

2023 - 2027

Our 5 year Strategic Plan

'Helping build lives free of violence.'

dvcs |

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

02 62 800 900

A message from our CEO Sue Webeck

The Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) has a proud history in the ACT, taking its first crisis call in 1988. Like many frontline domestic violence agencies DVCS is built on a feminist framework, centering its clients in the core of what we do and specifically their safety.

The last almost 40 years has seen significant growth and change in our understanding of domestic, family and intimate partner violence as well as the way we respond to it. This is true across the sector and for us all as a Nation. As tragic events have been broadcast across the news and media the broader community has rightly asked questions and pushed the Nation and Governments to respond. This in turn has changed the way services including DVCS operate while still maintaining our core values of being client led.

DVCS has incorporated service delivery during this time to include responding to all members of our community experiencing domestic, family and intimate partner violence, as well as working with those who perpetrate violence to be accountable and cease their use of violence. This work must be collaborative, connected and engaged with the broader service sector, and centered on the clients we work with and their experiences. We know not everyone has access to services when they experience violence in their lives, or use violence, and as such our efforts must focus on capacity building for the agencies we work with, as well as the community more broadly.

Our greatest hope in supporting our community to live lives free from violence is to ensure we use our knowledge and skills in pursuit of prevention - working to stop violence before it starts. This strategic plan gives us the guidance and framework to do this, to continue the work we do in responding to violence in our community, while working closely with community partners and leveraging our knowledge, skills and insights as a long standing organisation to support prevention.

This seemingly large remit is only made possible by the skills, professionalism and commitment of our diverse workforce. From our Board, to our frontline teams, this strategic plan also centers them as a key focus for our investment and our strategy to achieving better outcomes for the people who access our supports. As we face the many challenges of secure and stable funding, recruitment of a skilled workforce, and ever increasing demand in our community for our services, it is encouraging to have a strategic plan that helps us to maintain our focus on the key purpose of our organisation.

It is an incredible time of change and renewal across the sector, and DVCS is well positioned to ensure the community we exist to serve is centered in those change and renewal processes.

A message from our 2023 Board

DVCS provides a comprehensive and specialist range of services to those impacted by domestic, family and intimate partner violence. It could not do this without the support of government, other community services, the private sector and the community.

DVCS provides a 24/7 service to those in immediate need. This crisis work is at the coalface but is by no means the end of the support. DVCS also provides a men's behaviour change program, specialist women's and children's programs, legal advocacy, court support, and community education and training.

In addition to this specific client-focused work, we engage in systemic advocacy and policy reform. All of this work is informed by working with trauma on a daily basis; this is no small undertaking. This asks a lot of our staff which cannot go unrecognised.

The community sector, including DVCS, is being challenged by the need for its services into our community, the complexity of needs and our ability to respond with agility and sustainability. There continues to be an unrelenting demand for, and uptake of, our programs.

As an organisation DVCS learns and adjusts, doing what it can within its means, always prioritising the needs of clients and their families, to find innovative solutions. It is hard to speak to the breadth of the work that goes on behind the scenes of DVCS, to ensure the deeply necessary services provided to the community function optimally.

The Board is confident in the direction of the organisation and optimistic that this strategic plan will help guide its operations.

‘Helping build lives free of violence.’

DVCS is here to support people build lives free from domestic, family and intimate partner violence and fear. We are committed to breaking the domestic and family violence cycle in the Canberra community. For almost 40 years, we have been providing emergency and long-term support, advice, domestic violence resources, and services.



Our principles:

- **Safety** — We prioritise the safety of victim survivors in every decision and action.
- **Accountable** — We hold people who use violence responsible for their behavior and its impact.
- **Feminist Framework** — We address domestic violence as a gendered issue rooted in power and inequality.
- **Equality** — We advocate for fair access and outcomes for all, regardless of identity or background.
- **Respect** — We listen, uphold dignity, and challenge attitudes that enable violence.

Strategic aim 1 - Enhanced service delivery

Strategic aim 2 - Leaders of sector collaboration

Strategic aim 3 - A sustainable organisation

Strategic aim 4 - A commitment to reconciliation

Strategic aim 5 - Advocacy for action



Strategic aim 1 - Enhanced service delivery

Enhance the agility, sustainability, and consistency of our service delivery in an ever-changing environment.

Our ability to be responsive in rapidly evolving situations is core to the positive outcomes for our clients. We need to enhance this capacity as resourcing and demand pressures increase, and a changing landscape of violence, test our existing governance, funding and operating circumstances. We will deliver on our aim by:

- Advocating for sustainable funding models that allow for testing of new initiatives alongside existing programs.
- Seeking to provide a responsive service delivery offering that can seamlessly shift towards the pressure points as they arise.
- Delivering clients the same high standard of service across the organisation.
- Responding to those impacted by domestic, family and intimate partner violence in flexible ways that meet their individual needs.



Strategic aim 2 - Leaders of sector collaboration

Be leaders in sector collaboration.

Our clients require support from across the service sector, including government and non-government agency responses and social supports, to ensure those seeking services in the ACT are able to be safe, recover and heal. As the ACT's specialist domestic, family and intimate partner violence service, we take initiative in supporting the service sector's understanding and promote an integrated response for clients. We will deliver on our aim by:

- Ensuring people residing in the ACT can access information regarding DVCS easily, in order to facilitate their support needs.
- Supporting DVCS clients to engage with external services that are complementary to their risk, safety plan and support needs.
- Investing in partnerships across the sector that best meet client outcomes.



Strategic aim 3 - A sustainable organisation

Maintain and support our quality workforce.

Our workforce is the foundation of the positive change we make in our community. We must invest in the recruitment, training and retention of staff through quality professional development and learning opportunities. We will deliver on our aim by:

- Recruiting a diverse range of professionals both emerging in their career, and those with significant practice history.
- Ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Providing a workplace that results in fulfilled and engaged staff with access to growth and professional development opportunities.
- Prioritising staff wellbeing through individual and innovative responses that create opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Maintaining adequate funding from government, strong internal financial management and seeking a sustainable and more diverse income base, where possible.
- Investing in systems and processes that facilitate our work and enable a resilient, feminist culture and staff wellbeing.

Strategic aim 4 - A commitment to reconciliation

We take meaningful action towards reconciliation.

Our commitment to reconciliation is at the forefront of our work and our engagements with community. We will deliver on our aim by:

- Leading with our values in ensuring we take meaningful action towards reconciliation, consistent with our Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Pursuing strategies to enhance service offerings to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members; including through strengthened partnerships with local Indigenous service delivery organisations.
- Strengthening our cultural and reconciliation learnings, protocols and activities.



Strategic aim 5 - Advocacy for action

Effect positive and informed change in the public policy domain, as well as responding to the social and cultural drivers which impact domestic, family, and intimate partner violence.

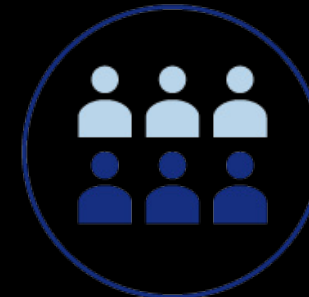
The voice of lived experience informs our advocacy and supports progress towards equitable and responsive support services. We will deliver on our aim by:

- Ensuring awareness of and access to information regarding domestic, family and intimate partner violence as an issue impacting the ACT, nationally and internationally.
- Advocating with the interest of the community at the fore, to influence key government decision makers to actively pursue policy reform and increase financial and human resource investment in preventing and responding to domestic, family and intimate partner violence.

Our services



Advice
& information



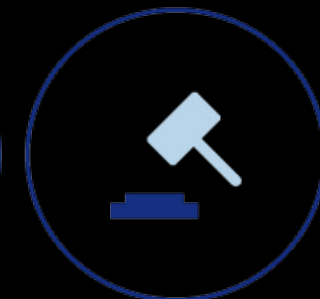
Support
programs



Crisis
intervention



Safety
Planning



Legal support
& advocacy



dvcs |

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02 62 800 900

admin@dvcs.org.au
<https://dvcs.org.au/>