » Growing our service mix and reach
- » Maintaining a skilled and pro active workforce
- » Targeting our services to make a difference for women and their children experiencing vulnerabilities

# Strategic Plan



Be a strong voice for positive change at all levels by:

PARTNERSHIP & ADVOCACY FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

- » Speaking up for our communities with decision makers and stakeholders who can make a difference
- » Maintaining and growing strategic relationships
  - » Communicating and promoting our values, the work we do, and the outcomes we achieve
  - » Being recognised as a leading 'go to' women's service on the South Coast

# Our Management Committee



Andrea Powell  
- Chairperson



Wendy Hunter  
- Secretary



Jules Klugman  
- Acting Secretary



Kerry Moore  
- Treasurer



Linda Tucker  
- Member



Pru Leone  
- Member



Catherine Murphy  
- Member



Jenny Van Gorder  
- Member



Coral Anne  
- Member

# Womens Resource Centre



# Our Team

Jane

MANAGER



Nalla

ADMINISTRATION  
ASSISTANT





2022-2023

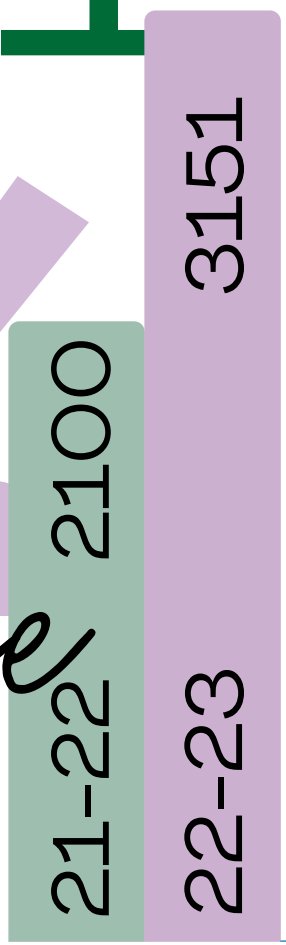
# Womens Resource Centre

recorded  
occasions of  
service  
excluding  
workshops

# 3151

# 50%

*Increase*  
in 12 months



*Physical  
Resources  
Provided*

# 371



# Food Relief

680 though  
secondbite

## Crisis

Food assistance  
from emergency  
pantry  
& Too Good Co  
frozen meals



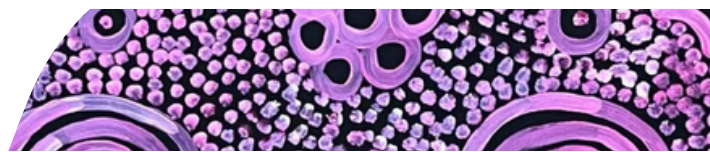
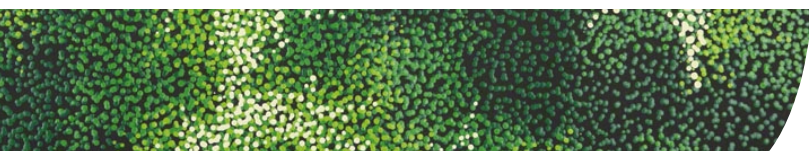
**TWO  
GOOD  
CO.**

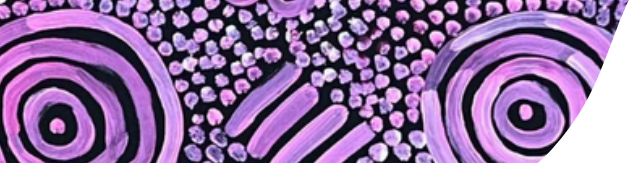
  
*sharethe*dignity

**SecondBite**  
Ending Waste. Ending Hunger.

SAPPHIRE  
**COMMUNITY  
PANTRY**

EST. 2017





# 1116

occasions of  
access to  
resources

including computers, shower,  
washing machine, copier,  
phone or dropping in to have  
a cuppa and a chat

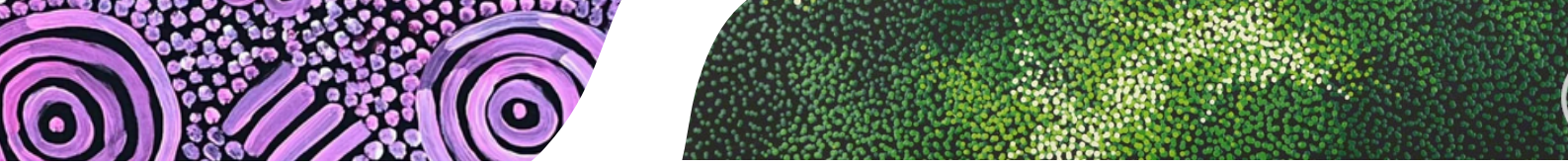


Over

# 2000

workshops including  
craft, nutrition,  
exercise, self esteem,  
mental wellbeing, social  
inclusion and more





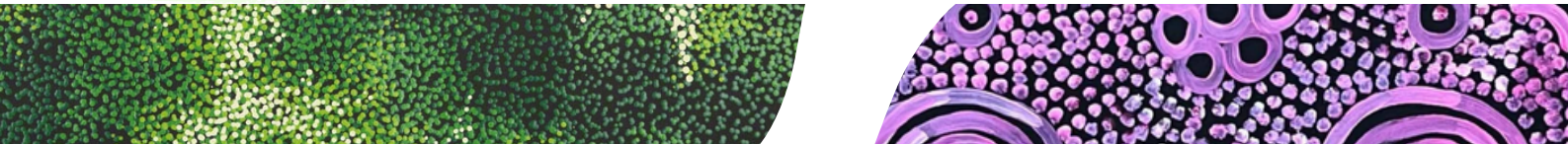
# 1110

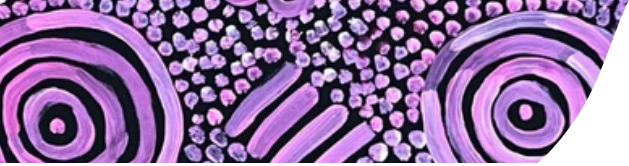
occasions of individual support,

information, referral and/or advocacy face to face and via telephone



occasions of providing blankets, clothing and personal hygiene items specifically to women in crisis





The WRC is located at 14 Peden Street Bega, which is centrally located close to the CBD, with ramp access at the front of the building.

The venue has a 'flex-space' for small groups or visiting professionals as well as a large meeting room available for forums and workshops.

In addition the WRC has an open kitchen and dining space along with lounge area which is used by women to socialise and engage with others. The WRC has a renovated garage art/space in the backyard and several garden beds for gardening workshops. The building also has two office spaces which accommodate on site staff.

*The WRC endeavors to develop & build community education, knowledge & awareness through our programs.*



WRC runs workshops, skills and capacity-building groups and social action groups. Other community organisations also utilise the WRC as a low-cost venue for their own activities, training or meetings.

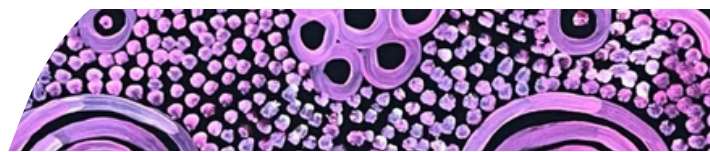
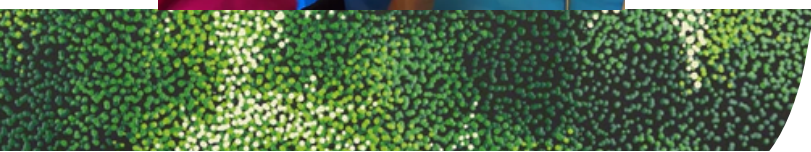


The WRC provides women with access to computers and the internet, as well as a photocopier/scanner, phone and other media equipment, a washing machine and showering facilities.

WRC activities and groups develop skills, broaden social networks, reduce social isolation and build the confidence, capacity and resilience of the women of the Bega Valley.



For women experiencing hardship, crisis or particular challenges WRC staff provide individual support, information, advocacy and referral.



# Aims & Objectives

The WRC objectives are to:

- Provide resources, including information and referral, to enable women to make safe, informed choices
- Offer advocacy, support and resources for women with specific issues and needs.
- Supply a confidential, safe and friendly environment to relax and connect with other women.
- Make available a place where women can simply walk in knowing that they will be free to express their concerns or worries to workers who will respond professionally and respect their dignity and confidentiality
- Network with groups in the community, agencies and organisations to identify and resolve issues of concern to women in the community, with a focus on prevention and early intervention
- Ensure access to food, clothing and sanitary products for women and girls

The Women's Resource Centre aims, in a non-hierarchical manner, to combat gender-based inequality as well as economic and social discrimination, including racism, age-ism, able-ism and homo/trans-phobia.



# WRC Staffing

The WRC is run on 'Women Power'. Enormous amounts of time and energy are given to our work both in the Centre and in the broader community.

While some of this is paid work, a great deal comes free of charge and reflects the community commitment to WRC. In particular, unpaid Management Committee members and direct service volunteers contribute to the WRC on a weekly basis.

The WRC is primarily staffed by a Manager for 21 hours per week. At different times over the 2022/23 financial year additional grant and philanthropic funding has allowed for the employment of an extra staff member as well as the manager for one day per week.

Currently the WRC 'core funding' allows for it to be open to the public between 10am and 4pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, but we know that this is insufficient to meet community needs as demands on the service continue to grow.



# Screech WRC What's On...

## Monthly e-news

WRC sends out a monthly MailChimp for the 'Screech WRC What's On' e-newsletter. The WRC is committed to reducing our environmental impact and to streamline the amount of information we send out by encouraging services and individuals to subscribe to our email group. This is a valuable marketing tool that goes directly to other organisations, businesses, service users and friends. The subscription list continues to grow - from last year's 380 we now have more than 470 subscribers to our e-newsletter.

**24%** INCREASE IN  
12 MONTHS

**WRC ON**



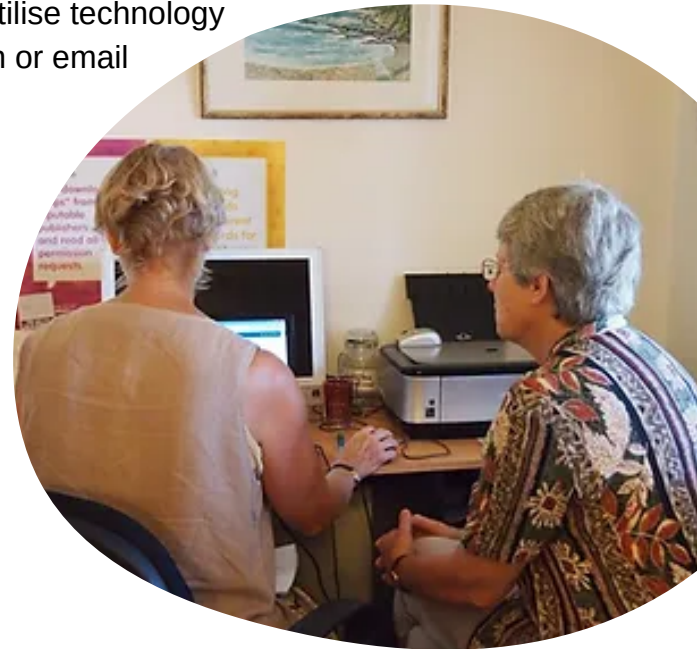
WRC has a well-established community organisation page Wom Ensouth Women's Resource Centre. The page continues to be well utilised and numbers of followers continue to grow with the page now boasting more than 1000 followers. The facebook page has proven to be a valuable method of communicating services, events and information about issues which impact on women in our community as well as information and articles on women's health, safety and wellbeing more broadly. The page also links people to our webpage and to sign up for the Screech e-newsletter or to make donations.

<https://www.facebook.com/womensresourcecentre/>



# TECHNOLOGY

Technology is important to our daily lives and WRC offers internet and computer access for women coming into the Centre. This assistance continues to be essential for many women in the community who often need support to utilise technology and would otherwise not be able to access, print, scan or email essential documents.



## WRC WEBPAGE

The Women's Resource Centre, Southern Women's Group Inc. and Far South Coast Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service currently share a web page. This site no longer reflects the scope and diversity of the services we offer to our communities. As such a new and improved website is in development and it is anticipated that it will be launched in late 2023.







# Publicity

Services, events, courses and workshops organised through the WRC receive publicity through the local radio, regular press releases in local newspapers and other community publications as well as our social media platform. Local radio interviews with ABC radio and Power FM have promoted local initiatives and events. Publicity flyers are also used to advertise upcoming workshops and are distributed at meetings, events and through the email group.

The WRC also has a strong Facebook presence and utilises this platform to promote Centre activities and events.

The WRC is often a first point of contact for journalists wanting to conduct interviews or seek comment on issues impacting women such as domestic violence, homelessness and government policies and budgets.

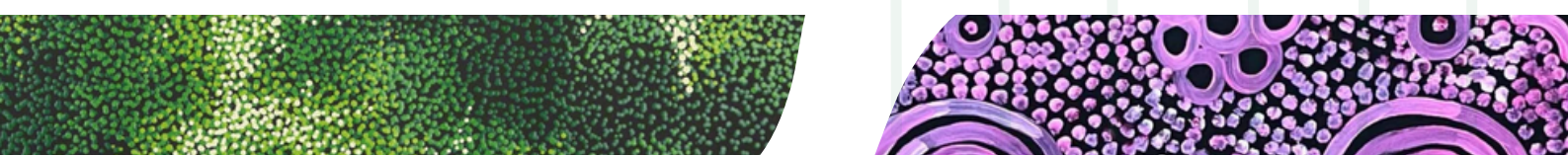
Our public profile and the good reputation of the WRC in the broader community has frequently led to donations of money, services or goods directly to support the work that we do.



# Community Network Groups

Over the last year the Women's Resource Centre has continued to be involved in community networking activities and has initiated and/or participated in a range of activities and events. Networking with local groups, agencies and organisations is an effective part of our community capacity building and early intervention support. With opportunities for face-to-face networking limited due to the need to operate the Centre we found ourselves spending a lot of time in front of Zoom.

WRC also endeavours wherever possible to provide a venue for other community organisations to access space to deliver services or to meet with women who feel more comfortable in the WRC space.





# Community

## SERVICES LIAISON

WRC acts as a hub of information for many other services. Listed below are just some of the many services that have directly liaised with the Centre over the last 12mths.

- 
- South East Women's & Children's Service
  - Bega High School
  - Southern Youth & Family Services – Homeless Youth Accommodation Program
  - Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV)
  - Katungul Aboriginal Medical Service
  - Ozharvest
  - NSW Legal Aid
  - Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council
  - Salvation Army
  - Centrelink
  - Relationships Australia
  - Wellways
  - Illawarra Legal Centre Tenants Advocacy Service
  - Bega TAFE
  - Flourish Australia
  - Playability
  - Second Bite
  - Housing NSW
  - Link2Home
  - Share the Dignity
  - Bega Valley Shire Council
  - Brighter Futures
  - Men's Wellbeing NSW
  - Southern Cross Community Housing
  - Anglicare No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)
  - Anglicare Post Separation Cooperative Parenting Program
  - Anglicare Family Dispute Resolution
  - Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre
  - Greater Southern Area Health Service
  - Disability Trust
  - The Sapphire Coast Community Pantry
  - NSW Department of Education
  - Community Mental Health
  - Bega Valley Sexual Assault Service
  - Women's Health NSW
  - Two Good Co
  - Sapphire Neighbourhood Services Inc
  - Mission Australia Bega Valley Homelessness Service
  - NSW Victim's Services
  - Coordinare
  - PCYC
  - Grand Pacific Health
  - Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
  - NSW Department of Fair Trading
  - St Vincent De Paul
  - Workability
  - Australian Tax Office
  - Bega Valley Homecare
  - Men's Referral Service
  - Spiral Gallery
  - Bega Valley Family Day Care
  - NSW Police
  - Country Women's Association
  - DV NSW
  - Bega Multicultural Centre
  - Headspace
  - Senior's Rights
  - Community Industry Group
  - ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service
  - Eden Access Centre
  - The Sapphire Community Pantry
  - The Family Place
  - Sapphire Health and Wellbeing Service
- 

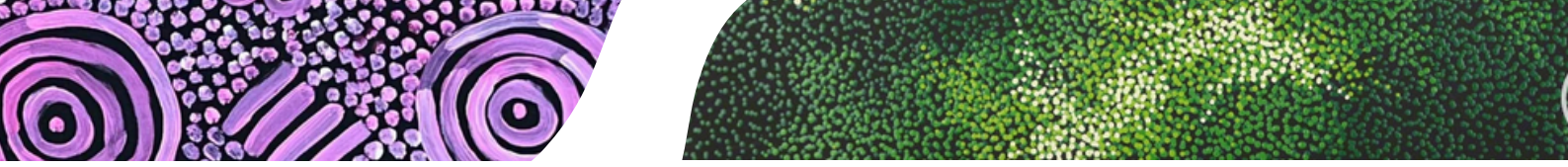
# Annual Performance Report

## What do Women say?

The WRC also conducts surveys of regular Centre users as well as the broader community about whether we are meeting people's needs or whether there are gaps in our service delivery that need to be addressed.

### What do women value about the WRC





# WHAT DO WOMEN SAY TO OTHERS ABOUT THE WRC?

“They can help you”

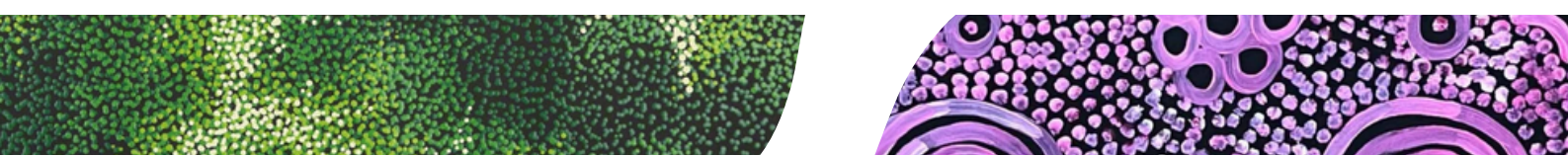
“The WRC is a wonderful organisation, with kind caring compassionate staff who help all women with anything they need help with.”

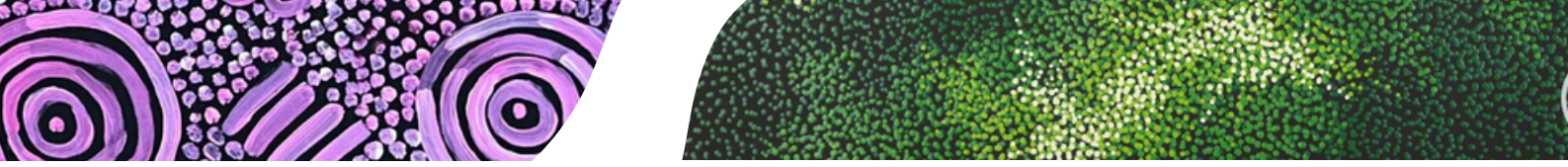
**“ONE STOP SHOP OF FRIENDLINESS AND SAFETY”**

“It is a good place and relaxing place to catch up with friends and they do crafts on Wednesday mornings where we can do different things”

*“I would say I go there to get help with my struggles with life. Support of family problems/ relationships Where it’s welcoming safe non judgmental”*

music day confidence depression Friday mental health  
 laughter groups good help days work shops self-esteem  
 help and support support groups women Morning tea  
 new skills support groups women Morning tea  
 groups such as budgeting depression groups Workshops





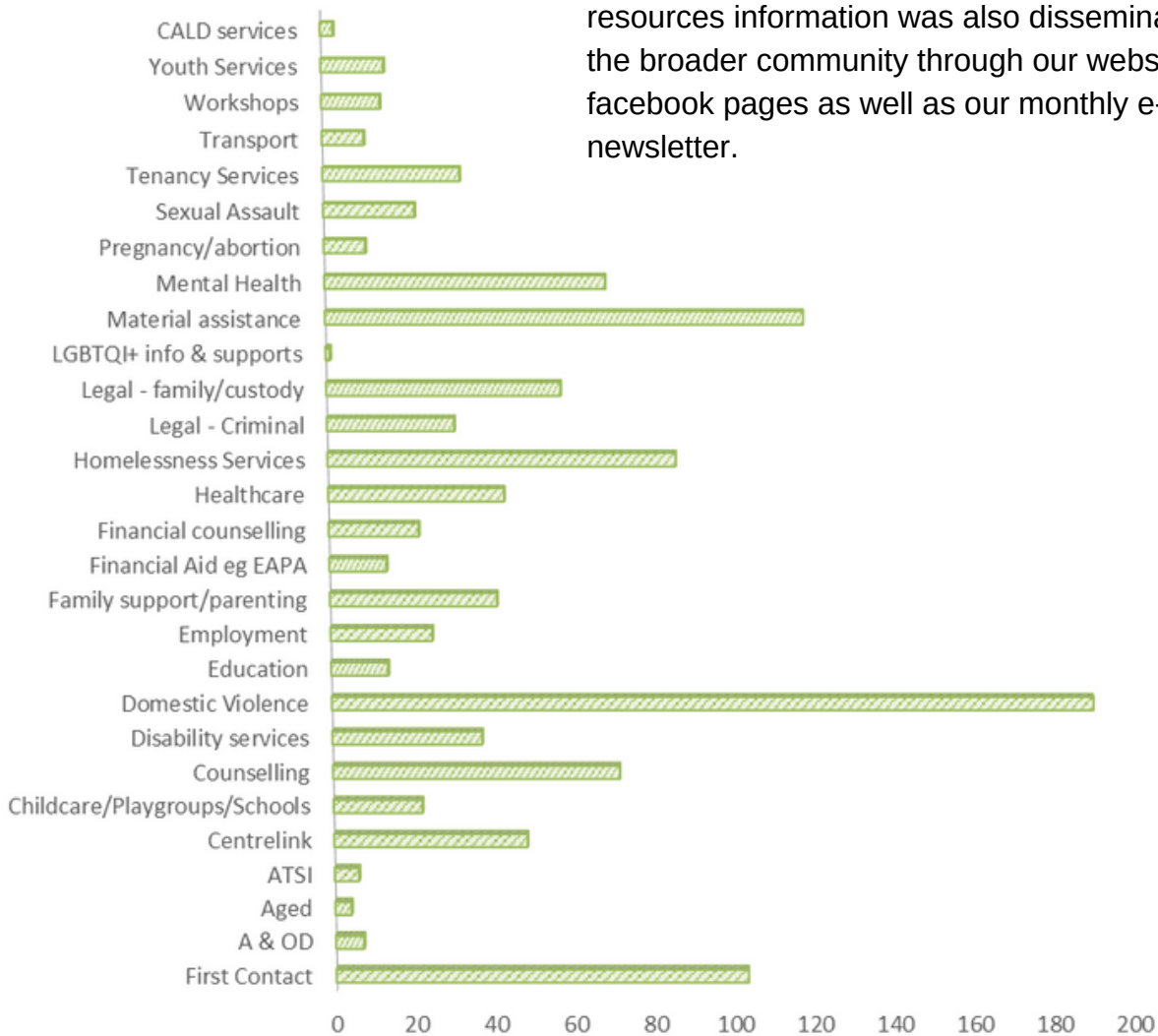
# WHAT THE WOMEN USED THE WRC FOR 2022-2023

## Information & Referral

Information is power. WRC provides community service information as well as personal support, referral, advocacy and collective action on issues or challenges affecting Bega Valley or women in general. The provision of information contributes to WRC's role in building local community capacity as well as the skills, knowledge, opportunities, access, resilience, confidence and self-efficacy of the women accessing the service.

Comprehensive information and referrals were provided to women in addition to maintaining a notice board and resource library including community information flyers, pamphlets, kits, library, print materials, and internet access. In addition to the on-site

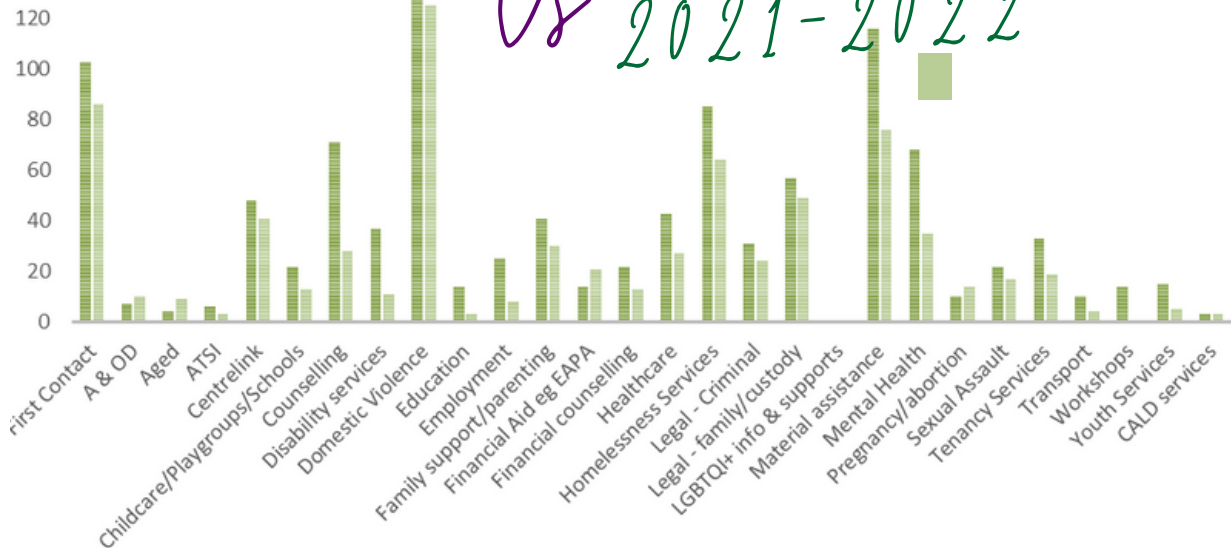
resources information was also disseminated to the broader community through our website and facebook pages as well as our monthly e-newsletter.



# INFORMATION, REFERRAL & SUPPORT

2022-2023

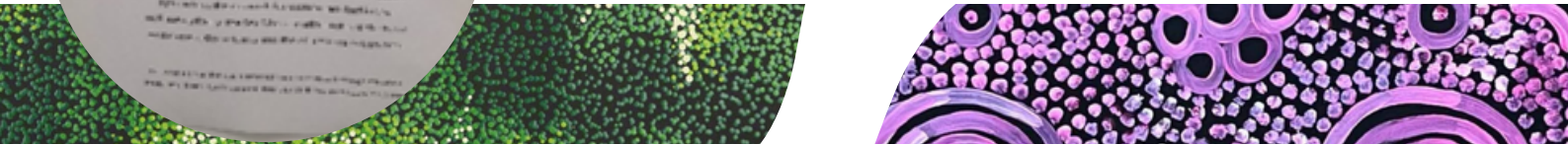
Us 2021-2022

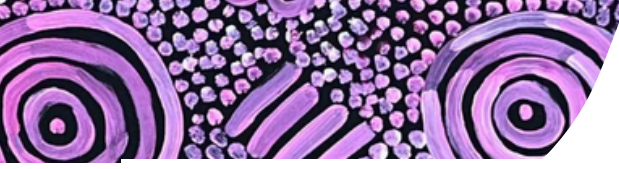


This graph shows a comparison for the 2021/22 financial year against the 2022/23 financial year which demonstrates a significant rise in the need for services in particular domestic violence, mental health, homelessness and material assistance due to cost of living pressures, the ongoing impacts of community-wide disaster related trauma and the local housing crisis.

## Physical Resources

WRC has a range of equipment to meet the diverse needs of women in the community including phone, photocopier, washing machine, bathroom with shower facility. The WRC provides access to computers with internet connection to support women studying, building their computing skills or needing to access Centrelink, MyGov etc online. The WRC has a private office area where women can arrange to meet with other service providers if they feel anxious or unsafe to attend at another location. Our open door policy also means that the WRC is one of the very few places consistently available to women in any form of crisis or distress where they can actually connect with someone for immediate assistance or just human contact. Other equipment includes self-defence equipment, PA, guitars, keyboard, percussion, microphones, speakers, portable projector with screen and shade marquee. WRC also makes available a safe and friendly meeting place with tea and coffee facilities, children's toys etc. The centre has a fully equipped kitchen, a workshop/group space and a backyard with shed for activities as well. Our building is air-conditioned to provide a comfortable workplace environment for staff as well as making the Centre more pleasant for service users. The WRC has become something of a climate sanctuary for women as the increased cost of living has caused them to refrain from using heating and cooling in their own homes as they cannot afford the bills.





### Statistics - Physical Resources

Computers	202
Shower & washing machine (Susan)	38
Photocopier/Scanner (Xena)	99
Telephone	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>371</b>

## WRC USAGE

2022-2023



Vs

2021-2022



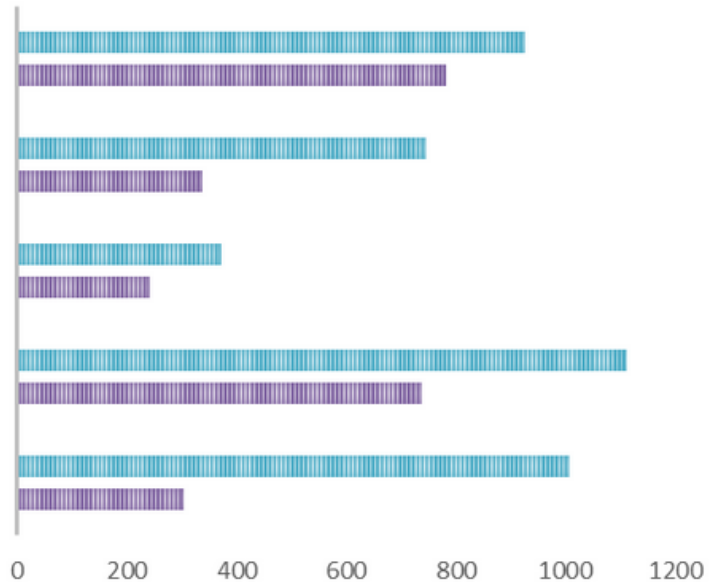
Material assistance inc. blankets, emergency pantry, pantry vouchers, sanitary products, bedding, clothing, food recovery

Drop in - cuppa & a chat

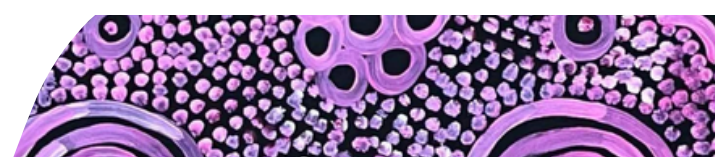
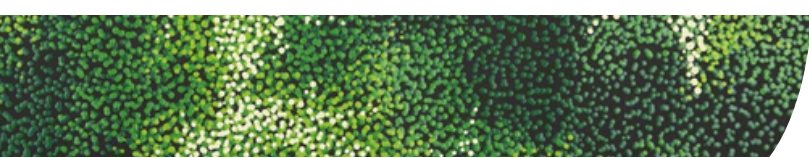
Physical Resources inc. computers, phones, copier, shower, washing machine, library

Information, support &/or referral

Workshop attendance



n.b. the workshop data for the 2022/23 year is significantly higher as the data for the previous year did not contain the attendance numbers for our off-site workshops. It's possible that these numbers were in fact higher as during busy periods we don't always have time to capture data as accurately as we'd like.





## Community workshops, events and activities

WRC believes that social disadvantage can be reduced by working on the causes as well as the symptoms. WRC supports women most affected by their problems to become active agents for change in their lives instead of feeling that they are passive or dependant. Self-help, mutual support, community education and collective action are a big part of WRC strategies. The WRC delivers a comprehensive program of workshops which vary in response to the identified social, educational and personal needs of the women accessing the Centre. The WRC also hosts skill building workshops for our colleagues in the Community Services Sector as well as coordinates and/or collaborates on public events aimed at raising awareness about a range of issues which impact on the lives of women in the Bega Valley.

*Who helps us?*

### **Free Fresh Food Program**

#### **Second Bite**

WRC users have benefited from having access to fresh food at the centre. SecondBite exists to provide access to fresh, nutritious food for people in need across Australia. They do this by rescuing and redistributing surplus fresh food, building community capacity in food skills and nutrition and advocating for an end to food insecurity.

We are grateful to our regular volunteer Marg Broadbent who picks up this donated food from Coles on Wednesday mornings, before WRC opens.



**SecondBite**  
Ending Waste. Ending Hunger.

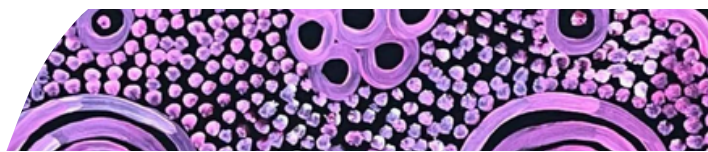
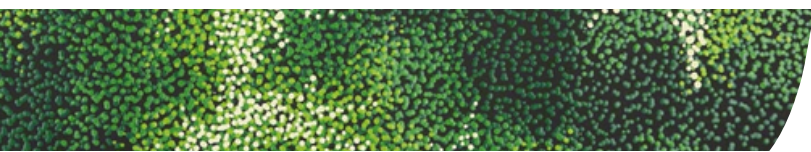
### **Sapphire Community Pantry**

<http://www.sapphirecommunity.org.au/>

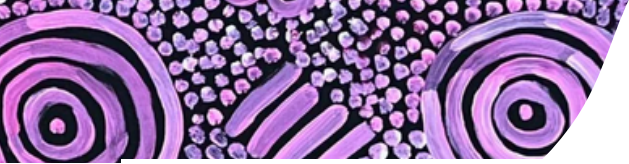
Our good friends and neighbours the Sapphire Community Pantry very generously donates food vouchers for distribution to women in great need of food support. These vouchers are provided to women or families who find themselves in financial hardship and need a little bit more than what is available through our food recovery program or emergency pantry to see them through. We are very grateful to the Sapphire Community Pantry for providing this extra assistance to people who are struggling.



SAPPHIRE  
**COMMUNITY  
PANTRY**  
EST. 2017







**Share the Dignity** <https://www.sharethedignity.org.au/>  
Share The Dignity, a charity which supports women in ensuring that they have access to sanitary and hygiene products, provides regular ongoing assistance to the WRC through the provision of pads, tampons, incontinence products and other hygiene items which we distribute to women in need accessing the centre. Share the Dignity also provide 'Dignity Bags' full of useful necessities which we give out through the year to women who are homeless or in crisis.



**share***thedignity*

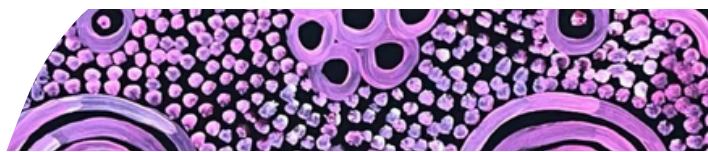
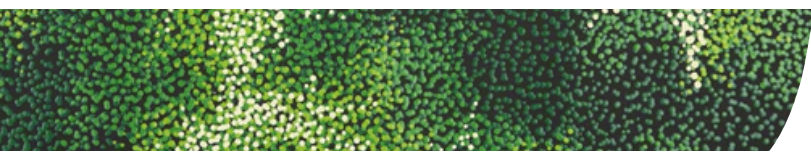
**Two Good Co.** <https://www.twogood.com.au/>  
Following the Bushfires the WRC was approached by Two Good Co. to query the needs of the Bega Valley Community. Since that time Two Good Co have regularly been providing frozen meals and pamper boxes to be given to women in need. The WRC was also honoured with an acknowledgement in the Two Good Cook Book – Recipes for Resilience.

**TWO  
GOOD  
CO.**

**Thread Together** <https://threadtogether.org/>  
Thread Together collects brand new unsold clothing from all around the country, saving it from landfill and partner with charities and social service agencies to distribute it to people doing it tough. The core belief at Thread Together is that people in need deserve the dignity and choice of new clothing, without judgement.

**T** **THREAD  
TOGETHER**

With that mind set Abby from Thread Together reached out to us here at the WRC as a potential charity partner to host one of their crisis clothing wardrobes. For this initiative Thread Together partnered with Ikea to provide host organisations with limited space and storage options, like us, with brand new wardrobes to then be filled with donated items from Thread Together. We are really excited about this new partnership and the additional capacity we now have to support vulnerable women in crisis.



# the Community

## Material assistance and brokerage funds

The WRC continues to receive a wide variety of donations from the broader community in the form of food, bedding, clothing, cash, toiletries, hand-made gifts and blankets. Warm blankets and clothing are often in demand for those suffering from the cold due to being homeless and having to camp out, living in uninsulated properties or being unable to afford heating due to the high cost of gas, electricity and wood. Our thanks go out to the women of the Merimbula Evening View Club, the Pambula Rotary Club and the Pambula Merimbula CWA as well as the numerous individuals who regularly supply us with blankets and other essential items for those in need.

This past financial year the WRC was very grateful to receive additional financial support from the Rotary Club of Pambula, the Bega CWA and the Pambula Merimbula CWA through the provision of funds to be used at our discretion when we have been unable to find other sources of support for women and families in need. The WRC receives no direct funding to provide material or financial assistance for women accessing our services so it has been of enormous impact to our work to have access to the money donated by the Rotary Club of Pambula, the Bega CWA and the Pambula Merimbula CWA to meet the cost of expenses when no other help is available.

The WRC had the very great honour of being selected as the recipients of funds raised by the Tilba CWA from their fabulous High Tea event, a celebration of 100yrs of the CWA in NSW. The event incorporated historical talks and displays, traditional CWA food and craft stalls along with a truly sumptuous 'High Tea' with an array of home-made tasty treats including scones with jam and Tilba cream. The women of the Tilba CWA requested that the funds donated to the WRC used in support of women and children experiencing, fleeing or recovering from domestic violence – a big part of the work that we do on a daily basis.

throughout the year.

## Bega Big W Giving Tree

The WRC was really thrilled to have been selected once again by staff at the Bega Big W store to be the recipients of the donations from their 'Christmas Giving Tree' which allowed us to give the opportunity for vulnerable families to come and select presents for their children. Bega Big W has also provided one off donations of food, clothing, school equipment and cosmetics on several occasions throughout the year.





## What else happens at the WRC?

### International Women's Day 2023

International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated across the world each year on March 8. The day provides an opportunity for the community to recognise the achievements of women and their contribution to society. On this day, women can celebrate the progress that has been made but also contemplate those areas of women's lives where true equality has not yet been achieved.

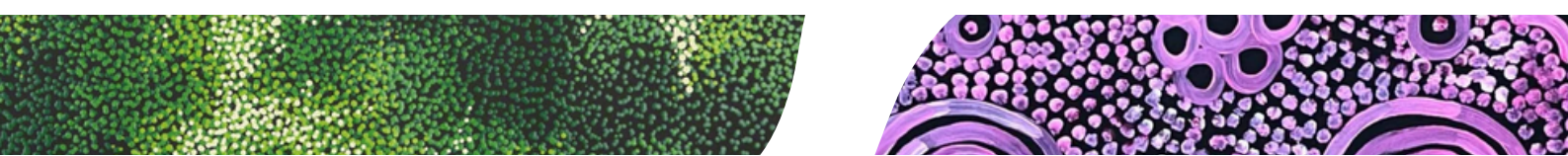
The 2023 International Women's Day theme was 'Cracking the Code: Innovation for a gender equal future' an encouragement for to think about how we can use technology and innovation to provide a voice and accessibility to vulnerable and marginalised women in particular but more broadly in combatting discrimination and gender inequality. At the Bega Women's Resource Centre, we felt this IWD theme was an amazing opportunity to re-visit and update a project from the past which does exactly that.

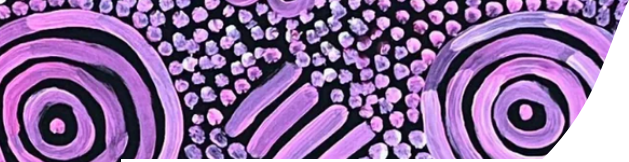


20 years ago Bega Women's Resource Centre Manager Caroline Long envisioned the Bega Koori Women's Voices project to capture the stories and experiences of local Aboriginal women on cassette tape to preserve them for history and the education of future generations.

Now 20yrs on we were able to take that Koori Women's Voices project a step forward by digitising those original cassette tapes, making the contents safer and more accessible. This also provided a means of bringing the wisdom and experience along with the humour and humanity of three amazing Aboriginal women to the broader community. Copies of the digitised recordings were then provided to family members, the Local Aboriginal Land Councils and the Bega Valley Library. Copies will also be sent to the National Archives as well as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

On March 8th, International Women's Day, the WRC hosted a morning tea at the Bega CWA Hall where we launched the digitised recording and had the chance to speak with one of the women whose voice had been captured 20yrs ago about her experiences then and the importance of continuing to push for women, particularly Indigenous women, to be heard.





## IATO Tax Help

Volunteer Judy Grasby receives training from the Australian Tax Office to support and help low income earners and disadvantaged people to prepare and lodge their tax returns on-line. Tax Help is a national, free and confidential service provided by volunteers in a community centre such as the WRC in Bega.

## Bega Valley Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Committee

The WRC convenes the Bega Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Committee meetings which are held bi-monthly. The Committee's key strategy is conveying the message 'Say No to Violence'. This community awareness message started over 20yrs ago and has continued with the use of bumper stickers, street signs, purple silicon wristbands, postcards, greeting cards, NO Never Not On posters, YOU can say no to violence post-it notes and Say NO to Violence coasters and t-shirts. In addition to funding from the Local Domestic and Family Violence Committee Grants the committee conducts events and fundraisers throughout the year to raise the funds it uses to continue to promote its message to the community.

The Bega Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Committee membership is broadly represented by local services including the Women's Resource Centre (WRC), Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV), Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS), Sapphire Neighbourhood Services Inc, GSAHS Sexual Assault Service, South East Women and Children's Services (SEWACS), Mission Australia Homelessness Service, NSW Police, Centrelink, Housing NSW, NSW Police and the community. These services work together to develop community-based strategies which target the elimination of violence in the Bega Valley.

In 2022 the primary awareness raising event was the launch of some new awareness raising campaign tools which was hosted for us by Club Bega. The Committee launched a new set of new set of 'Bega Valley Says No to Violence' coasters going out to venues across the Bega Valley with the intention of sparking conversations among patrons about the types of behaviours which are common in abusive relationships as well as the qualities we see in healthy and happy relationships.

The Committee also created a new mobile public banner which will be hosted by various businesses around the Bega Valley. The banner message 'See Something? Say Something! Do something about ending domestic and family violence' is designed to remind us all that we all have a responsibility to address domestic violence.





### Work Development Orders

SWG and WRC are approved to offer Work and Development Orders (WDO) placements. WDO's allow eligible people who have a mental illness, intellectual disability or cognitive impairment; are homeless; have a serious addiction to drugs, alcohol or volatile substances or who are experiencing acute economic hardship to satisfy their fines debt by non-monetary means through unpaid work with an approved organisation or by undertaking certain courses or treatment.

### TAFE Community Welfare Students

WRC hosts work experience placements of students undertaking Community Services courses. Community Services courses train students to gain employment in the community services industry in a range of positions. WRC hosted Cheryl Robinson who undertook placement hours for the Cert III in Disability Services.

### Victim's Services Counsellor

At a time when there was no capacity to refer women to a Victim's Services Counsellor due to the only approved psychologist in the area having had to close her books the WRC reached out to see if there was any way we could address the issue. The counsellor had been unable to take on any new referrals due to not being able to find suitable office space for seeing clients. The WRC made the offer of using our small office space on Fridays which was accepted and in turn we have been able to refer a number of vulnerable women into that service.

### Women's Health Week 5th – 11th September 2022

The WRC coordinated a comprehensive program of workshops, activities and information sessions targeting a broad range of Women's Health issues over the course of Women's Health Week 2022. In total we had 17 workshops and 86 workshop participants over the course of the week. Workshops included trauma informed movement/relaxation, impacts of chronic stress on back health, heart health for women, cervical screening information session, art therapy for self-care, guided meditation, the importance of breast screening and how to love your liver among others. The overwhelming feedback from participants was that the sessions were interesting, informative and fun. Participants also loved the colourful Women's Health Week show bags provided by 'Jean Hailes for Women's Health' which were filled by WRC volunteers with a variety of health information, promotional materials and goodies donated for the event.



# Our work raising in Community awareness

## Bega Valley Says NO to Violence

WRC in conjunction with the Bega Valley Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Committee continued to reinforce messages about positive behaviours and social norms in rejecting violence against women. For over 15yrs the Committee has been promoting the theme the 'Bega Valley Says NO to Violence'. This year the WRC organised the development of three 'pop-up' banners with themed information raising awareness about DFV. The banners are designed to be mobile and easy to erect so that they can be loaned out to businesses, public venues, GP surgeries, schools, banks, café's etc so that they are visible to a broad range of people across the whole Bega Vally Community. These banners have been hosted at a variety of community events and workplaces since their launch with positive feedback from hosts as well as the broader community. Following the successful launch of the Bega Valley Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Committee banners the WRC worked directly with the Bega Multicultural Centre to develop a 'pop-up' banner to address the specific concerns of migrant women that they will lose their visa or be deported from Australia if they report DFV.



## Resource Booklet

Just a Piece of Paper? Making your AVO work for you  
The WRC developed and produced this booklet that contains ideas and suggestions to assist women to maintain the strength that they initially found to obtain the order. The booklet helps women understand their rights and responsibilities in maintaining an effective ADVO. The booklet was updated with the support of Women's Legal Service NSW in November 2017. Over 4000 copies of this booklet have been purchased and distributed within NSW since the update demonstrating that it continues to be a relevant and valuable source of information for women. We are currently exploring funding options to have the booklet updated and re-published with the assistance of the NSW Women's Legal Service.



# International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

November 25 2022 - Bega Valley Women's Safety Forum



We all want women to be safe

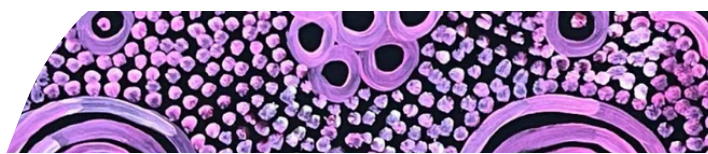
Bega Valley Women's Safety Forum  
11am - 2pm  
Friday November 25th  
Uniting Church, Gipps St Bega  
(BBQ lunch included)

With the support of the DV Committee and working closely with Jo Donovan the Manager of Cultural Inclusion from Southern NSW Local Health District the WRC once again hosted the Bega Valley Women's Safety Forum.

The forum provided an opportunity for services and the community to come together to discuss awareness about DFV, what's currently available, what are the gaps and how do we all support each other in working towards a safer and happier community. The event commenced with speakers providing information about programs, activities and issues related to Women's Safety in the Bega Valley, followed by breakout discussion groups focussing in on some of the root causes and drivers of violence and exploring potential community-driven solutions to deliver safety address them.

We also secured representation from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council to inform the development of the next National Plan to end family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia. The Advisory Council Chair, Sandra Creamer, addressed the forum on the work that needs to be done to eliminate violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait women and children.

The event was really successful with lots of passionate discussion about how we as individuals, families, workplaces, communities and as a society can take action in raising awareness and changing the attitudes that drive gender-based violence and make women unsafe. The ideas and strategies generated in the breakout group discussions were later collated and disseminated to interested parties and will be utilised to inform the work of the WRC and the Domestic Violence Committee. This information was also provided to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council to inform the development of the next National Plan to end family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia and was used as a community consultation report in support of the creation of that plan.



Bonus

initiative identified in the 2021 Bega Valley Women's Safety Forum had been successfully adopted by the Bega Valley Shire Council.

The issue — Many people who work in positions of authority or with vulnerable communities are required to undertake police checks and/or Working With Children's Checks. Why aren't our politicians? As some of the most powerful people in the country, in the states and in our communities, people who are responsible for safeguarding the wellbeing of the people they represent it would seem reasonable to require that they too should be required to be subject to police and working with children's checks to determine their initial fitness to even stand for election. This prompted local BVSC Councillor Karen Wright to request that it become policy that all BVSC Councillors as well as staff are required to undertake both a WWCC and a Police Check in order to be appointed to council. Cr Wright's movement was ultimately successful.

we learnt just before the forum that an

Good on BVSC for being proactive and setting a standard on WWCC which is in line with community expectations - another demonstration of Bega Valley innovation!  
And a great big THANK YOU to the wonderful Cr Karen Wright who championed this initiative following last year's Bega Valley Women's Safety Forum at the WRC 🙏🙏🙏  
I am looking forward to this years Forum next Friday to see what we can achieve next ❤️🙌

the face of someone who got children's checks mandate Councillors in Council policy

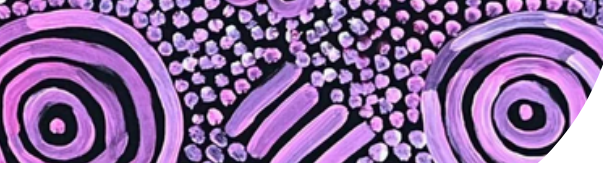
Cr. Karen Wright · Follow  
17 November 2022 · 🌐

**1.4.2.1 Elected Council**  
The Council will uphold and promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the community. The elected body will also complete and submit a Working With Children Check (WWCC).  
**A motion was moved by Crs Porter (no seconder)**  
That Council delete the last sentence in Policy 4.16, Item 1.4.2.1 – The elected body will also complete and submit a Working With Children Check (WWCC).  
**A motion was foreshadowed by Crs Wright and Seckold**  
1. That Council adopts the following policy:  
Policy 4.16 Child safe organisation  
2. That the adopted document be published on Council's website  
A Point of order was called by Cr Porter against Cr Wright  
The Mayor ruled that there was no point of order  
The motion was **LOST** (no seconder)  
The foreshadowed motion became the motion and was put to the vote and it was **CARRIED**  
**IN FAVOUR:** Crs Fitzpatrick, Nadin, Griff, Seckold, Allen, O'Neil, Robin and Wright  
**AGAINST:** Cr Porter

# Grant Projects

The WRC relies heavily on accessing grants from Government and Community Foundations as well as assistance from private organisations and philanthropic trusts to be able to continue our work for the Bega Valley Community. Here are a few of the significant projects we've undertaken with this assistance.





## Catholic Emergency Relief Australia (CERA)

Women's Medicine Garden and Meeting Place – ongoing  
The 'Women's Medicine Garden and Meeting Place' project will provide opportunities for women to gather, garden, develop new skills, meet new people, engage in creative activities, increase their self-confidence and reduce isolation.

Women engaging in the building and creation of the garden and meeting space will learn gardening,

mosaicking, paving, concrete paver making, furniture making, how to use medicinal herbs and a range of other practical skills.

When complete the medicine garden and meeting place will provide opportunities to gather, connect and enjoy the chance to meet and talk with other women in a safe, nurturing and welcoming space.

The space will also provide an avenue for future workshops around gardening, women's wellbeing, cooking with home grown produce, using plants and herbs for health as well as a venue for discussions around women's health issues, good nutrition, stress management strategies and the importance of physical activity.

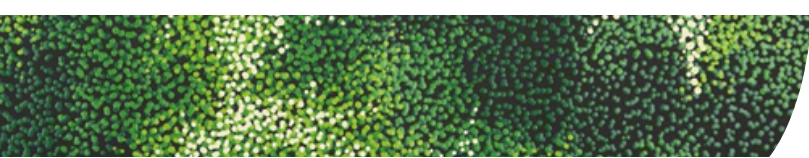
Creating this space in front of our premises will also increase the accessibility and visibility of the Women's Resource Centre and ties in with the idea of women proudly claiming space in our community rather than feeling that we can only be valued, respected and safe when we are behind locked doors.

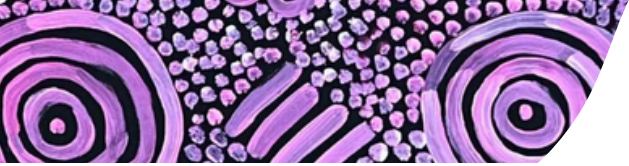


## NB Gantner Family Trust

### WRC Service Capacity

The WRC has been incredibly fortunate to have been donated funds by the NB Gantner Family Trust. The funds were donated specifically to the WRC to support us in providing services to vulnerable women in the Bega Valley. Given the increasing demands on the service and the community in general we elected to use these funds to open the WRC for an additional day per week and to employ an additional support worker, Nalla Bourke, for one day per week to assist the manager in meeting the needs of women accessing the centre. Nalla's assistance during her time with the WRC has been invaluable and allowed for the progression of a number of projects which had been stalled due to lack of time or ability to focus on them. It also freed up the WRC Manager to work on writing grant applications in search of additional funding.





## Mumbulla Foundation - Recovery Sanctuary

The WRC Recovery Sanctuary project was developed with the intention of providing the women of the Bega Valley with an accessible, trauma informed space on the grounds of the WRC. The people of the Bega Valley are living in the aftermath of significant trauma. The impacts over the last several years of drought, flood, fire and pandemic have compounded one upon the other until we have found ourselves in a state of disaster fatigue as an entire community. Having community-based spaces designed specifically with trauma recovery in mind not only provide opportunities for healing but also serve as a reminder that 'help-seeking' is ok, that needing to take time out to build or recover your resilience is a normal and in fact necessary action. Once established the Recovery Sanctuary will be a space that women can access which is designed to provide opportunities for grounding and mindfulness which are essential in supporting people to heal from trauma. The Recovery Sanctuary will also provide a space where we can deliver regular workshops teaching women techniques which can assist with their individual trauma recovery journeys. For assistance with this project we successfully applied to the Mumbulla Foundation to access one of their community grants to pay for workshop facilitators and to purchase materials needed for the creation of the Recovery Sanctuary space. The project is expected to be completed in early 2024 with plans for a formal opening in March.

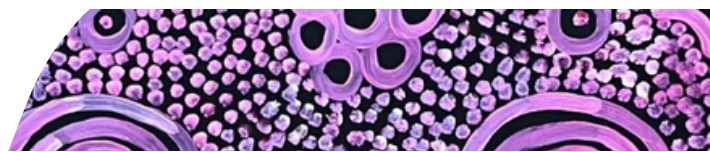
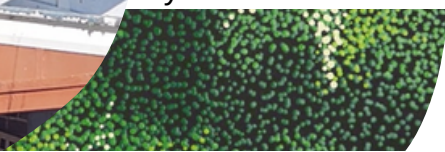


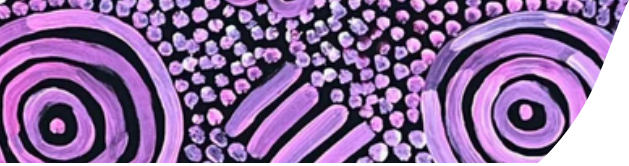
## Community Builders -Centre Sustainability

Here at the WRC as we are impacted by the same cost of living pressures as the rest of the community – increased rent, power, insurances etc – but we do not get any additional funding to offset these costs. As we have to pay our bills just like everyone else this means that the only area in which we can possibly reduce our costs is actually in service delivery. At a time when we were seeing increased demand on our services and more need in the community reducing our services was simply not an option we wanted to



have to contemplate. In a bid to try to find any opportunity to reduce costs we applied for funds to install solar through the Community Builders funding and our application was endorsed by our local State Government Member Dr Michael Holland. This application was ultimately successful and the WRC now has a solar system!





## Volunteer Grants

### Toolbox Training

Some time ago the WRC was successful in getting a Commonwealth Volunteers Grant to provide training to support our SWG and WRC volunteers in their work. With these funds we were able to pay for a specific targeted training program to be developed for us by the Centre for Community Welfare Training – Volunteer Toolbox Training. The training was delivered to volunteers undertaking a number of different roles at the WRC including SWG Committee Members, 'Meet & Greet' volunteers and workshop facilitators. All participants reported that the training was extremely valuable and that they got a lot out of the sessions. We hope to be able to offer similar sessions in the future.



## Future Directions

In 2022-2023 the WRC will continue to:

- Upgrade the facilities and equipment made available to women and community groups accessing the service
- Support staff and volunteers to maintain skills by attending valuable professional training as well as supporting the local welfare community by organising and hosting training events
- Develop partnerships with local groups, agencies and organisations for the betterment of women and young women in the Bega Valley Shire and surrounding areas.
- Respond to the needs of women in the community by running a diverse range of interesting workshops and support groups
- Operate an effective service that acts as a hub for information, resources and referral
- Address issues that negatively impact on the women and children of the Bega Valley
- Challenge inequality, disadvantage and discrimination
- Lobby for the funding we need to sustain this vital community service





# South Coast

## Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service





7 COURTS

4 Offices

1 Co- location Police Station

*Total number of Referrals serviced*

THREAT LEVEL REFERRALS 2865

540

Serious Threat Level Referrals





20223 Referrals  
MADE

441 HEARINGS

Supports  
Provided 9477

1198 VICTIM  
SERVICES  
CLAIMS

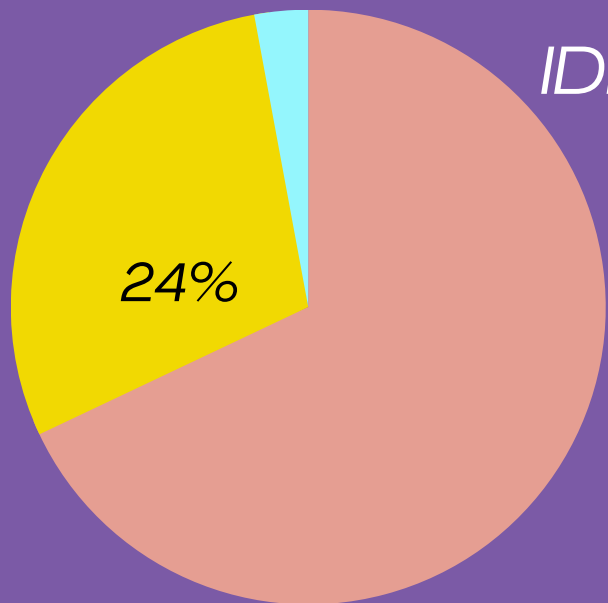
497 FINAL  
ORDERS  
MADE

SUPPORTS FOR  
ACCOMADATION 1253



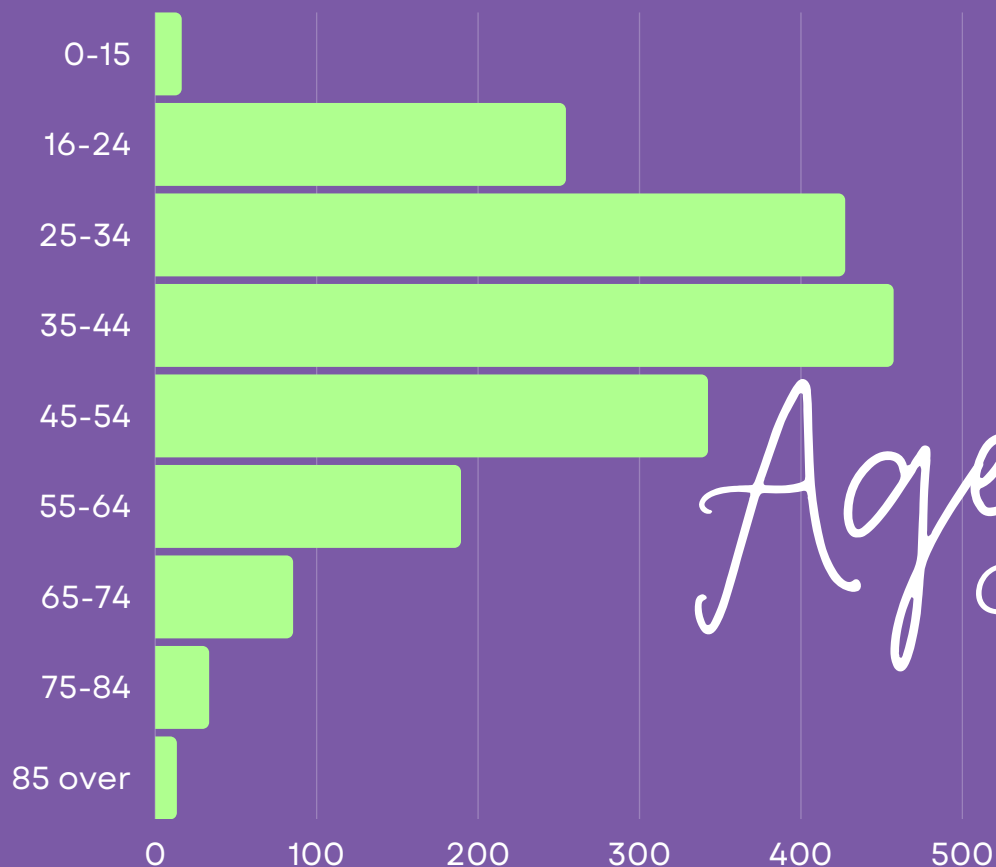


## IDENTIFIED ABORIGINAL OR TSI PEOPLES



- NO
- YES
- NOT STATED

2047 Multicultural Clients  
8 of which are on Temporary Visa's



*Age* OF CLIENTS





4

# Offices

NOWRA . ULLADULLA . MORUYA . BEGA



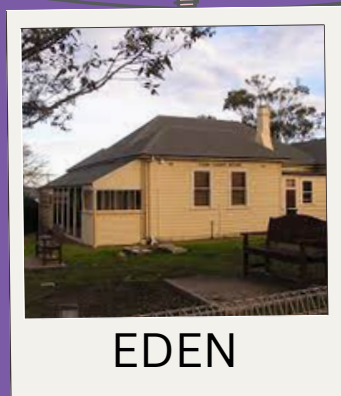
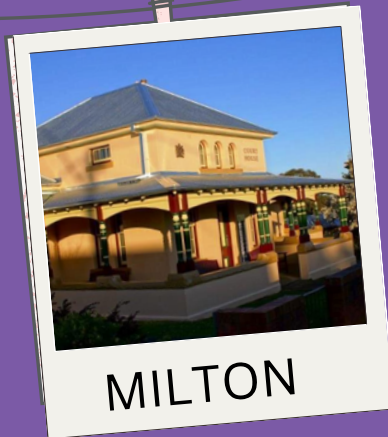
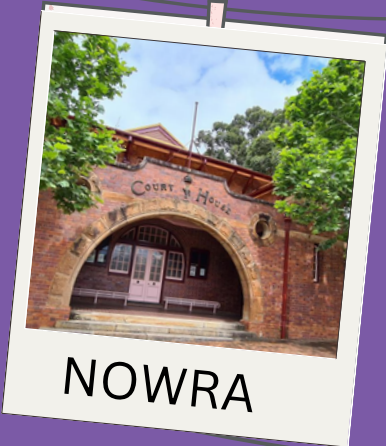
# Co-Location

NOWRA POLICE STATION





# 7 COURTS





# Courts

SCWDVCAS continues to attend each list day and service 7 courts in total. Every woman is contacted prior to court when the CRP referral is received to assist with safety planning and identify support needs.


SCWDVCAS make contact again with women the day before court to discuss the provisional AVO and ascertain if the conditions will work for their family. During these conversations, women are encouraged to attend court for first mentions with the support of our SCWDVCAS court staff.

If clients decide not to attend court, the presence of the court worker remains vital to ensure that the women's wishes are considered by the police prosecutor and to

Hearing matters, workers attend a majority of these proceedings. Often police have been unable to contact a victim prior to the hearing, workers have been able to fill this gap by ensuring clients are prepared for the hearing and alleviating additional stress. This process has assisted in providing a supportive and client-centred approach to court service delivery and as a result more women are attending hearings.

SCWDVCAS currently have safe rooms accessible in a majority of courts. Workers encourage women to access these spaces, and this contributes to women's willingness to attend court. Narooma Court often poses an issue as there is no safe room which then requires a second worker to support the women outside of court were the perpetrators are also seated. Our staff need to be creative with their support.

Batemans Bay court is introducing circle sentencing to the area and the SCWDVCAS Aboriginal Focus worker will be reaching out to the Aboriginal community justice group to offer consultations about how Aboriginal women can be supported by this process and ideally contribute to lowering male reoffending.



# Our Team

KYLIE

MANAGER



"Family and domestic violence is such a grave violation of our human rights, I am so fortunate to work alongside a team of passionate, resilient, and highly skilled individuals who support women to live safely without fear, abuse, coercion and

violence. I am grateful to work from an inclusive, empowering, feminist perspective and will continue to advocate for a culture that is free from discrimination, where all women and children matter.

"

SAM

ASSISTANT MANAGER



"I consider myself lucky to be employed in a feminist organisation that values both my personal and professional development. The organisation is also committed to supporting our intelligent and fearless team while we encourage and uplift women and children at any stage of their journey. I feel incredibly grateful to hear the inspiring stories of the women we work with."



SARAH T

SAFETY ACTION MEETING  
CO-ORDINATOR

“Women have the right to be heard, to be believed and to be validated in their experiences. It is a privilege to be in a position to offer this to women at some of the most vulnerable times in their lives - that is why I do this work. “



JUDY

DFV SPECIALIST WORKER-  
ABORIGINAL FOCUSED

I love my work because of our clients I enjoy doing community work and spreading the word about Family and Domestic Violence.

SARAH B

DFV SPECIALST WORKER

“Being a witness to women reclaiming some power and self-love, in a system that often works against them, is why I do the work I do. Its such a privilege to feel inspired by the women I support”



APRIL

DFV SPECIALST WORKER

My work with WDV CAS is meaningful because it allows me to support people who are impacted by power dynamics and embedded inequalities that occur on social and cultural levels. Magic can flow from the simple reminder that we all have the right to feel safe.



EMMA

DFV SPECIALIST WORKER

‘Every day I come to work I am surrounding by intelligent, strong, caring women, supporting women. We support not only our clients but each other!’





BEC

## SAFETY ACTION MEETING CO-ORDINATOR

'I am incredibly proud of the work I do to support and advocate for women and children impacted by DFV. I choose to sow seeds of hope and positive change, just as other strong and healed women have done for me. I choose to trust and believe in the intrinsic strength of women to recognise their worth and strength and hold this hope for all women. I believe that if women can survive abuse, they can absolutely survive recovery. I admire the beautiful individuals I work with and am inspired by their passion and bravery. This is a purposeful role that I feel privileged to have.'



AMANDA

## DFV SPECIALIST WORKER

I do this job because I want to give women support and empower them to take the first steps to leave a violent relationship by showing them that they have support and there are organisations out there that will help them through the whole journey. I love being the first person a woman discloses too, as it shows that we have trust, they feel safe with us and they know we are here to help them



SARAH H

DFV SPECIALIST WORKER

I love working as a DFV specialist because we can support women at every stage – whether it is supporting them directly at court or just providing an initial phone call to let them know they are not alone and we will be here whenever they are ready to talk.

JEN

DFV SPECIALIST WORKER

It's a privilege to work in a space where we are supporting and keeping women safe in the community which is something I'm extremely passionate about. I work alongside incredibly talented women who I learn from daily and I feel respected and valued within the organisation.



MANDA

DFV SPECIALIST WORKER

"I love my Job because it allows me to use my skills and talents to make a difference in the world"



NOWRA · ULLADULLA · MORUYA · BEGA



# Case Managers

JESSIE

DFV CASE MANAGER  
BEGA VALLEY

I enjoy working with women to create better outcomes and opportunities for them and their children to escape violence. I also enjoy advocating and creating relationships in the community to work together with other stakeholders to reduce and eliminate domestic violence in The Bega Valley.



RACHEL

DFV CASE MANAGER EUROBOODALLA

What I love about my role and working for WDVCS is as a case manager here, I have the opportunity to work with and hold the women through their journey, irrespective of the length of time this takes.



JADE

DFV CASE MANAGER  
SHOALHAVEN

I feel privileged when women allow us into their lives during some of their hardest days. I love we can offer practical support to navigate an overwhelming system and that our workers are well supported by WDVCS while doing that!



NOVRA . ULLADULLA . MORUYA . BEGA



# Our Community

SCWDVCAS are continuing to prioritise service visits within the entire catchment. These visits provide an opportunity for our staff to discuss the operations of WDVCAS as well as what domestic violence might look like within the community. We provide resources and referral pathways to ensure services can provide a fast, consistent response to their clients. We have been identifying emerging trends within several sectors and focusing on these services which have included GPs, CWA, Childcare Centres and a church. Our hope is to expand this in the next reporting period.



## Tracing Ancestors for Mob State Library

In collaboration with Bega Valley Shire Library and the State Library, a two-day workshop was held at the Bega Commemorative Civic Centre in Bega. It involved finding out what the state library has on local and state-wide Aboriginal History and learning how to scan documents and photos. The community also got to see the Tindale maps.

# 2023 Annual Colour Run Youth Against DFV

Another Successful Partnership for SCWDVCAS and the Eurobodalla Local Council's Annual Colour Run Over 500 people attended this year, which was once again organised by SCWDVCAS in collaboration with the Eurobodalla Local Council. The event provided a platform for local services and community members to come together and raise awareness about this important issue. By designing the t-shirts with anti-violence messages, students from the Love Bites program played a vital role in promoting healthy relationships and spreading the message that domestic violence is never acceptable.



# 2023 Annual *Colour Run* Youth Against DFV

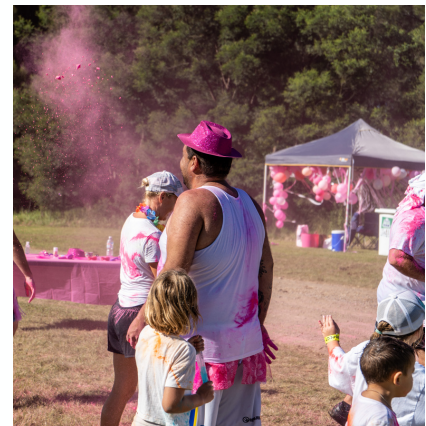


The different colours used in the run also served as a visual representation of the support available in the local area for those affected by domestic violence, with each NGO or Local Police having their own colour. The event's success is a testament to the power of collaboration between local organisations and the community to promote positive change.





# 2023 Annual Colour Run Youth Against DFV



# Project work with *South East Regional Hospital*




The collaborative project that was established between SERH Aboriginal Health, the Emergency Department Social Work (ED SW) service and SCWDVCAS continues to foster connection and healing for local Aboriginal women through the development of the Indigenous edible community garden.

## NAIDOC 2023

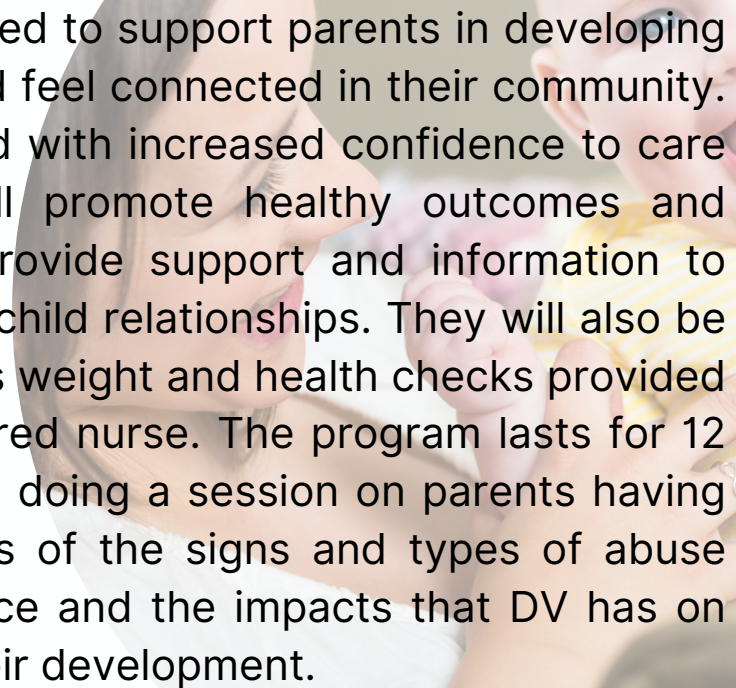


Bega Lands Council held this year's NAIDOC day on the 7th of July. A great turnout and a great way to network with services that we may not come across in our everyday practices. We participated in a smoking ceremony as well as watching a film by a local elder who was a 2022 Caines winner called "Mother Mountain".



## Playability, Mums and Bubs Bega Valley: Campbell Page, Katungul, Playability and WDV CAS

This program was initiated to support parents in developing their parenting skills and feel connected in their community. They will be empowered with increased confidence to care for their babies. It will promote healthy outcomes and lifestyle choices and provide support and information to help strengthen parent-child relationships. They will also be able to have their baby's weight and health checks provided each week by a registered nurse. The program lasts for 12 weeks. WDV CAS will be doing a session on parents having an increased awareness of the signs and types of abuse around domestic violence and the impacts that DV has on children's brains and their development.



# Sorry Day

## Headspace Bega

WDV CAS attended with numerous services and school children through the Bega Valley to come together to remember and acknowledge the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were forcibly removed from their families and communities.



# Lifeline

Sunrise walk to raise awareness for suicide prevention



Lifeline South Coast had its community connections roadshow to help raise awareness about suicide prevention. It was brought about due to the bush fires, floods, and Covid 19.

## Tracing Ancestors for Mob

### Tracing Ancestors for Mob State Library

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# Eden

## Canoe Project

Eden Canoes project has a vision for a pathway towards hope through listening, virtue, skills and shared opportunity. The group that Jessie our Bega Caseworker and I observed, cemented the belief that conversations and healing can arise from sharing a mutual, hands-on task.

Eden Canoes employs 5 Aboriginal mentors from the local area to help facilitate the canoe project and yarn with program attendees. The project fosters a shared pride and enables mentorship and healing through culture.

An aboriginal mentor shared with Jessie and Judy the story that she had painted on her canoe. She had suffered immense grief and loss and was able to share her story through aboriginal painting on her canoe. This enabled her to not only share her story her way but also heal and process her trauma.

Most of the attendees at the Eden Canoe project on the day were children of domestic and family violence.







# International Womens Day

This year SCWDVCAS celebrated International Women’s Day by hosting an afternoon tea award ceremony for one of our local Aboriginal Elders who was presented with an IWD award. This award was presented by our local member, Dr Michael Holland.

Our team once again presented a Social Media campaign for this year’s theme of #Embrace Equity. We had such a variety of responses from our community with even our Police Prosecutor and local member of parliament all taking part.



# Batemans Bay Public School

## Outreach Program

Sarah B has continued the successful partnership with Batemans Bay Primary School (BBPS) wellbeing unit. The wellbeing unit has worked with WDV CAS to seek advice around safety options for women and children, safety planning, AVO understanding and information sharing (with consent) between WDV CAS and the school.

BBPS has the highest number of families impacted by domestic and Family violence in the Eurobodalla and recognises that this is having a significant impact on children's safety and their capacity for learning in the school environment.

There is an emerging trend of mothers who are being restricted from accessing service support by perpetrators but are accessing the BBPS wellbeing workers and disclosing incidents of domestic and family violence.

Many of these families are clients of WDV CAS but may not be engaging with the service. BBPS encourage engagement with WDV CAS and assists with information sharing and discussion of safety options.



# Thrive

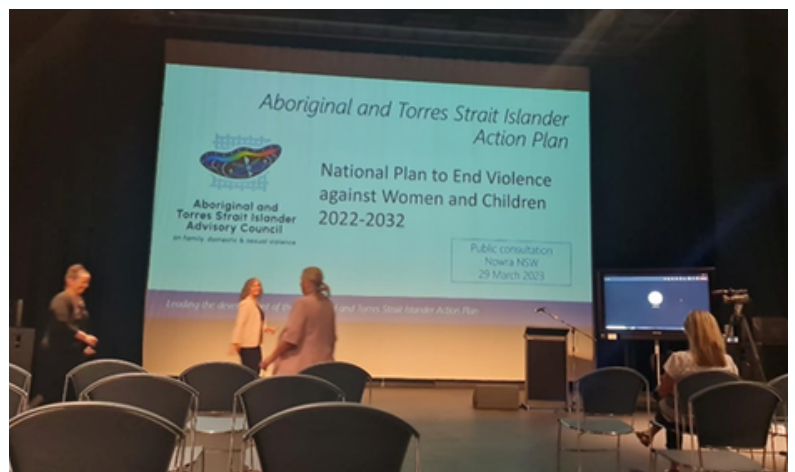
Together fair

Nowra



SCWDVCAS participated in the Thrive Together Fair hosted by Shoalhaven City Council. The Fair is an opportunity for people doing it tough to connect with financial, housing, legal, government, physical and mental health and wellbeing support under one roof. The day was a great success for our Team to connect with the community and other services and spread the word about Domestic and family violence.

## Aboriginal and TSI Action Plan



# Case Management

This funding has allowed SCWDVCAS to recruit three skilled employees to cover case management over the three Local Government areas within our catchment. The funding has given significant benefits to women who have experienced DFV by enhancing SCWDVCAS's ability to provide effective,

wrap-around support to women with complex needs who are in crisis. This has allowed an opportunity for SCWDVCAS to enhance the ability to provide effective, wrap-around support to women with complex needs who are in crisis due to domestic violence. The seamless transition from DFV specialist worker to

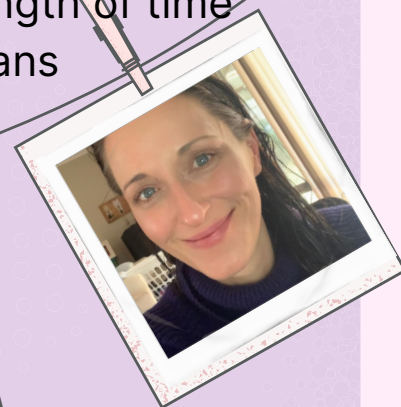
case management all within the same service has ensured women are not subjected to the processes of another service and having to retell their stories. This reduces trauma as well as the possibility of non-engagement. Clients will usually average a total of three months with specialised case management assistance.

However complex court proceedings and length of time to access appropriate housing products means that some clients are supported for a longer period of time.

# 73

**Clients supported in case management**

**... so far!!**





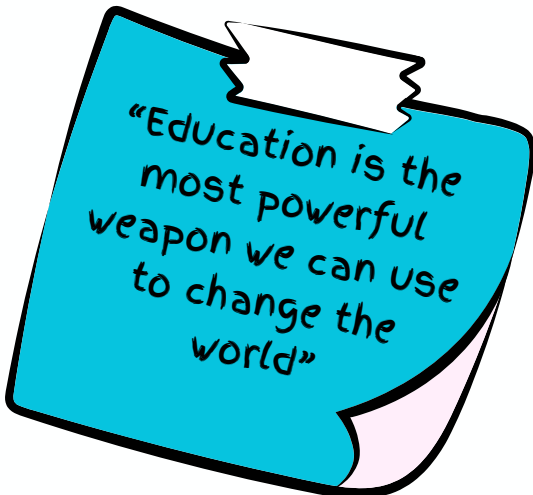
Continuous

# Education

During this reporting period, SCWDVCAS has focused on our professional development by attending training and workshops. Our team has started the Safe and Together 4-day model and will continue to complete this throughout the next reporting period.

Other training this reporting period completed,

- SAM training
- Blue Knot Diversity Masterclass
- Recognising and responding to elder abuse
- DV alert
- Window of Tolerance
- Victims Services training
- Responding Effectively to People who have experienced sexual Violence
- Blue Knot Diversity Masterclass
- DV and child protection



“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world”





# Feedback

‘THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR PHONE CALL TODAY.

ALTHOUGH IT WAS EMOTIONAL,  
IT WAS VERY COMFORTING TO HAVE SOMEONE  
REACH OUT AND HAVE MY THOUGHTS VALIDATED.

IN CASE YOU HAVE NOT BEEN TOLD TODAY,

YOU ARE DOING A VERY IMPORTANT JOB.’

“Yesterday marked 12 months since Michael was arrested and the first ADVOs were put in place. **I’m so proud of how far my kids and I have come in one year!**


Thank you for all you did to support and help us...I honestly don’t think I’d be where I am if it wasn’t for you! The police were awesome but half the time I didn’t know what they were talking about or the ramifications of what was happening, also I was terrified! You were so calm and kind through it all, from the initial phone calls to making my statement and the court appearance, even now knowing that you’re in court should Michael challenge the ADVOs is reassuring. **You helped me more than I think you’ll ever know...I’ll never forget what you’ve done for my kids and I.”**

Thank you for all your help and support. While I am going through a difficult time in my life and feeling lost

***you have always helped me, guided me, listened to me and made me see no matter how bad the moment*** is that we are going through, everything will be fine.

Amanda was so welcoming and guided me in what will come next. The work of WDVCS helps women find a light when we only see darkness and that makes all the more difference.

Thank you again and again. Gratitude.



# How Can You Help?

Donate



Become a  
Volunteer



Apply to Join  
Our Board



Support an  
event or  
fundraiser



[www.southernwomensgroup.org.au](http://www.southernwomensgroup.org.au)



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