

# Hope for Change

Building Partnerships with Survivors  
and the Community



Annual Report  
**2024-2025**



Domestic Violence  
Prevention Centre  
Gold Coast Inc.



Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc. is located on Kombumerri country and we stand in footsteps millennia old.

We acknowledge the traditional owners, the Kombumerri Saltwater people, whose culture and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture this land, since women and men awoke from the great dream.

We honour the presence of these ancestors who reside in the imagination of this land and whose irrepressible spirituality flows through all creation.

We pay our respects to the Elders of the past and present and look with hope to the leaders of the future.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our country who have made positive contributions to sustaining First Nations People's voice, knowledge and connections.

Ngulungmay nyanyahbu jimbalang.





We acknowledge the strength, courage, and resilience of all people who have experienced domestic and family violence.

We honour those who have died because of domestic and family violence. We recognise the family and friends forever changed by these deaths, and we stand with them in hope and determination for a future free from violence.

Our work is guided by the voices and lived experiences of survivors, and we remain committed to creating lasting change by ending domestic and family violence and all forms of gender-based violence.



# For Emily

This report is dedicated to the memory of Emily Thompson — a vibrant young woman whose life ended too soon.

Emily's story is a heartbreaking reminder of why our work matters, and why we must continue striving for a community where safety, respect, and equality are non-negotiable.

Sunflowers, Emily's favourite flower, feature on our cover in her honour, symbolising the brightness, warmth, and light she brought to those around her. You will see flowers scattered throughout this report as a gentle tribute to her life and to all victim survivors whose stories guide our mission.

We honour Emily, her family, and every person impacted by domestic and family violence. Their courage strengthens our resolve, and their memories continue to drive our commitment to creating lasting change.



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Mike Gilbert, Chair

# CHAIR FOREWORD

that every program we deliver, every partnership we build, and every dollar we raise is more than a statistic; it is a lifeline.

Each year in May our team holds a Candlelight Vigil to recognise and remember victims of domestic and family violence. I had the privilege this year to sit alongside Russ Thompson, an 80-year-old gentleman who had recently walked 80 kilometres over four days in honour of his granddaughter Emily. Emily was a young victim of domestic violence and Russ was kind enough to share how this impacted him, and how it inspired him to set his personal challenge. His personal challenge snowballed into a wonderful event which raised almost \$30,000 and more importantly raised awareness of the services that are established to help in these circumstances. Russ's simple message was "if you need help, reach out and ask". DVPC remains steadfast in its commitment to respond.

In watching our organisation achieve its goals and more this year there are several highlights I believe worthy of drawing attention:

It is my great privilege to present this year's Chair's report. This year has been one of resilience, growth, and unwavering commitment to our mission. DVPC Gold Coast has continued to strengthen its role as a leader in the domestic and family violence sector, delivering critical services and expanding our reach to meet the needs of women and children in crisis.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team, our partners, and our supporters. Your passion and perseverance have enabled us to achieve remarkable milestones during the past year.

My first year as Chair of DVPC Gold Coast has reminded me why our work matters so deeply. I have witnessed numerous stories of courage—women and children taking their first steps toward safety and independence. These moments reaffirm

- We have strengthened service delivery: From July 2025, we received a 20% uplift in core funding, enabling us to expand our workforce by seven full-time roles.
- We delivered on the Safe Haven Project: We rapidly deployed a \$30,000 grant from Queensland Gives which provided emergency accommodation and relocation assistance to women and children escaping domestic violence. A lifeline for victim survivors where having a safe haven means they can start to regain their independence and rebuild their lives.
- We utilised the DFV Rent Assist Brokerage Fund and more: \$45,000 in targeted funding helped clients at risk of homelessness maintain or access housing, and DVPC utilised some prior year reserves to address what remains one of the Gold Coast's largest challenges.
- We expanded the Embedded DFV Specialist Pilot: Our presence in police stations grew from two to four locations, with the success of these pilots ensuring a five-year extension was secured for Coomera and Southport.
- We delivered on the Holding Hope Creating Change Program: We launched this evidence-based early-intervention initiative for young people aged 8–12 to break cycles of violence and harmful behaviours exhibited towards their mothers or primary female care giver.

This year we have purposefully given increased attention to the role our local community can play in the sector's mission.

In addition to the efforts of Russ and his family I mentioned earlier, our community demonstrated extraordinary generosity. A few notable examples include:

- Broadbeach Robina Cricket Club's inaugural Women's Charity High Tea supported DVPC.
- A \$5,000 donation from the Burleigh Bowls Women's League, which strengthened our programs.
- And we partnered for the first time with the Gold Coast Marathon, which provided a few inspirational stories of support from individual runners.

All in all, fundraising efforts across the community provided an extra \$160,000 which we were able to dedicate as direct services to the women and children we support.

As Helen Keller aptly stated, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."



As a Board, while super focused on good governance, we are also very driven to ensure the organisational and financial health of the association remains robust. An almost \$1.75m combined increase this past year in both government grants and community support has allowed us to reinvest both in the organisation and its team.

Significant organisational advancements this past year include:

- Implementation of the Flexible Work and IT Upgrade Project, transitioning to Microsoft Teams Calling for enhanced cybersecurity and continuity. This was particularly significant when we had to implement our Business Continuity Plan during Cyclone Alfred.
- Our team growth and support from Zupp Property Group has enabled us to expand premises and now provide dedicated space for our business support team.

Given our increased service delivery this past year, and the challenging nature of the work undertaken by our team, it is vitally important we continue to do what we can to attract high calibre team members.

Maintaining the respected profile of the organisation is critical, and DVPC Gold Coast proudly takes a leadership role in the domestic and family violence sector.

During the year we hosted several key events, including the Candlelight Vigil, a DV Prevention Month Breakfast with over

250 delegates, and the QDVSN June meeting. Our CEO, Lucy Gregory, also received the Community Dedication Award at the Gold Coast Women in Business Awards.

We are deeply grateful to our sponsors, partners, and donors whose generosity and collaboration make our work possible. Your support ensures that we can continue to provide life-changing services and create safer communities for all.

Looking ahead to the coming year, the organisation aims to take another leap forward with the launch of its refreshed strategic plan. Built from the ground up, the strategic planning process gave us the opportunity to canvass ideas from all team members in the organisation and harness the collective wisdom of all who tackle challenges on the front line. The strategic plan will set the direction for the coming five years and provide a roadmap to ensure the organisations aims and objectives remain focused on the women and children who matter most.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all involved for your dedication and support this past year. Our achievements are a testament to what we can accomplish when we work together. Let us move forward with hope, courage, and determination to create lasting change.

**Mike Gilbert**  
**Chair**



Lucy Gregory, CEO

# CEO REPORT

Hope.

It is a word, a feeling and oftentimes a lifeline.

And it always comes up when I am in conversations about our work.

Hope is what we cling to in the darkest of times, hope for safety is reflected in the words of survivors when they reach out to us, hope is in the child survivors that they will be the generation that does not perpetuate gender based violence, hope is what we see in the men who work with us, working towards change.

This past year, we have had a year of hope through growth, of new beginnings and of challenges.

It has been a year of growing our partnerships with the people we serve, hosting focus groups, surveys, narrative projects, groups and face to face conversations in the spirit of true learning. DVPC has become an active seeker of wisdom from those who use our services, from those who know what it means to be a survivor of gender-based violence.

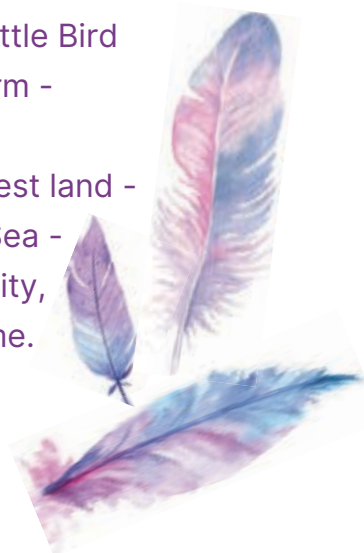
## “Hope” is the thing with feathers

By Emily Dickinson

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -  
And sore must be the storm -  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm -

I’ve heard it in the chilliest land -  
And on the strangest Sea -  
Yet - never - in Extremity,  
It asked a crumb - of me.



We have worked to hear the voice, the wisdom and the advice of those most marginalised by our society. The women who have been wrongly labelled as perpetrators of domestic and family violence and who had their victim survivor experience denied by the system purportedly there to protect them. We have heard the pain, the fear and the anger at systems abuse and systems collusion. We have heard and we are now focused on not only hearing but acting and actively making plans to rectify the systems wrongs and bring some hope back to survivors.

In our Specialist DFV Court, 16% of all the women we supported this year in relation

# 16%

**of Temporary Orders,  
women were named as the  
respondent.**



to a temporary DVO were named as the respondent. With what we know in relation to the gendered nature of domestic and family violence, this number is too high and indicates an unacceptable number of women being wrongly identified as the person using violence. DVPC has supported many women to correct the record, be recognised as the victim and in some cases have wrongful charges against them dropped. But we know there are many women who still need our assistance and our legal and systems advocacy to right these wrongs.

And so, this year our project to create a Women's Justice Centre commenced, with the secondment of one of our staff to Gold Coast Community Legal Centre, and the provision of legal advice to women being embedded within our service delivery. Already we can see the justice outcomes for women emerging. The seeding of the Womens Justice Centre this year has brought hope - we can see that through legal and systems advocacy we can bring hope and change.

I have often been in conversations where we ask the question, how do we know if our work is a success? How do we know we are doing it right? I personally measure success is by the number of women, men, children and young people who seek us out, and who tell their friends and family that we can be trusted.

This year, we had a 63% increase in women and young people reaching out to us for help for themselves. This increase tells me we are getting it right – that those who need us know who we are, know how to reach out and are confident in doing so. I have seen women on social media tell each other to call us, that we can assist. Words such as ‘go see the girls at DVPC they are honestly the best and really helped me see I was doing the right thing’ and ‘go straight to the Southport Court House DVPC have wonderful DV support workers there who can help assist you to get a temporary DVO’. This is success in my book.

We also had a 78% increase in stakeholders reaching out to our service – this for me signifies strong community confidence in our service. It is a strong measure of success.

Our other measure of success is our engagement with the community, and I was particularly proud of the number of

community members who attended our DV Prevention Month breakfast this year. I am filled with hope that with our community partnering with us, we can address domestic and family violence effectively on the Gold Coast.

As an organisation we have become more active and visible in our community, and this has brought its rewards in many ways. Through community action and sponsorship, we have been able to provide essential food, accommodation and safety to women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Donations from community are not only the financial assistance and essential items they provide – they are a message of hope. They are messages to those experiencing domestic and family violence that their community cares. And through our many generous partners in our community we have witnessed hope in its many forms.



I want to personally thank all the survivors and the families of those who have not survived for sharing their experiences with me – I am touched by your courage and your willingness to trust me with your truth.

I cannot thank Russ, Jan, Melissa and Michael enough for partnering with DVPC and raising funds in honour of their loved daughter and granddaughter Emily. Their generosity in turning their heartbreak into hope, raising funds so that not another woman dies, is truly courageous.



We can only provide our essential services when we have a skilled, flexible, reflective, well-resourced and healthy workforce. We have endeavoured to provide a wide and varied offering of professional development and designed practice development opportunities in collaboration with the team. We have a dedicated, skilled and reflective team leader group who fill me with hope as the next generation of leaders in our sector.

We have consciously recruited with an intent to have a team that reflects the diversity and richness of the people we serve. We have welcomed students back into our organisation and partnered with more organisations than ever before. Our growth is intentional, not for growth's sake, but in order to provide the best possible service to our community and to the women, children and young people we serve.

Our work with men has grown and diversified. We now have more men's in voluntary programs than in court ordered mandatory programs, we are working with men beyond the weekly men's groups – that gives me hope.

Our newly established women's counselling team, though small, makes a meaningful impact.

To our community, and to our sector and government partners I want to say a huge thank you. Your commitment to the safety, wellbeing and agency of survivors is evident in our daily work, in your willingness to continue to partner with survivors and with our service, and to not shy away from, but embrace the difficult conversations about how we can do better. It is through our collective response that we bring home and make the positive impact on so many lives.

I want to thank all of the team at DVPC. I am so proud to work with each of you and with you collectively. Without your commitment and hard work, we would not

be able to support so many people in our community and bring hope for change.

Thank you to my family and the families of all of our team, who support to do our work.

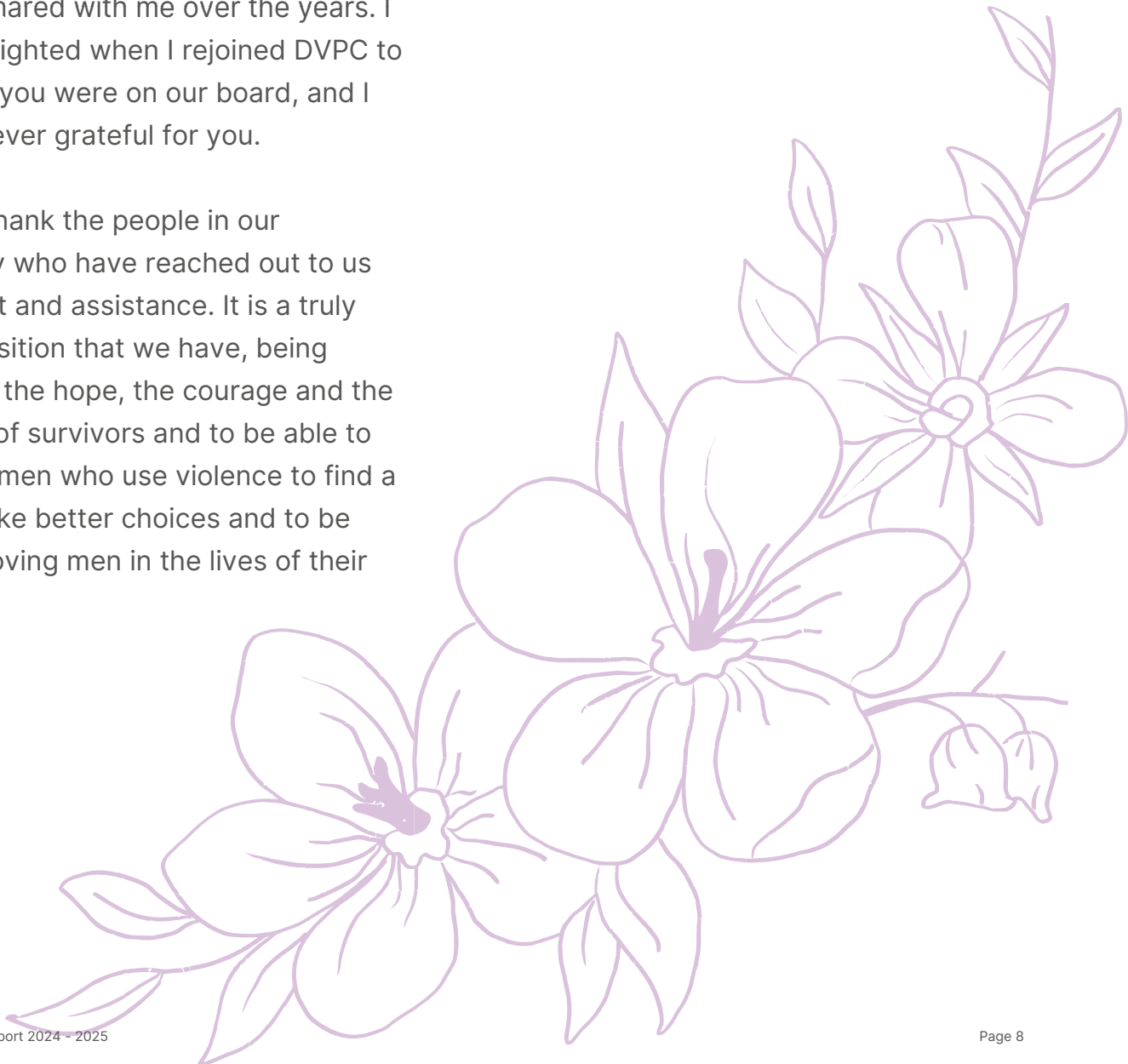
I want to thank the board for your support of the work of our team – without your wise counsel, your flexibility and your openness our successes this year would not have been possible. I want to thank Catherine Hand who I am sad to say will be stepping down from our board. Thank you, Catherine, for your sisterhood, your solidarity and your quick wit and humour that you shared with me over the years. I was so delighted when I rejoined DVPC to know that you were on our board, and I will be forever grateful for you.

I want to thank the people in our community who have reached out to us for support and assistance. It is a truly trusted position that we have, being witness to the hope, the courage and the resilience of survivors and to be able to work with men who use violence to find a way to make better choices and to be safe and loving men in the lives of their families.

As I reflect on the challenges, the successes and the joys of this year, I feel a immense sense of hope.

Hope for our organisation, for our community and for a future free of violence.

**Lucy Gregory**  
**CEO**



# OUR VISION

Everyone is safe to live with justice, freedom and hope in their family, community and country.

# OUR MISSION



**ADVOCATE** relentlessly to achieve change.



**COLLABORATE** to improve safety and to build and share our specialist experience and knowledge.



**INNOVATE** by listening to those most impacted by domestic and family violence, and by working with them to explore the options to create radical and positive changes.

# OUR VALUES



## Safety-focused

- We centre the safety of women and their children in all our decisions.
- We appreciate the diverse experiences of women and their children and recognise that this shapes their experience of violence.
- We listen and learn from them – they teach us how to do this work.



## Accountability

- We have documented frameworks that guide our decisions and responses, and we take responsibility for our choices and actions.
- We are committed to continually improving our services to ensure they are relevant, specialised, consistent, ethical, practice-led and evidence-informed, while adapting to a challenging and ever-changing environment.
- We evaluate our programs to ensure they contribute to the safety of women and their children and add to the body of knowledge about this work.
- We can demonstrate that we manage our resources effectively, efficiently and responsibly.
- We coordinate community responses that centre the safety of women and their children by making the impact of their experience of DFV visible.
- We work with our partners to hold those who commit domestic and family violence responsible for their actions.



## Equity

- We consistently and fairly prioritise and allocate resources by considering immediate needs with long term sustainability.
- We share the work fairly to deliver effective responses and to create systemic change.
- We actively seek out diverse voices to help us identify and remove barriers to accessing our services.



## Respect

- We respect women's rights to make their own decisions and choices for themselves and their children.
- We have brave, honest and respectful conversations with people.
- We talk to people, not about them.
- We clearly communicate what we can offer and what we expect of each other.



# OUR BOARD



## Mike Gilbert Chair

An experienced hands on executive, Mike is a strategic business developer who, after commencing in public practice, transitioned to the corporate sector over 20 years ago. Mike assists organisations on the path to stable and rapid growth, while also bringing a heightened level of governance and organisational structure. Mike has held leadership roles within multiple industries and listed organisations across both Australia and Europe, and more recently held Chief Executive positions in the property and retail sectors.

A Gold Coast native, Mike holds a Bachelor of Business from QUT and has been a member of Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand for over 25 years.

Mike joined the Board in June 2022 in a non-executive capacity, with a desire to bring perspective gained from working across five continents.



## Susan Beattie Secretary

Susan has held multiple senior management roles across the public service and community sectors, focusing on driving cross-system improvement and reforms. She has extensive experiencing working towards the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence. With a passion for good governance and continuous improvement in practice, Susan joined the DVPC Board in 2024 as Secretary and has served as a non-Executive Director for a number of other community organisations. She holds a Masters in Forensic Mental Health, and a Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Psychology).



## **Toni Lamb**

### **Treasurer May 2024 - June 2025**

Toni is a seasoned business owner with 20 years of experience in the financial industry. As a resilient and experienced leader, she empowers everyday people from all walks of life to achieve better financial stability and structure. With a strong presence in both the Australian financial sector and the international arena, Toni's influence is far-reaching.

Her engaging, inclusive, and collaborative approach inspires everyone to participate in their journey toward positive and secure financial outcomes.

Toni holds an Australian Credit License and has proudly served on the DVPC Board since May 2024.



## **James Stewart**

### **Treasurer June 2025 onwards**

James is a strategic executive with a strong focus on driving sustainable growth and operational excellence. Beginning his career in banking, James has spent his career in the corporate sector where he has consistently achieved successful outcomes.

James has held senior leadership roles across diverse industries, including banking, technology, biotechnology and education, and has successfully guided organisations through periods of transformation and expansion. His expertise spans financial management, organisational structure, and strategic planning, enabling businesses to achieve stability while positioning for long-term success.

Originally from the Netherlands, James holds a Bachelor of Economics from the University of New South Wales, and is a long-standing Certified Practising Accountant, a Chartered Financial Analyst, and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

James joined the Board in June 2025 in a non-executive capacity, bringing a global perspective shaped by experience across multiple markets and a commitment to strong governance and stakeholder value.



## Catherine Hand

Catherine Hand has 22 years of senior management experience in government and non-government sectors. She has made significant contribution to the criminal justice sector serving on multiple boards and committees including Domestic Violence Integrated Response, Queensland Parole Board, Drug Court Reference Group and Serious Offenders Committee. She has had oversight of the development of management practices that respond practically and therapeutically to the effect of violence.

Catherine has an incisive understanding of the intergenerational effect domestic and family violence has on women and children.

Through the DVPC Board she is committed to supporting the DVPC in their mission to position women and children at the very centre of this complex issue and amplify their voices and lived experiences.



## Ciara Furlong

Ciara has held multiple legal and governance roles across the public and private sectors, and was appointed to the DVPC Board in May 2025.

She is passionate about law, justice and advocating for those who cannot advocate for themselves. She has experience in supporting Community Legal Centres, and providing pro Bono advice and legal support to survivors of domestic and family violence.

Ciara holds a Bachelor of Laws, a Master of Laws, a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice, and is a qualified Barrister.



## Michelle Teis

Michelle is the Managing Partner of Evinact, a national data and digital consultancy, leading a team of 50 consultants who deliver transformative solutions for clients across Australia.

With over 30 years of experience, Michelle has driven enterprise-scale data and digital initiatives that fundamentally reshape how organisations compete and operate. She specialises in preparing businesses for data-driven futures—building the strategic foundations, capabilities, and governance frameworks that enable innovation while ensuring security and trust.

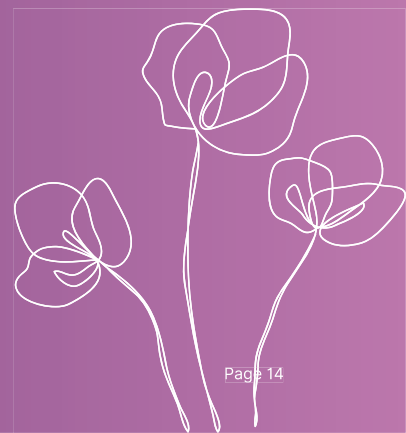
Throughout her career, Michelle has partnered with executive teams to turn complex data challenges into competitive advantage, consistently delivering measurable business impact and sustainable transformation. Michelle is a member of the Australia Institute of Company Directors (MAICD) and joined the DVPC Board in January 2023 as a Non-Executive Director.



## Peter Smales

Peter was born and raised in Southport and spent most of his working life on the Gold Coast. He spent almost 40 years working within the Federal and Queensland State Governments. Most of this was in Senior Executive positions including Corrective Services, Child Protection, Youth Justice, Housing and Homelessness and Disability Services.

Peter is pleased to be able to give back to the community in which he resides by being a Board Member of the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre. He also holds another Board position in an organisation supporting older Australians, people with a disability and Veterans to receive much needed care.



# SERVICE SNAPSHOT

## 14,000 +

In 2024-2025 Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Supported over 14,000 people across the Gold Coast.

723

**New self referrals**  
63% increase from 2024

2020

**New secondary consults**  
60% increase from 2024

496

**Women supported in Police Stations**  
97% increase from 2025

54

**Women provided counselling**  
From program commencement April 25

36

**Women's group sessions facilitated**  
Including Turning Points & Reflections



# Men's DV Education & Intervention Program

The MDVEIP team has continued to grow and strengthen its impact over the past financial year. We successfully introduced an additional men's group, bringing the total number of groups to seven. This expansion has enabled us to engage more men in the program and reduce waitlist numbers.

Several new Men's Workers have joined the team, allowing us to broaden our reach and provide more consistent support to men who are using violence and abuse in their relationships. Many of our team members have progressed to become Senior Facilitators, reflecting their commitment to professional development and the program's focus on building expertise and leadership within the team. In addition, we implemented an exciting team restructure, appointing two Team Leaders to provide dedicated support to Men's Workers and an additional Team Leader to oversee and support the MDVEIP Women's Advocates.

A key highlight this year was the commencement of a partnership with the Queensland Police Service. Through this collaboration, our team has been engaging with men in the Watchhouse, creating earlier intervention opportunities and offering support options that contribute to increased safety for women and children.

Looking ahead, our goal is to continue expanding our work to connect with more men, strengthen intervention strategies, and enhance pathways that promote accountability and safety for all.

189

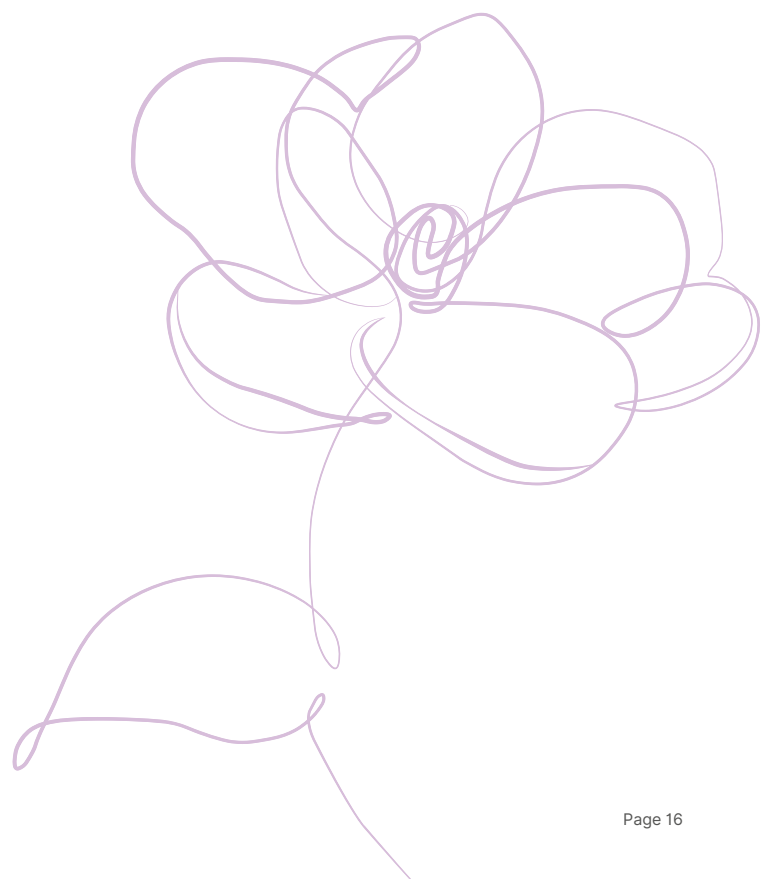
**Non-Mandated Program sessions**  
31% Increase from 2024


696

**Police Assisted Referrals (PARS)**  
59% Increase from 2024


22

**Watchhouse engagements**  
From April - June 2024






"I feel awesome, I feel I am settled now. Finally I get somewhere to stay long term and I don't have to worry for the next day where I will be so thank you for your hard work, it means a lot to me. If I ever return to the Gold Coast I will say hello."



"It is the connection with other women and the help I have received that strengthens me to want to recover and move forward, one step at a time."



"By the way please pass on my gratitude to the women's advocate who helped me with my application. I was granted a TPO on Wednesday. I wouldn't have had that courage without her help. And thank you too for encouraging me to get my voice heard. Truly grateful."



"I finally found the top of the water, I look back and can see I used to be drowning but now I see the shore."

"I can't express how grateful I am to you for making things easier for me when I was feeling so overwhelmed. You have such a comforting and lovely nature about you that made it so comforting for me to go through this. It's people like you at the end of the phone for women who are going through so much and you don't realise how much of an impact it has on our life. With all this anxiety, when people can understand that makes a big difference. You feel so much better even to just talk about these situations because when all of this happens everybody just blames you."

"Life is looking glorious again and I just wanted to thank you for your role in making that happen!"

# BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH SURVIVORS



In 2024-25 we aspired to better partner with the experts in our work – the women who have experienced domestic and family violence. We sought to honour their expertise, learn from them what we need to change in order to provide the best possible service and then turn that learning into action and measurable change. We worked to embed the wisdom, the experience and ideas of survivors into our work, across all our programs and projects.

Survivor insights are not just stories to be told; they are vital knowledge that can shape practice and drive systemic change. When lived experience is truly integrated, it moves beyond awareness and becomes the foundation for better responses, stronger systems, and safer communities. It should never be seen as tokenistic or optional, but as genuine expertise and partnership. When survivors share what they have endured, they are not simply recounting personal tragedies—but are offering analysis, naming patterns, identifying systemic blind spots, and showing, through lived evidence, what needs to change. This is survivor expertise: powerful, analytical, and transformative.

We actively asked survivors to share their wisdom with us, to help us create systems and organisational change that meets their needs and expectations. We undertook focus groups with women who had accessed our service and made changes to our work in the group space, in program development and in the advocacy. We assisted those with a lived experience to engage in research projects being conducted in Queensland and Australia-wide. We established womens counselling as a service offering, which we have not been able to provide for many years, as women told us this was a priority for them when seeking our support. This work has brought us closer to achieving the Women’s Advisory Council for DVPC, which we aim to establish in the next year.

We are grateful to the strong, resilient, hopeful women who have shared their lives and wisdom with us, and hope that we do justice to your contribution.

# Hope for Change

Elevating voices of women experiencing domestic and family violence who have been criminalised by the system

DVPC facilitates the Turning Points program, which is a 14-week Duluth curriculum for women who have experienced domestic and family violence and who may have used resistive violence to keep themselves and their children safe, and to preserve their dignity. Over the years, Turning Points facilitators consistently heard from group participants, about their experiences of being unheard, invisible and judged by the service system. As survivors of domestic violence and criminalised by the system, they have told us they wanted their voices to be heard so that systemic responses can improve. And so, in the first Turning Points group of 2025, we began a narrative project to document women's collective experiences to raise awareness among services about the systemic barriers that women experience when they are wrongly labelled as persons using violence.

We heard about the impacts of domestic violence and coercive control on the women's lives; how they coped, survived and resisted the abuse. They told us about their experiences of seeking assistance from services and what improvements they would like to see in systemic responses. Women identified the need for:

- practical and financial supports that extend beyond the point of crisis,
- clear information and answers from services,
- a strong understanding across the system about coercive control,
- the correct identification of the person using violence and
- increased accountability for persons using violence.

Group participants shared their experiences of "battling systemic failures", receiving "conflicting information", experiencing "condescending behaviour", having to go "round and round" and yet not getting the help they needed, "feeling pressured" by services and being unable to access certain supports due to being criminalised.

Women said that they knew that documenting their experiences wasn't going to change their individual situations, but they were keen to share their stories with the hope of influencing change.

In the words of the participants:

“

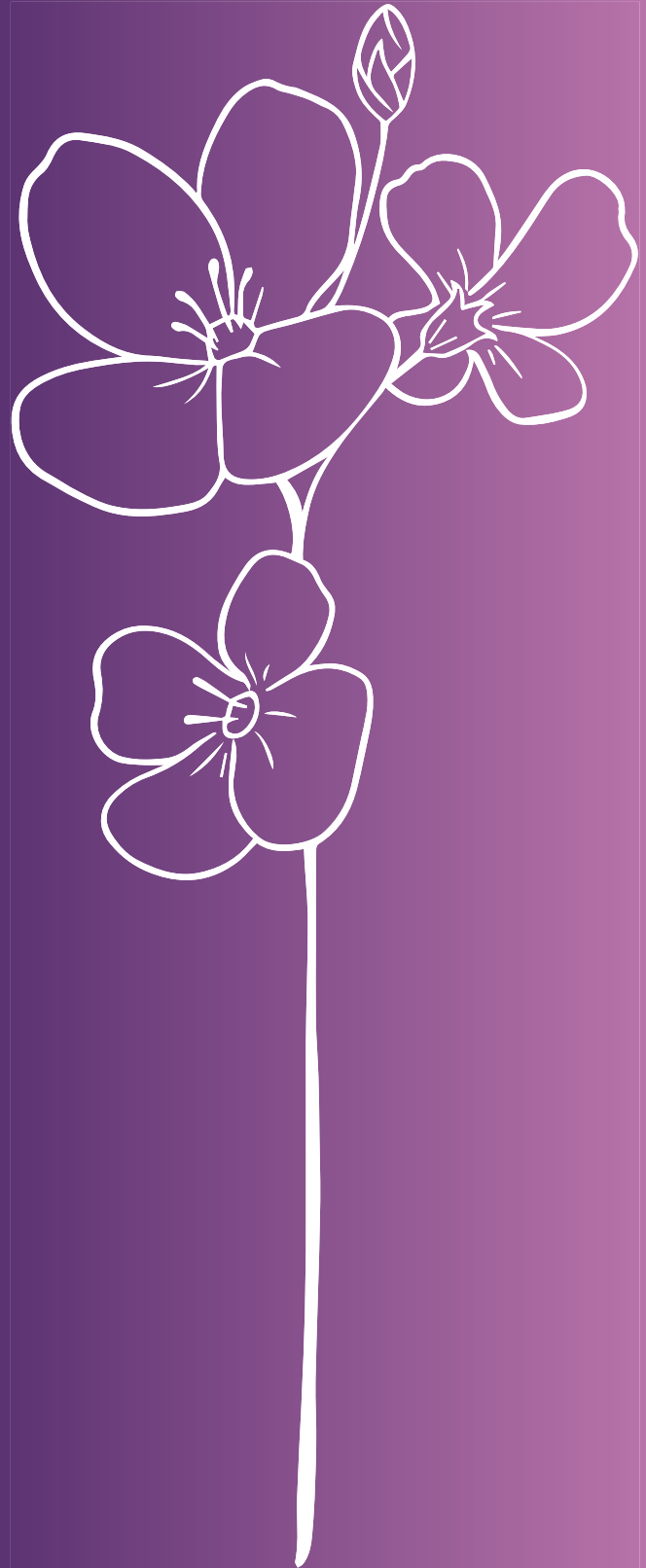
*We are here in this group because we are labelled by the system as abusers, when all we are trying to do is to stand up for ourselves and stop the abuse done to us. We want to give an insight to people who don't know what we are going through, the toll that it takes on all aspects of our lives and the harm caused to us. We hope for change.*

”

Despite facing ongoing systemic barriers, women in Turning Points believe that change is possible.

DVPC remains committed to bringing forth stories of survival and resistance and advocating for improved systems responses for women using resistive violence.

We stand in solidarity with survivors of domestic and family violence because we too Hope for Change.



# Butterfly Squad

DVPC Lived Experience Committee



The DVPC Lived Experience Committee (LEC) was formed in recognition of the many survivors of domestic and family violence in our workforce and to work to remove any stigma they have experienced in our workplace. An often overlooked or misunderstood part of the workforce, we recognise that the movement to end gender-based violence and the establishment and growth of many programs and services was only possible because of the courage and contributions of survivors. We established the committee to remove shame or silencing felt by survivors in our workforce and to honour their knowledge and unique understanding.

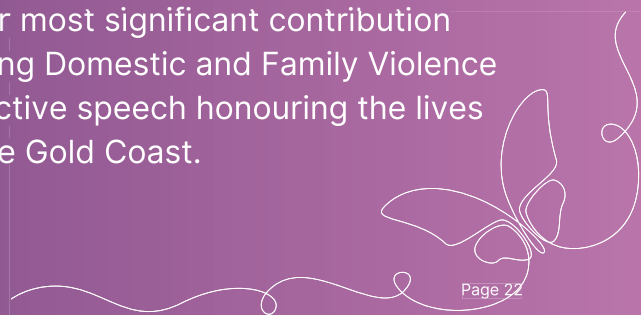
We wanted to create a space within DVPC where staff with survivor-informed knowledge could engage safely, honestly, and respectfully with each other and provide advice

to the organisation on ways to improve our response to survivors in our workforce. The LEC is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential - recognising that survivors should be able to contribute without fear and with freedom to engage on their own terms.

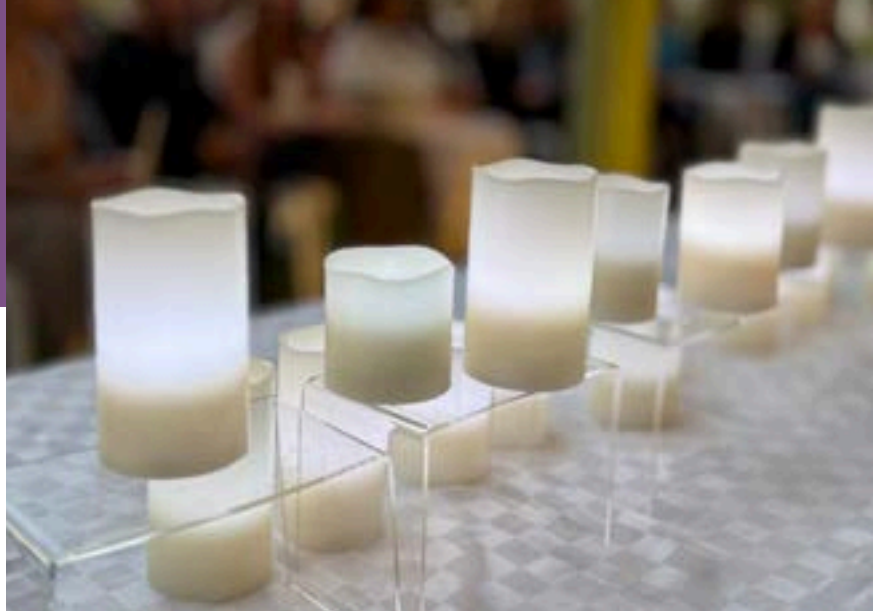
This year, the LEC's work centred on remembrance, support of each other, advocacy, and preparation for future projects. Our most significant contribution was contributing to the 2025 Candlelight Vigil during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. We wrote and delivered a collective speech honouring the lives of those killed because of domestic violence on the Gold Coast.

## Looking Ahead

This year, the LEC's work centred on remembrance, support of each other, advocacy, and preparation for future projects. Our most significant contribution was contributing to the 2025 Candlelight Vigil during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. We wrote and delivered a collective speech honouring the lives of those killed because of domestic violence on the Gold Coast.



# Candlelight Vigil



Held every year on the first Wednesday in May, to remember those who have died as a result of domestic and family violence, this year's vigil was a powerful and moving event that highlighted the ongoing need for awareness, support, and action in relation to domestic and family violence.

We were honoured to have the family and friends of those who have died attend and also many survivors of domestic and family violence at our vigil. We are grateful to the survivors who performed at the vigil, sharing their talent and demonstrating the transformative healing power of music.



As we lit candles in memory of those who have died, each candle symbolised remembrance and hope—a light for every life taken, and a call for collective action. Each flame danced in the name of women and children from right here on the Gold Coast—women whose lives were cut short by someone they once knew, someone they should have been safe with.

We will remember them.

# No More Rally

July 2024



# STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

This year, we expanded our engagement with the Gold Coast community, recognising that meaningful change begins with awareness, connection, and shared understanding. Through strong partnerships, active participation in local initiatives, and increased visibility across the region, we are expanding our profile and building greater community involvement in addressing domestic and family violence.



Each connection we form, whether with individuals, workplaces, or community groups, helps create a more informed, compassionate, and empowered community. By strengthening these relationships, we are working together towards a future where safety, respect, and support are accessible to all.

Throughout the financial year, the donations and grants of funding we receive provide DVPC the opportunity to support women and children with valuable resources beyond the scope of our usual government funds. These donations and grants do not just bring financial relief – they also bring hope.

# A Walk for Emily



Russ Thompson walks 80km for 80 years

When 80-year-old Russ Thompson put on his walking thongs this year, he wasn't just marking a milestone, he was honouring the life of his granddaughter, Emily. In October 2022, Emily, aged only 18, was killed and her ex-boyfriend was charged with her murder.

Just a few years earlier, domestic and family violence was something Russ had only read about in the papers, a distant tragedy that happened to "other people." Then it touched his own family. "Until it affects your own family," he said, "it's hard to imagine the shock of it all."

So, when Russ began planning his walk, he decided to dedicate it to something close to his heart — in honour of his granddaughter, Emily. "It was the only thing that made sense," he said, "It's never out of our thoughts."

Russ set out to raise \$5,000 for DVPC, but the community had other plans. Friends, neighbours, even

strangers were handing him donations in lifts and at the golf club. "People just wanted to help," he said, "They wanted to walk with me, to be part of it." By the end, Russ, joined by his daughter-in-law and Emily's mother Melissa, and his daughter, Emily's Aunty, Sandie, had raised over \$29,000 and walked a total of 93 kilometres, "a bit extra," he joked, "so no one could say I didn't finish it."



For Russ, every step was about more than distance. It was about connection, awareness, and community. “After it all, people would come up to me in the pub or the club and say, ‘We didn’t know what your family went through — now we understand.’ That’s what mattered most.”

When Russ finally walked up the beach to the cheers of friends, family, and supporters, he was overwhelmed, “I didn’t want to let anyone down, but I never expected the support I got. It was unbelievable.”

In dedicating his milestone to Emily, and to the countless families affected by domestic and family violence, Russ showed what ‘Hope for Change’ truly looks like. It’s courage born from love. It’s the community coming together. It’s ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

And like Emily’s beloved sunflowers, it’s a reminder that even in the hardest seasons, we can still find beauty and grow toward the light.



# Walk a Mile in Her Shoes

Broadbeach Robina Cricket Club



The Broadbeach Robina Cricket Club (BRCC) chose DVPC as their charity partner for their Women in Cricket High Tea, held on Saturday 8 February 2025.

The event was inspired by BRCC's formation of their first women's cricket team and their commitment to increasing community participation while supporting local women. The club wanted to ensure that the funds raised would directly benefit women in their community and to help raise awareness about domestic and family violence.

The High Tea featured a powerful panel discussion including our CEO, Lucy, alongside Bec Rawlings (Victim Survivor and UFC Bare Knuckle Boxer), Bonnie Hancock (Gold Coast Ironwoman), and Melissa Wilson from Humanistic HR, who also sponsored the panel. Our Chief of Staff, Sarah, did a fantastic job as MC, guiding an inspiring and thought-provoking conversation.

The event also featured the "Broady Slipper"—a symbolic race where men from the club ran in high heels as a nod to the idea of "walking a mile in her shoes." This meaningful gesture served as a reminder of the importance of empathy, understanding, and collective responsibility in addressing domestic and family violence.



Put yourself in her shoes, think about what it's like to be a woman, think about all of the barriers that women experience, so walking a mile in her shoes is understanding what that feels like, whether it's just to be a woman, or to be a woman who has systems barriers, or to be a woman who is experiencing DV.



Lucy Gregory, DVPC CEO

We are grateful to BRCC for their generosity and commitment to raising both funds and awareness for women in our community.



## Burleigh Heads Ladies Bowling Craft & Charity Table

DVPC extends its sincere thanks to the Burleigh Heads Ladies Bowling members and their Craft and Charity Table for their generous \$5,000 donation in March 2025. Their support has enabled us to fund victim-survivors' participation in the Disruption Conference in the new financial year—an important opportunity to ensure lived experience remains central in shaping responses to domestic and family violence. Community awareness and contributions like theirs play a vital role in strengthening opportunities for victim-survivors and supporting our work across the Gold Coast. programs and services.



# Ripples of Hope

Mylie Campbell  
DVPC Member and Supporter

When Mylie talks about her work, her compassion shines through. A registered nurse at Gold Coast University Hospital, Mylie has spent more than a decade caring for others — first in the fast-paced Emergency Department, and now in a community health role. But her care doesn't end when her shift does. For nearly a decade, she's been a passionate supporter and fundraiser for the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre (DVPC).

Mylie's journey as a supporter of DVPC began in 2015, on a morning that changed everything.

"On the 8th of September 2015, Tara Brown presented to the Emergency Department in a vulnerable state," she recalls. "I later discovered this was at the hands of her partner and Tara sadly passed away. This rocked me. It was here that my passion for fundraising for domestic violence prevention was born."

That moment sparked something enduring. In May 2016, Mylie made her first donation to DVPC, donating the proceeds from selling Christmas scrubs to her colleagues. Since then, she's raised an estimated \$25,000 through creative, community-driven initiatives.

From Christmas scrubs and Krispy Kreme drives to raffles and locally made Christmas candles, Mylie's efforts have not only raised vital funds but also built awareness across her workplace.

"One perk of working in the same hospital for so long is knowing a lot of people, friends from all over the hospital help sell for me! I make flyers each year, post them on the staff social pages, and even give out my number for direct sales. Word of mouth has been a huge impact."

For Mylie, the cause is deeply personal.

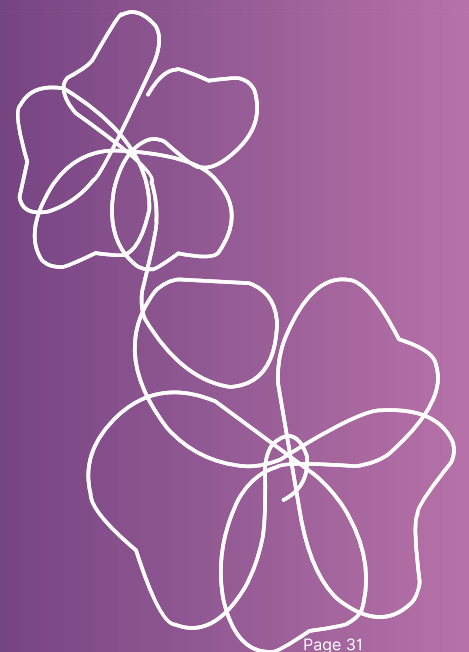
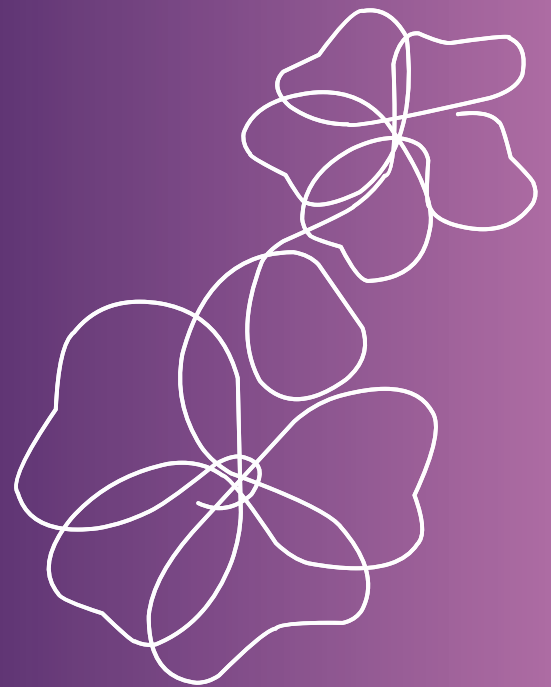
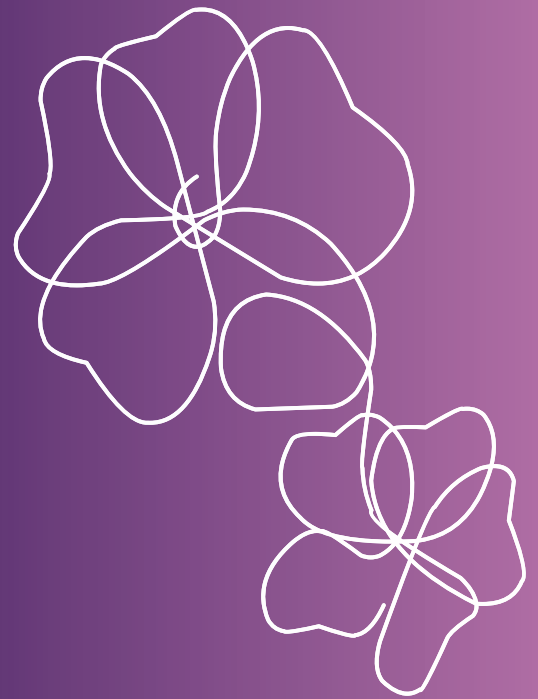
*"I've experienced DFV myself, and I've supported two dear friends who used DVPC's services. I honestly don't know if they'd be safe today without this incredible centre. Knowing I can make a small difference fills my cup."*

Her lived experience has shaped her understanding of both vulnerability and strength. It's also deepened her resolve to be part of a culture of change, one where conversations about domestic and family violence are open, compassionate, and informed.

When asked what hope for change means to her, Mylie reflects thoughtfully: "It's believing that things can be different. That no matter how heavy or stuck something feels right now, there's the possibility for growth, healing, or a new beginning. It's the quiet strength that keeps you taking one more step, even when you don't see the full path yet."

Her words embody the very essence of DVPC's theme this year — Hope for Change: Building Partnerships with Survivors and the Community. Through her generosity, leadership, and advocacy, Mylie exemplifies how one person can inspire many, turning compassion into collective action.

"I feel proud to be part of DVPC's community of supporters," she says. "It represents a collective commitment to respect, equality, and safety. Knowing that my involvement contributes to awareness, prevention, and support services makes me feel connected to a powerful movement for change."



# Safe Haven Project

Queensland Gives (QCF) Regional Grant Program 2024

In 2024-25, DVPC received \$30,000 in funding from the Queensland Gives (QCF) Regional Grant Program in support of the Safe Haven Project—an initiative designed to remove one of the most persistent barriers faced by women escaping domestic and family violence: the immediate financial cost of safety.

For more than 30 years, DVPC has seen women and their children forced to remain in unsafe environments because they could not afford emergency accommodation, relocation support or storage fees. These upfront costs, while relatively small in the broader context of service delivery, often determine whether a victim-survivor can leave an abusive relationship.

The Safe Haven Project directly addresses this need by providing immediate financial assistance for:

- 1-2 nights of emergency accommodation for approximately 50 women and their children
- Urgent relocation support, including removalist fees, for an estimated 8 women
- Short-term storage of belongings and household items, assisting around 10 women and children while they await safer housing

This project is a lifeline for victim-survivors at the most critical point of their journey to safety. By covering these essential costs, the Safe Haven Project empowers women to make the life-changing decision to leave an abusive relationship, begin rebuilding their independence, and transition into longer-term support pathways.



This immediate intervention offered security, stability and hope for change during a time of crisis for multiple women and children, as demonstrated in the (de-identified) story of Kate:

*Kate had endured years of both physical and emotional abuse at the hands of her partner, creating a constant state of fear and isolation. The complexity of her situation was further compounded by her living arrangements – she was renting a home under a lease held by her aunt, a safe and supportive figure in her life. However, when her partner became aware of her aunt’s involvement Kate felt she was unable to leave as any attempt to escape could put both her and her aunt at greater risk. DVPC worked closely with Kate to develop a detailed safety plan, taking into consideration her partner’s likely reactions, the potential scenarios and any unintended consequences. Understanding the financial strain of fleeing an abusive relationship, the DVPC was able to draw from the Safe Haven project funds and cover Kate’s storage and interstate relocation costs where she has since reconnected with her family. This financial support was essential in ensuring she could leave without delay and allowed her to move to a distant location far from the reach of her abusive partner. While it took time to ensure that all aspects of her safety and logistical needs were covered, she is now free from violence and living independently.*

With continued grants to fund projects such as ‘The Safe Haven Project’, and strengthened community investment, we can offer them more than support, we can offer hope.



# Airbnb Community Fund Donation



In 2024–25, we were honoured to be selected as a recipient of the Airbnb Community Fund, following a nomination from the Gold Coast Airbnb Host Club. Through this nomination, we received a \$40,000 USD unrestricted donation, marking a significant and impactful contribution to our work supporting individuals and families experiencing domestic and family violence across the Gold Coast.

This unrestricted funding has provided us with vital flexibility at a time when service demands continue to grow and the complexity of client needs increases. Unrestricted support allows our organisation to allocate resources where they will make the most meaningful and immediate difference, whether that is strengthening crisis responses, enhancing transitional housing pathways, emergency accommodation and housing or other immediate needs.

The Airbnb Community Fund is designed to uplift organisations that create tangible social impact in their local communities. Being selected through a host-led nomination

demonstrates genuine grassroots recognition of the importance of our work. It reflects not only the trust placed in our services but also the community's understanding of the need for safe, stable, and supportive environments for families recovering from domestic violence. We are grateful to the Gold Coast Airbnb Host Club for recognising our role and advocating for our inclusion in this year's funding round.

On behalf of our Board, leadership team, staff, and the thousands of people we support each year, we extend our sincere gratitude to Airbnb and the Gold Coast Airbnb Host Club. Their generosity reinforces our mission and enhances our capacity to provide safety, dignity, and hope to individuals and families across our region. This partnership stands as a testament to the power of community-led support and the shared commitment to creating safer futures for all.

# INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAMS

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## Women's Justice: Bringing True Trauma Informed Expertise into Legal Practice

All survivors who experience domestic and family violence require legal advice at some point in their journey. The process to obtain this can be lengthy and requires referrals and can mean engaging with multiple services and retelling their experience many times.

The phrase 'justice delayed is justice denied' was never more true than for survivors of domestic and family violence, and in particular those who are mis-identified as the person using violence or met with a legal practitioner who does not work in a trauma informed way. This year, thanks to a generous bequeathment from Beryl Lloyd Foundation DVPC was able to commence the journey to providing a trauma informed, justice focused, timely legal advice response at DVPC.

In March 2025, Emily, a Women's Advocate at DVPC and qualified lawyer, commenced a formal secondment arrangement with the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre (GCCLC).

Emily brings a unique combination of legal expertise and frontline advocacy experience, enabling her to provide accessible legal support that reflects a deep understanding of domestic and family violence and the complexities it presents for women and children. Her grounding in trauma-informed and feminist practice enhances the way legal information and representation are provided, ensuring that clients experience both safety and empowerment throughout their legal journey.

Having a lawyer embedded within the organisation has strengthened DVPC's capacity to deliver timely and specialised legal support, bridging the gap between advocacy

and legal systems. The secondment has enhanced service integration and improved outcomes for clients by enabling more collaborative, coordinated responses to complex legal needs.

Not only has this secondment strengthened DVPC's capacity, but it has been mutually beneficial for GCCLC, with CEO, Tanya Diessel noting " The secondment between DVPC and GCCLC has been a heartwarming initiative that not only showcases the relationship between both Centres but has helped create a better understanding of how both organisations interact with and help clients seeking support in and facing DFV. Emily has been a remarkable addition to our team over this period, not only in her legal skills but the trauma informed lens and learnings she brings to her interactions with clients is recognised."

Throughout the secondment, Emily has provided legal advice, assistance, and representation across the Family Law, Domestic Violence, and Child Protection jurisdictions. Examples of this work include:

- Providing legal advice regarding domestic violence orders, parenting, child protection, and property settlement matters.
- Representing women who have been misidentified as Respondents in the Southport Specialist Domestic Violence Court.
- Preparing Domestic Violence Order applications, affidavits for defended hearings, and submissions to the Queensland Police Service.
- Assisting with parenting plans, correspondence in parenting disputes, and drafting consent orders.
- Supporting clients with divorce applications, Victims Assist applications, and victim impact statements.
- Delivering weekly Duty Lawyer services for Aggrieved' s at the Southport Specialist Domestic Violence Court.

## 1 March 2025 - 30 June 2025



**59 Clients**



**85 Client appointments**



**5 Appearances in the Southport Magistrates DV Specialist Court**

While the integration of a dedicated lawyer has provided significant organisational benefits, the demand for legal assistance continues to far exceed capacity. With only one lawyer servicing a large and growing client base, the need for accessible, trauma-informed legal support within domestic and family violence services remains critical. Despite these limitations, Emily's contribution has had a measurable impact — enhancing advocacy effectiveness, improving client understanding of legal processes, and strengthening collaboration with the legal sector.

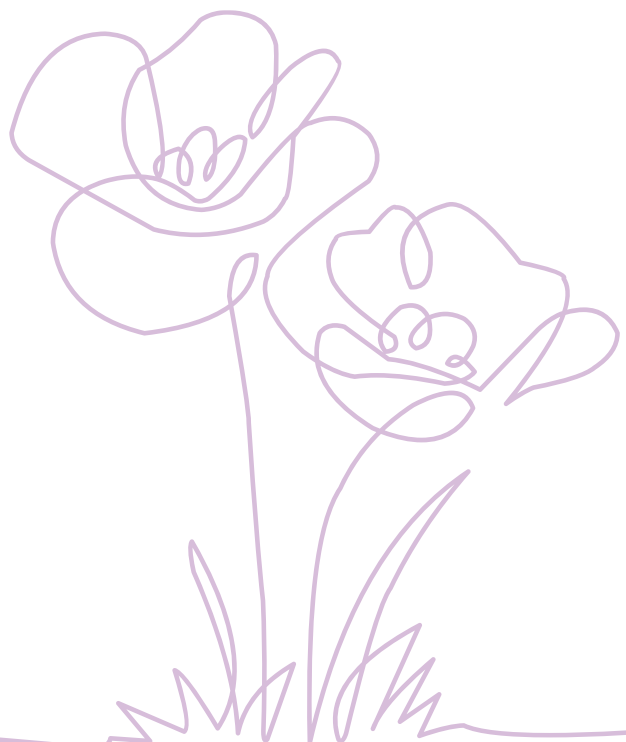
Importantly, this partnership ensures that women receive informed, consistent, and empowering legal guidance within a supportive and safe environment. It also highlights the systemic need for sustained investment in integrated legal responses within specialist domestic and family violence services.

### **Emily's Reflections**

“As lawyers, we are often trained to measure our success by the number of cases we ‘win’. If I were to use that measure, my greatest success to date would be achieving a summary dismissal of a Police Application that had misidentified a young woman as the Respondent in a Domestic Violence Order.

However, for me, the definition of success extends far beyond legal ‘wins’. While achieving the desired outcome is important, so too are the smaller steps along the way. A win is when a client feels heard and leaves my office with a clear understanding of the legal process, not with more questions than answers. It's when their experience is validated, and when they feel empowered to make decisions that are best for themselves and their children.

These moments of empowerment and understanding are the true markers of success, achieved through each respectful, trauma-informed interaction rather than the outcome alone.”



# Holding Hope Creating Change



Over the last three years, DVPC and the DVIR partners have consistently recognised the need to improve systems responses and supports for young people using harmful behaviours and violence towards their family.

Australian and international research on young people's use of violence in the family indicate that most young people using violence in the family have also experienced family violence and many young people face additional intersecting challenges that may contribute to their use of violence. Focus group findings, along with discussions within the DVIR network highlighted the need for an early intervention program for primary school children using violence towards their family. It was hoped that children would be more likely to engage with services when they are younger, and that receiving support at an early age could

reduce the likelihood of young people getting involved in the criminal justice system when they get older. Receiving early assistance may also increase the chances of young people engaging in education and other prosocial activities, which play an important role in enhancing their overall safety and wellbeing.

This systemic gap was a call to action for DVPC.

DVPC have been a specialist service for children and young people experiencing domestic and family violence for over 30 years and we truly believe in using a strengths approach in our work with young people. Having the specialist DFV knowledge, experience and the commitment to improve support for young people and their families, this led to the creation of the Holding Hope Creating Change program.

 *The program has been our anchor. I feel anxious even thinking about this support ending because I can see how much it helps us.* 


We consulted extensively with specialist services in Victoria, and with Jo Howard, Australia's leading AVITH researcher, social worker and family therapist. We also examined the 2023 ANROWS research report-WRAP around families experiencing AVITH to inform our approach in creating this program.

In 2024, DVPC was successful in receiving the Targeted Responses to Youth Crime grant from the Department of Youth Justice, for the Holding Hope Creating Change program. Holding Hope Creating Change is a targeted early intervention program for young people between the ages of 8 and 12, using harmful behaviours and violence towards members of their family.


The Holding Hope Creating Change team have been able to work with families where the child was using violence in the home. We have

supported children to strengthen their skills in emotional regulation, and to explore their understanding of gender roles, offering new perspectives where needed. Through a non-judgmental and therapeutic environment, we have created a safe space for children to express their fears, worries, and dreams.

In parallel, we have worked with mothers to reflect upon the impact that domestic violence has had on their own wellbeing and on their relationships with their children, helping to strengthen safety and connection within the family and foster hope for change. Mothers engaging in this program have reported this type of support closely meets their needs and has been more effective than other services they have previously accessed. Over



*PUV still thinks he's the victim, he's never taken accountability for anything he's ever done. I feel like I can see things more clearly now. I wish I'd had this type of support a few years ago but I'm glad I have it now. You are a big support to me, these appointments help me a lot.*



time, they describe developing a stronger and more positive connection with their child, helping to strengthen safety and connection within the family and foster hope for change. Mothers engaging in this program have reported this type of

support closely meets their needs and has been more effective than other services they have previously accessed. Over time, they describe developing a stronger and more positive connection with their child, alongside a growing sense of being genuinely heard and understood. Importantly, they feel supported without judgement or blame for their child's use of violence, which has helped them to engage more openly in the process.

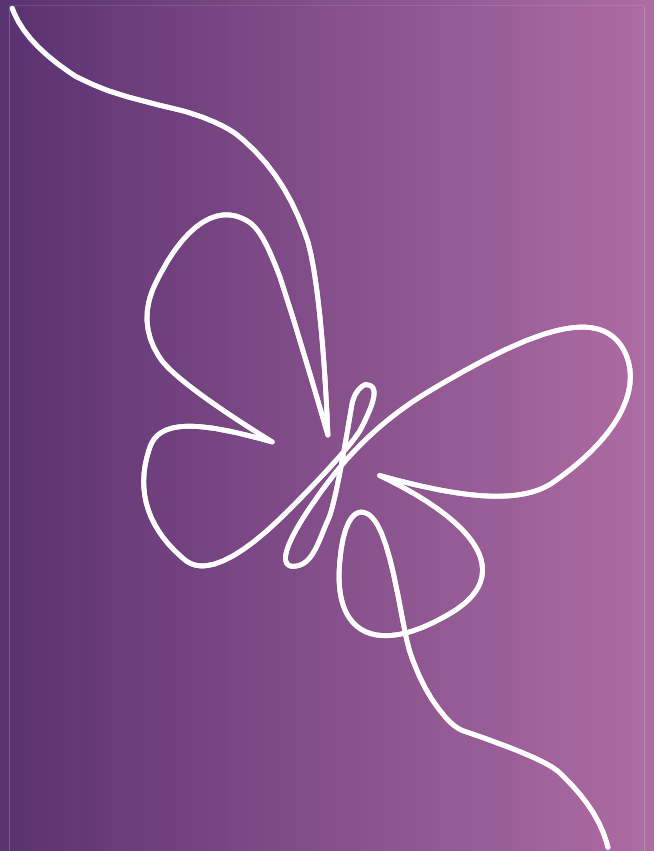
The progress we have observed to date gives us confidence that the continuance of this program will generate lasting positive outcomes and support families in building hope for change.

**49**

**Children & Young  
People supported by  
HHCC Advocates**

**71**

**Women supported by  
HHCC Advocates**



# SECTOR IMPACT

Collaboration sits at the heart of DVPC’s work in responding to domestic and family violence, and is strengthened by our mission to advocate, collaborate and innovate. We actively engage with partner agencies, community leaders, and sector networks to strengthen coordinated responses and improve outcomes for those affected. Through joint initiatives, delivering training, consultations, and community events, we champion systemic advocacy, foster meaningful partnerships, and embrace innovative approaches that build a more connected and informed service system—one that works together to create safety and lasting change.

## Key Highlights Include:

- QNADA: FDV Capability in MHAOD Services – overview of baseline capability across Queensland’s MHAOD sector
- Southport Specialist DFV Court: Justice Response Workshop 2024
- QPS In Her Shoes training
- Soroptimist International: Preventing Gender-Based Violence Panel
- Broadbeach Robina Cricket Club: Walk a Mile in Her Shoes Panel
- Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Families Experiencing DFV
- PAR and PAF DFV Research Focus Group
- Elder Abuse Inquiry
- Roundtable on Sentencing of Domestic Violence Offences in Queensland
- Domestic and Family Violence Roundtables with Ministers and Shadow Ministers
- 1800 RESPECT Evaluation
- Review of Criminal Defenses Roundtable
- Business Reference Group – Adults Using Violence Assessment Tool
- Queensland Police Service Referral Working Group (Gold Coast)
- Disrupting Violent Behaviour: Examining what works in domestic and family violence interventions – Dan Mitchell, PhD
- Children’s Participation in Family Law Project
- Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council (QSAC) Evaluation: Examining victim-survivors’ and advocates’ experiences of sentencing domestic violence offences under section 9(10A) of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 (Qld)



### Committee Memberships

- Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network
- Ending Violence Against Women Queensland Management Committee
- Services & Practitioners for the Elimination of Abuse Queensland
- Family Law Pathways Network Committee
- QNADA Building DFV Capability in Mental Health, Alcohol & Other Drug Services Project Governance Steering Group
- Youth At Risk Alliance Advisory Group
- Multiagency Collaborative Panel
- Domestic Violence Court Assistance Network
- Integrated Service Systems Oversight Committee

### Events Hosted by DVPC

- Purple Tent - December 2024
- Candlelight Remembrance Ceremony
- DVPC DFV Prevention Breakfast

# BUSINESS OPERATIONS

The year 2024–2025 delivered significant progress across Business Operations, strengthening our organisational capability and ensuring we remain equipped to support the growing demand for our services. Our focus this year was on building robust systems, developing internal capacity, and enhancing the operational foundations that enable frontline teams to deliver high-quality, responsive support to the community.

A key milestone was the successful implementation of Teams Calling, which modernised both internal and external communication. This transition has improved reliability, streamlined workflows, and enabled greater flexibility across all sites. Staff now benefit from enhanced mobility, reduced system downtime, and stronger integration with existing digital tools. This upgrade represents a major step in our broader strategy to modernise our technology environment.

We also completed the Level 2 office expansion, providing essential additional space to accommodate workforce growth. The expanded footprint has improved team alignment, created dedicated areas for specialist functions, and prepared the organisation for anticipated growth in the coming years. This investment ensures our people have the environment and resources needed to perform at their best.

Operational resilience was strongly demonstrated during the cyclone event, where full business continuity was maintained despite challenging conditions. Through effective planning, timely communication, and coordinated cross-team efforts, we were able to continue delivering uninterrupted support to clients. This outcome reflects the strength of our updated emergency management arrangements and our organisational commitment to service continuity.

We successfully completed the HSQF mid-point audit with strong results across governance, risk, and quality domains. The audit confirmed our ongoing commitment to high service standards and highlighted the effectiveness of improvements made over the past 12 months. All recommendations



have been actioned and incorporated into our continuous improvement schedule.

A major achievement this year was securing a 20% uplift in funding, which enabled the expansion of our workforce by 7 FTE across frontline service delivery. This investment has directly supported our ability to respond to increased community need, reduce pressure on existing staff, and strengthen long-term organisational sustainability. The uplift also positions us to strategically plan future growth and service innovation.

Business Operations continued to provide strong oversight across grants, HR, and finance, ensuring compliance with funding requirements, high-quality reporting, and responsible stewardship of organisational resources. Improvements across these functions have enhanced transparency, refined internal processes, and supported more informed decision-making at the Executive and Board levels.

Overall, 2024–2025 has been a year focused on stabilising systems, expanding capacity, and strengthening the operational foundations needed to support the organisation’s future growth and its ongoing commitment to the communities we serve.

# OUR PEOPLE



At DVPC, we believe that investing in our people is key to creating lasting positive impacts.

We prioritise ongoing learning and reflection through supervision, team development sessions, and specialised training opportunities. Our staff are encouraged and supported to engage with professional networks and attend sector events, ensuring our practice remains informed, connected, and forward-thinking. By nurturing growth and expertise, we strengthen not only our team, but the support we provide to women and children in our community.

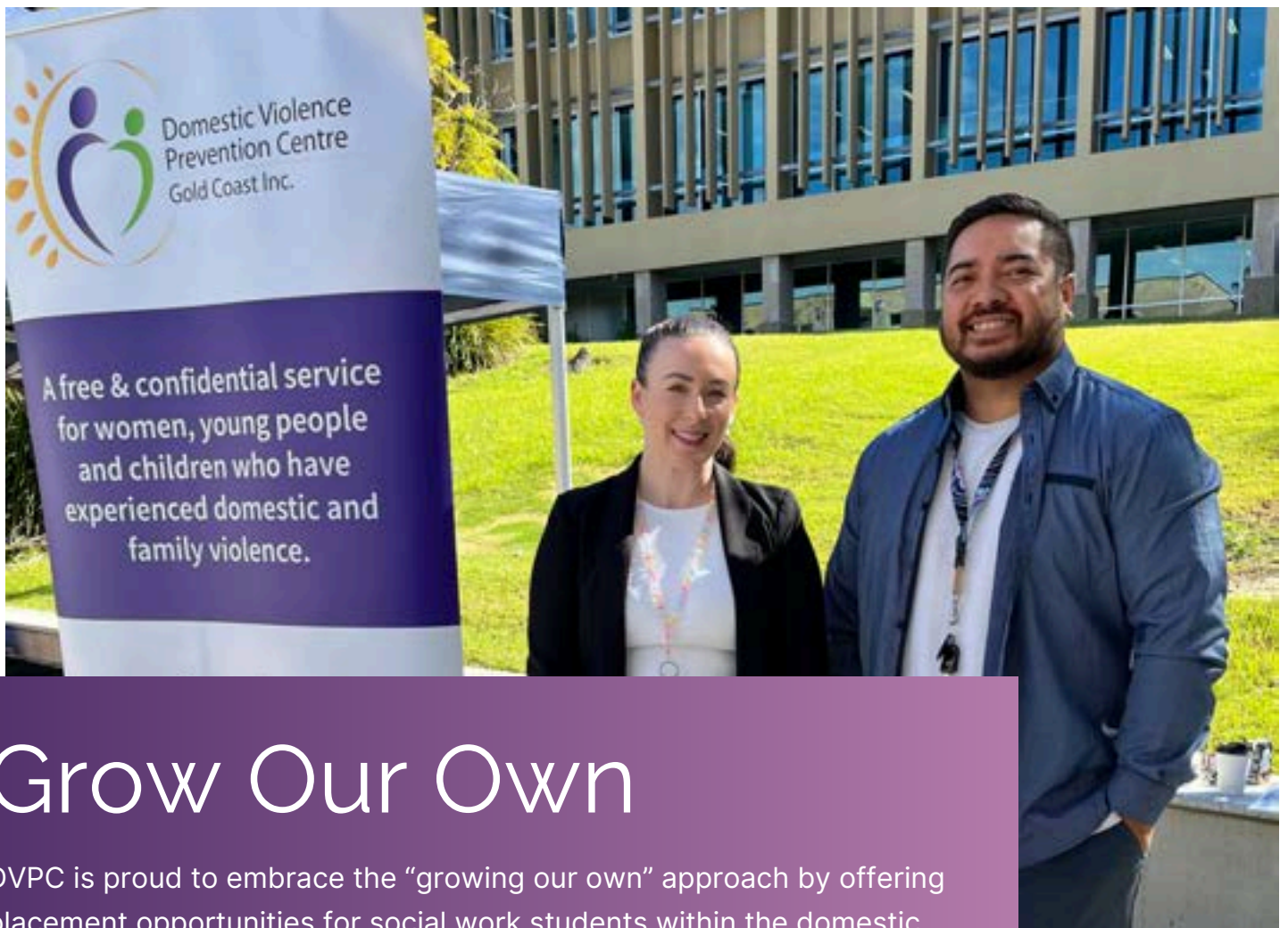
We also provided acting opportunities across the organisation, allowing team members to step into higher duties, gain confidence, and build leadership capability. These efforts supported a number of internal promotions throughout the year, with several staff progressing into Team Leader and other roles. Our focus remains on nurturing talent from within and building a strong, future-ready workforce.

# Learning and Development

Learning and Development opportunities this year included:

- Break the Patterns Conference
- Wesnet Social Media Training
- Vikki Reynolds Leadership Training
- Gold Coast Health Women's Conference
- SPEAQ Conference
- Dare to Lead
- PASE Supervision Training
- Narrative Training with Dr Tracy Castelino
- Allies in Systems Advocacy
- Family Law Pathways events
- Q Shelter Leaders Forum
- Leaders of Positive Change Function
- 2025 Reconciliation Awards
- Griffith University Interprofessional Workshop for Placement Educators
- Gold Coast Social Work Expo 2025
- Coercive Control and Entrapment Workshop Series
- Women who Use Force Training with Melissa Scaia
- Men's Facilitation Training with Melissa Scaia
- NAIDOC Flag Raising event - Kalwun
- NAIDOC March
- CPD on Changes to Consent Laws for Sexual Offences under the Criminal Code (QLD)
- Start By Believing Breakfast for Sexual Violence Awareness Month
- Reclaim the Night
- Gold Coast Health Pride Event
- Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum
- AIFS Webinar: Centering children when supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families
- ANROWS Conference





# Grow Our Own

DVPC is proud to embrace the “growing our own” approach by offering placement opportunities for social work students within the domestic violence sector. Supporting the next generation of practitioners is vital to maintaining a skilled workforce capable of responding to the complex needs of victim-survivors in our community.

Through supervision, reflective practice, and hands-on experience in front-line work, students gain invaluable insights into trauma-informed practice, risk assessment, safety planning and multi-agency collaboration. Placements at DVPC offer a rich learning environment where emerging practitioners can apply their academic knowledge in a supportive and structured environment and receive the opportunity to engage in direct client work. This combination of learning and practice supports students to build confidence and professional competence.

A recent example is a student who completed her final placement with DVPC and was successful in securing a role as Women’s Advocate. Her familiarity with our organisational values and operational processes enabled a seamless transition into practice. This outcome highlights that by investing in students and supporting their growth, DVPC strengthens its workforce, enhances service quality, and ensures that our support for victim-survivors remains strong and sustainable.

# Supporting Our Team

This past year has been one of big growth for our service. Over the past year, DVPC has continued to strengthen its commitment to staff care, reflective practice, and sustainable service delivery. As our teams grew, we kept creating time and space for collective professional growth, to connect with each other and our partners in the community, to notice the strengths and address struggles and to share practice wisdom. Our goal has been to intentionally cultivate a space where staff can remain connected, grounded, and anchored to and guided by the women and children whose safety needs are at the centre of our work.

Much of this happened through strengthening our clinical individual and group supervision spaces and monthly practice expansion sessions. Staff told us these practice sessions offered uninterrupted space to discuss practice, share perspectives, and promote collective learning.

Monthly clinical supervision continues to be the space for case unpacks and deep reflections about our practice. DVPC's leaders were

trained in PASE supervision model, a structured, holistic supervision approach that addresses both organisational demands and the worker's professional and personal development.

In addition to the individual clinical supervision, in April 2025 we were fortunate to secure Kym Tighe, a social worker with the wealth of experience to provide monthly group supervision to our Women's Advocates (Advocate) and Team Leaders. Advocates feedback is that being mentored by someone with the depth of Kym's experience has helped them feel more confident as advocates and leaders and has given them the tools to support the clients and each other in the most complex situations.

Advocates have identified the value of simply slowing down and asking how we continue to work in the client's best interest. Staff noticed that DVPC is prioritising attendance in reflective spaces, not as an afterthought, but as a commitment



to collective growth – that we are creating room for more rich conversations, deeper thinking, and more strength-based ways of understanding challenges.

Since it was initiated by the Advocates at the end of 2023, DVPC’s Social Club has provided space for connection and support. Each Monday morning the social club organises “Monday meets” as a space to welcome each other to the new week. Bi-monthly social events organised by the social club provide additional opportunities to take a break, connect and socialise.

Another priority was connecting with the other services to share resources and information. This year we invited Services Australia, SARA Program, Centacare and LAQ to share with our staff the information about their programs and discuss addressing some of the barriers the clients might be presented with when reaching out for supports.

This year’s annual team building event that included an Amazing Race around the Gold Coast, followed by the high tea and care packs was the kind of event that staff keeps reminiscing.

Throughout the year, themes around accountability to the women and children kept guiding us in our practice. Lived experience continued being the moral compass for our work and a reminder that we need to keep identifying and responding to the intersections of issues the women and children seeking support face. These ideas didn’t stay as abstract statements—they showed up in how people approached supervision, how they spoke with each other, and how they linked policy to practice.

This year proved that when we invest in reflective space, we invest in professional growth; when we invest in connection, we invest in accountability; and when we invest in our staff, the whole organisation grows in ways that matter.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTEGRATED RESPONSE

Domestic Violence Prevention Centre (DVPC) has been convening the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated Response (GCDVIR) since 1996. GCDVIR is based on the evidence-based Duluth model of coordinated community response. Currently there are 19 member agencies in GCDVIR. The purpose of the GCDVIR is to improve victim-survivor safety, wellbeing and agency, and increase accountability of persons using violence by:

- Monitoring and enhancement of systemic responses to domestic and family violence
- Sharing knowledge, cultivating best practice and fostering innovation by strengthening inter-agency collaboration and enhancing engagement with the local community.

Every year GCDVIR decides its key areas of focus based on current dominant themes, trends and systemic gaps identified by member agencies. Through ongoing discussions over the past few years, two of the consistently identified focus areas for GCDVIR have been:

- Strengthening engagement and collaboration with the Gold Coast community
- Improving integrated systems responses and supports for young people using violence in the family.

Strengthening engagement and collaboration with sector partners and community

In 2024, GCDVIR was successful in securing the Queensland Government's \$25,000 Safe and Diverse Communities Grant, to host the first of its kind, Break the Patterns conference on the Gold

Coast. The purpose of the Break the Patterns Conference was to raise awareness and improve systemic responses to domestic and family violence among culturally and linguistically diverse communities. GCDVIR nominated MFO's SARA program as the lead agency for this initiative. The conference planning

committee included DVPC, SARA Program, other DVIR member agencies as well as the City of Gold Coast. The Break the Patterns Conference was a highly successful event and was attended by over 200 members from local non-government and government services and community members from diverse cultural groups. Through this conference, DVIR created a platform for having a community dialogue about intersectional barriers and social inequalities faced by women and children from CALD backgrounds, experiencing domestic and family violence. It was a call to action for the whole community to come together and break the patterns of negative stereotypes and unhelpful

systems responses to domestic and family violence among CALD communities.

Following the success of the conference, several community members approached DVPC and expressed a desire to become involved in addressing domestic and family violence on the Gold Coast and improving systems responses. Being based on the Duluth Model of Coordinated Community Response, the DVIR is deeply committed to adopting a whole of community response approach to domestic and family violence.



Therefore, DVPC in partnership with DVIR agencies, established a Domestic Violence Community Response network in April 2025. The purpose of this network is to learn from community about what is working well in the current systems responses to domestic and family violence, what is missing and how can the systemic gaps be closed. The DV Community Response is a steadily growing network, of individual community members and members of different cultural community groups as well as faith groups, and some have their own lived experience of domestic and family violence. Being in its early stages, the DVCR is currently in the process of inviting community members from diverse backgrounds to join the network and share their insights about establishing a whole of community response to domestic and family violence on the Gold Coast.

### **Improving integrated systems responses and supports for young people using violence in the family**

The other consistently identified area of focus in GCDVIR, has been the need to improve the systems response for young people using violence in the family. Based on the observations of DVIR agencies over the years and extensive research conducted in Australia and overseas, on this topic, GCDVIR recognises that young people using violence in the family often have a lived experience of family violence and face multiple intersecting socio-economic barriers. In 2024, GCDVIR decided to undertake a focus group project to closely examine the current service system landscape of supports available to young people using violence in the family and identify areas of improvement. The focus group project aimed to invite mothers with a lived experience of their children using violence/ harmful behaviours in the family and young adults (ages 18-25) who may have used violence in the family when they were younger and frontline practitioners, to share their knowledge and expertise and provide insights into what is needed to improve supports for young people and their families. We asked



all focus group participants about what supports are currently available to young people using violence in the family, and their family members, what is working well and what more is needed. Practitioners identified many areas of improvement such as the need for more specialist programs and practical supports for young people using violence and their families, specialist training for workers, a coordinated approach of service delivery and an early intervention strengths-based approach rather than a punitive systems response to young people.

.. when you call these places, it's just also so emotionally draining and you kind of don't speak up... whereas you know someone else that I guess is emotionally detached from the situation can speak factually and go.... OK, this is what we want, this is what we need. You're not gonna call up and ask that for yourself when you're in it..... you'd be lucky to get through the 1st sentence without bursting into tears.

- Mother

I can imagine it must be so upsetting for them (young people) because they're like, screaming out for help, like 'I'm a victim, I'm a victim, I'm just lashing out now because I'm so sick of being ignored'. But all they're getting is like, that's wrong. You're in trouble. Go to court. Here's more punishment.

- Practitioner

Improving systemic responses to young people remains a priority area for GCDVIR and therefore, in 2026, we are committed to continuing this project by exploring further opportunities of reaching mothers and young people who may be willing to share their lived experience expertise with us.



### **Acknowledging contributions of Integrated Response Partners**

In our work, we rely on our allies throughout our community to help us support survivors. These allies are in all sectors and professions and work with us to assist survivors of domestic and family violence to navigate the complex and often re-traumatising service system that they are entangled in through no fault of their own. Every year at the annual DV Prevention Month breakfast event, we acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of an exceptional leader from our sector

for their role in improving integrated responses to domestic and family violence.

This year Inspector Scott Knowles was presented with the DV Prevention Award for his leadership, collaboration and dedication to go above and beyond, to increase the safety and wellbeing of survivors and accountability for persons using violence. Inspector Knowles was a strong advocate of the DVPC-QPS colocation pilot program that was first launched in 2020 and reintroduced in 2023. His ongoing commitment to this program and to partnering with external agencies to improve police responses to women reporting DFV, speaks volumes to his integrity and character. We thanked Inspector Knowles for his contributions to improving integrated responses to domestic and family violence in the Gold Coast region.



# Coordinated Community Response Training

A coordinated community response to domestic and family violence is the fundamental principle of the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated Response. DVIR is based on the world-renowned Duluth model of coordinated community response and DVPC are fortunate to have a long-standing partnership and friendship with Melissa Scaia, who has over 25 years of experience of working internationally to address gender-based violence. She is an international trainer on domestic violence and coercive control and she works with UN Women to provide training and technical assistance globally on working with criminalized survivors She has also

led and organized three Coordinated Community Responses (CCRs) to address domestic violence in Minnesota.

In Nov 2024, DVPC and DVIR members had the wonderful and exclusive opportunity to have a full day training with Melissa Scaia to discuss the principles of a coordinated community response and look at ways to enhance systemic responses by going beyond training. DVPC and DVIR would like to thank Melissa for her continuing guidance, encouragement and support. We are already looking forward to Melissa's next visit to Australia.





# 2025 DV Prevention Month Breakfast

With Dr. Faiza El-Higzi





# Purple Tent





James Stewart, Treasurer

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

I am pleased to present the financial results for the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Incorporated (“the Association”) for the year ended 30 June 2025.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. The financial statements have been audited by Crowe Audit Australia in compliance with Australian Auditing Standards, and I am pleased to confirm that a positive audit opinion was achieved.

The Association continues to be primarily funded by government grants, for which DVPC tenders on a regular basis. For the reporting period, revenue from government grants increased by 22% to \$8.06 million, reflecting the ongoing commitment to the domestic violence sector and the importance of the Association’s services.

Despite this strong revenue growth, the Association recorded a net deficit of \$37k, compared to a surplus of \$742k in the prior year. This outcome was anticipated as the Association focused on fully utilising funding to expand required services.

Key financial highlights for 2024–2025 include:

### **Revenue Growth**

- Government grant income rose by \$1.46 million (22%), driven by additional funding allocations.
- Other income increased from \$78k to \$372k, primarily due to a significant donation and higher rental and miscellaneous income.

### **Expenditure**

- Employee benefits expense grew by \$2.15 million (45%) to \$6.87 million, reflecting an increase in staffing to meet service demand.
- Direct client-related costs more than doubled to \$370k given the expansion of services provided.
- IT consulting and project costs also increased as part of infrastructure and service improvements.

### **Financial Position**

- DVPC continues to manage its cash reserves prudently, and the Association maintains a strong balance sheet with net assets of \$4.53 million and cash reserves of \$3.79 million, ensuring sustainability and capacity to meet future obligations.
- Unearned income of \$121k is recorded as contract liabilities, representing funding received for services that will be delivered in FY26.

DVPC remains financially resilient and well positioned to provide critical support to the community. The Board and Leadership Team are committed to ensuring that all resources are directed toward supporting those impacted by domestic violence.

For detailed information on revenue, expenditure, and financial position, please refer to the accompanying financial statements and notes.

**James Stewart**  
**Treasurer**



# DVPC SUPPORTERS



We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone listed for their commitment, partnership, and support throughout the year. Each of you has played a meaningful role in strengthening our work and helping us continue to stand alongside victim survivors with care, dignity, and purpose.

We cannot do this work alone, and we want to acknowledge our sector partners, our funding body, and their staff. We also want to recognise and applaud the dedication and tenacity of the staff at DVPC, who show up every day with heart and hope. Your unwavering belief in safety, dignity, and change is the foundation of all we do.

## Thank you

Airbnb Community Fund  
AV Partners  
BITS Technology Group  
Bloomjar  
Broadbeach Robina Cricket Club  
Bunnings Warehouse Southport  
Burleigh Bowls Women's Team Charity Table  
Café Catalinas  
FRANKZ  
Hilton Hotel Surfers Paradise  
Lions Club (Carrara)  
MooGoo  
Moss N Stone  
Mylie Campbell  
New Life Church  
Officeworks Southport  
Our regular donors  
Queensland Gives  
RACV Royal Pines Resort  
Ramen Danbo  
Russ and Jan Thompson  
Soak Bathhouse  
The Village Markets  
Wesnet  
WorkUP Queensland  
Zonta Club (Paradise Point)  
Zupp Property Group



# Domestic Violence Prevention Centre

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 [www.domesticviolence.com.au](http://www.domesticviolence.com.au)

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The Domestic Violence Prevention Centre is funded by the Department of Families,  
Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Queensland Government.

