

May 7, 2020

## **CENTRE FOR NON-VIOLENCE WELCOMES FUNDING TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND CHILDREN SEEKING SAFETY**

Centre for Non-Violence today welcomes the Victorian government's commitment of extra funding to support specialist family violence response services to respond to COVID-19.

Support for victim/survivors of family violence will be further strengthened through additional funding for phone-based and online responses and outreach support.

The funding will also assist specialist family violence case management services to deliver crisis response, including addressing costs associated with support such as housing and emergency accommodation, transport, personal safety responses, medical costs and material aid.

The funds will also assist Centre for Non-Violence to respond to changes in service delivery as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

Centre for Non-Violence chief executive officer Margaret Augerinos say this funding will help boost CNV's crisis case management support and brokerage funding and flexible funding, which will help women and children to access safety.

"We expect that as we see Covid-19 restriction ease in the coming weeks and months, our service will see increased demand," she said. "Currently as we are being asked to remain at home unless it is essential to go out, women have limited opportunities to safely make calls away from their abuser, or access services. We welcome any investment that will assist us to help keep them safe, when they can reach out to us."

Centre for Non-Violence will next week start an advertising campaign across television, radio and social media – with the message 'you are not alone'.

"It is always difficult to know the true number of domestic violence victims, but the silence during this global pandemic is telling," Ms Augerinos said.

"We have seen fewer calls, but many of those coming are in the high-risk category – which means women are not in a position to be able to reach out for the help they need until they are in crisis.

"This is not what we want. We want to reach those women before the abuse or violence escalates."

Ms Augerinos says many women will be drawing on their own resources to keep themselves and their children safe, while they are all at home.

"We want women to know we are here, and they can talk to us about what is happening," she said.

Centre for Non-Violence covers the Loddon region – which includes the City of Greater Bendigo and the Central Goldfields, Mt Alexander, Macedon Ranges, Loddon and Buloke shires.

**Centre for Non-Violence can be contacted on 1800 884 292 | The 24-hour statewide safe steps family violence crisis response line is 1800 015 188 | Men's Referral Service 1300 766 491 | In an emergency, call 000 | [www.cnv.org.au](http://www.cnv.org.au)**

Further information: Nicole Ferrie, Head of Media and Communications – 0475 963 741