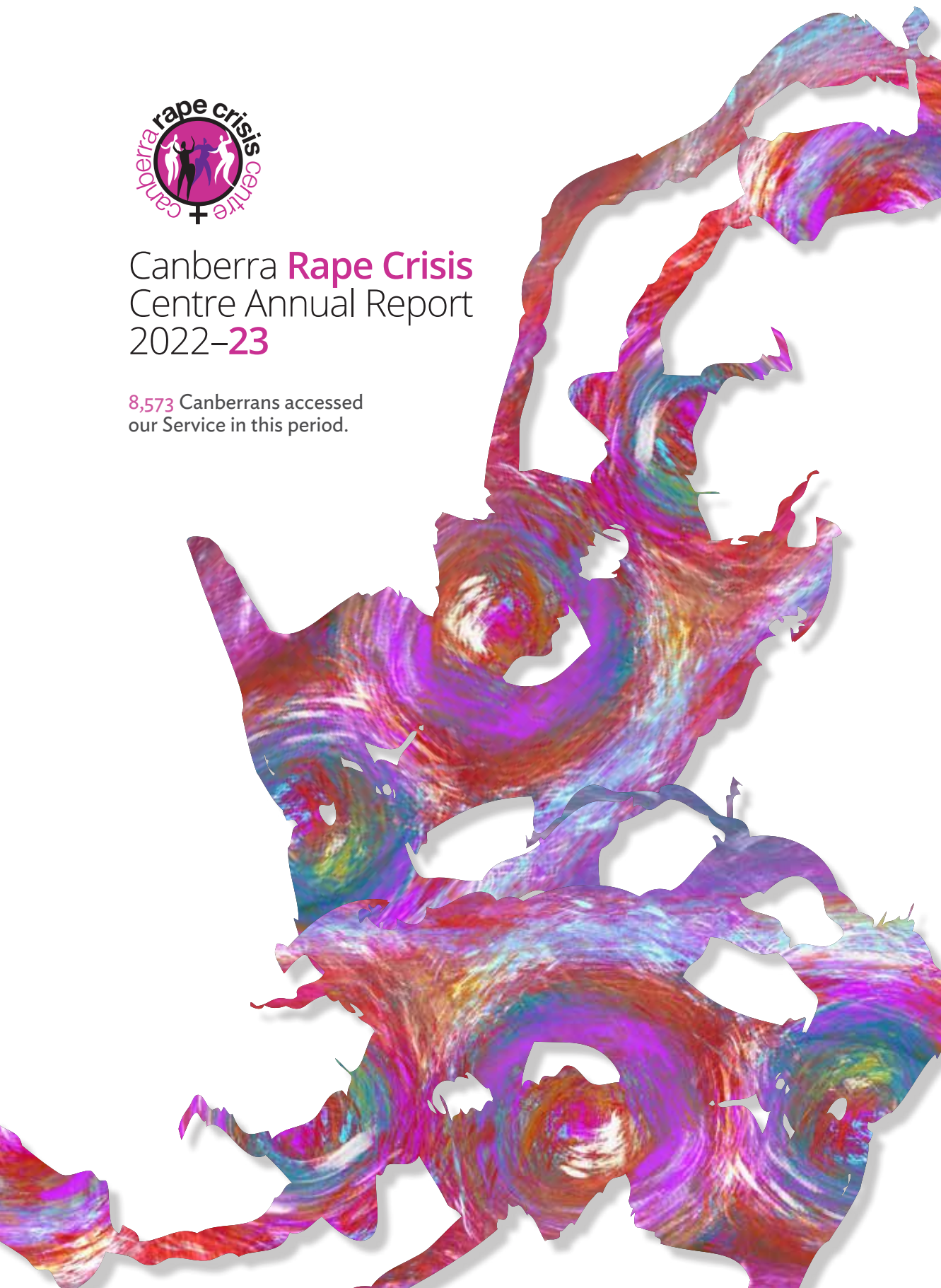




Canberra **Rape Crisis** Centre Annual Report 2022-**23**

8,573 Canberrans accessed
our Service in this period.





Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

Sexual assault counselling for women, children, young people, families and men

24 hour callout service
to Police and hospitals

Crisis and counselling line
7am-11pm, 7 days a week

Advocacy, education and training

Crisis contacts

For client and services enquiries,
crisis contact and counselling services

Crisis phone line: (02) 6247 2525
Crisis text line Only: 0488 586 518
Crisis email contact: crisis@crcc.org.au

General enquiries

Business phone line: (02) 6287 3618
Email: crcc@crcc.org.au

At a glance



1 in 16 men
are affected by
sexual violence



1 in 3 girls
are affected by
sexual violence

Supported by



ACT
Government



26,104
telephone
contacts



45,000
text messages



700
crisis
appointments



372
call-outs



1,300
follow ups



817
identified as culturally
and linguistically diverse



2,135
young people aged 12-15 years
accessed services



274
homeless



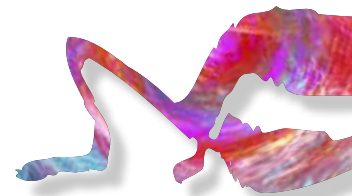
790
new clients

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Mission

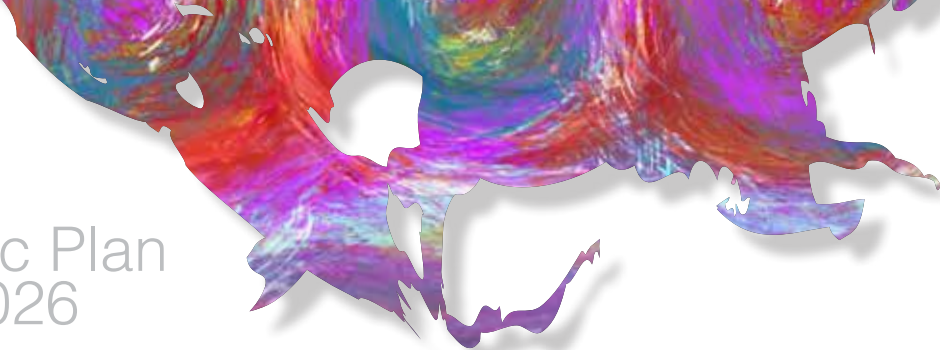
Within a feminist framework,
be an active, visible catalyst
for social change through high
quality services



Values

Respect • Collaboration
Empowerment • Innovation

Strategic Plan 2023-2026



Respect

Respect is the foundation for which all that we do is built upon. We respect our service users, each other, our partners, stakeholders and community. We actively respect the communities we serve. We use respect to engage with First Nations communities, communities living with disabilities, older people, children, those in living and working institutions, homelessness services, young people, children, adults and LGBTIQ+ communities. We will call out disrespect aimed at people impacted by sexual violence.

- Build and maintain an organisational culture and environment that values and supports all workers and Board members to deliver outcomes of excellence.
- Respectful relationships throughout internal and external communication needs.
- Demonstrate good governance through an engaged, professional Board of a diverse group, focussed on the broad strategic direction of the CRCC.
- Maintain strategic leadership with a strong policy and procedural framework to guide the agency.
- Build solid foundations for staff through their professional development to deliver the best outcomes possible for CRCC clients.
- Welcome and encourage diversity and innovation amongst our membership and staff.
- Build stronger organisational relationships by cultural and inclusion with local First Nations people.
- Fostering engagement with the union.
- Work within existing local, national, and international efforts to ensure that complex trauma frameworks are well understood within all structures and systems to better address slavery, trafficking, and child prostitution, as well as rape used as a weapon in war and sexual violence within all military and combat personnel.
- Develop and deliver contemporary best practice and non pathologising practices in service delivery.

PRIORITIES

- Always focus on building a culture where staff, Board members are valued and respected through;
- Appropriate support mechanisms, including debriefing, EAP and supervision, are in place for staff
- Continuous improvements in services are achieved through monitoring, review and action
- Professional development and Staff wellbeing remain
- Risk management and continuity planning is in place and functioning.
- Membership growth of the Association to further develop the foundation of the services provided
- Fostering relationships with marginalised groups, stakeholders, and organisations.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Organisational culture and values are assessed through performance management, feedback, and other processes.
- The needs of staff working in a crisis setting that responds to sexual violence are identified, implemented, and prioritised. Informal and formal staff support mechanisms in place and reviewed for effectiveness.
- Staff demonstrate contemporary best practice in all aspects of work.
- Service and business quality indicators are measured and reviewed regularly.
- All relevant policies, procedures, risk management, business continuity plans are in place and reviewed annually.
- Workplace health and safety and risk management is part of all work and monitored for effectiveness.
- Continued growth in Association membership.

Leadership

Our knowledge and ways of helping are Best Practice in the field of sexual violence and trauma. We provide leadership to our Community through our responses to sexual violence individually and as communities, education, primary prevention, trauma-informed expertise, sharing knowledge, information and our learnings. We use our knowledge to help people and communities understand the impacts of sexual violence better as the community is where victim/survivors go for help.

- The work of the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) remains an important focal point for CRCC for the united voice it provides to government and communities across Australia. The voice of NASASV brings the voices of Sexual Assault Services and service users together to provide a voice to government on all levels.
- Provide guidance to the community on myths and realities of sexual violence to work against the influence of discrimination that surrounds those who disclose sexual violence.
- Provide direction to the media in appropriate reporting of sexual violence.
- Influence systemic responses to sexual violence so communities are educated and considered in how they respond to sexual violence.
- Provide leadership and influence internally so that CRCC is robust in its capacity to respond to the community.
- Speak out on issues affecting those seeking CRCC services in all forums.
- Build cultural safety for First Nations people by proactively seeking ways to support First Nations led responses to sexual violence.
- Provide direction about the need for cultural change nationally to ensure that communities build a strong and sustainable response to those impacted by sexual violence.
- Provide Leadership support and development to CRCC Management and Board so that the Organisation is united.
- CRCC will speak out on all issues affecting survivors of sexual violence.

PRIORITIES

- CRCC continues to represent NASASV on a range of local and national levels, supporting NASASV with Treasury and attendance at events and meetings.
- CRCC lobbies local governments on issues for NASASV membership and member organisations.
- CRCC maintains a public presence on issues affecting service users of the ACT and nationally.
- CRCC advocates for survivors of child sexual assault, recognising the specific needs of this population.
- CRCC advocates for the needs of male survivors of child sexual assault recognising the specific needs of this group.
- CRCC promotes the need to respond effectively to children and young people with problem sexualised behaviours and to understand responses from a trauma-informed framework.
- CRCC supports broader initiatives within First Nations communities and seeks opportunities to partner on opportunities responding and preventing sexual violence.
- CRCC Board practice good governance providing effective broad direction to CRCC.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- NASASV forums and functions attended
- NASASV Treasury functions undertaken
- Ministerial Advisory Council on Women
- Social Media/Online presence
- Frameworks for Responding to PBS are developed by CRCC
- Progression of ServiceNow
- Reclaim the Night.



Connection

We cannot stop the impact of sexual violence alone. We can respond to, prevent and stop sexual violence by working with each other and those around us towards a world that is free of sexual violence. Connection breaks down the isolation and silence of sexual violence, so communities are stronger. Through connection we can educate people about the impacts of sexual violence, making it visible whether the violence occurred recently or long ago.

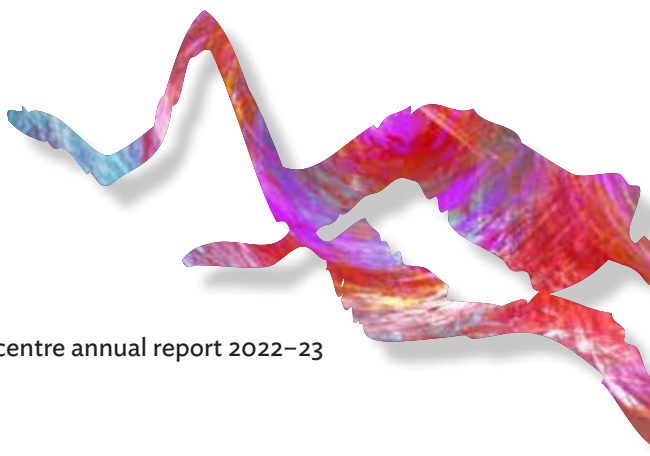
- Maintain links to the historical Feminist Movement recognising that Rape Crisis Centres are part of a global Feminist network and are agents for social change, as well as crisis, counselling, support and advocacy services.
- Advocate and increase awareness and knowledge of, and provide support to; the causes and impacts of rape, sexual violence, child sexual assault-recently or long ago, intergenerational trauma, sexual violence in the broader context of family violence, and recent sexual assault locally, nationally and internationally
- Support service users throughout all life stages including children, young people, adults, older persons, and their supporters
- Advocate and increase awareness and knowledge of stalking, harassment and predatory behaviour
- Influence systemic and social responses to sexual violence in all its forms through all levels of Government.
- Make visible the communities more vulnerable to sexual violence and help communities build capacity to better respond to sexual violence such as First Nations communities, People Living with Disabilities and LGBTQIA+ communities
- Forge links to respond to sexual assault, child sexual assault, slavery and trafficking of children and women, including those within war and combat zones.
- Build and maintain collaborative productive relationships with key agencies to address the structural causes of adult sexual violence and child sexual assault and influence justice, health and community responses to respond in a trauma-informed way.
- Build & maintain an online service provision and presence aimed at responding to and educating the community about E-Safety and other forms of sexual violence.
- Market and strengthen the reputation of CRCC as the key sexual assault services provider locally and nationally.

PRIORITIES

- Work with ASC restorative program to improve responses and support survivors of child sexual assault within institutions.
- Positive relationships with existing stakeholders are maintained and new relationships are sought.
- Key partnerships are developed and maintained.
- Position CRCC as expert in issues relating to sexual violence.
- Media, community awareness campaigns and events to continue to raise awareness about sexual violence and the impacts.
- Mitigating barriers to service for accessibility to online support services.
- Establishing key partnerships with social media platforms, key stakeholders, utilising social media for service promotion and awareness raising.
- Responding to sexual violence in all systems including aged care, health, child protection, criminal justice system and prisons.
- Actively reduce barriers for community groups to access sexual assault services by maintaining visibility of these groups in initiatives and planning at CRCC.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- The number of opportunities to raise the CRCC public profile sought with increased references in media, government and other forums.
- Increased community awareness about the impacts of sexual assault and child sexual assault through the media, community campaigns, systemic advocacy, and awareness raising events.
- Increased requests for participation on panels, committees, forums, training partnerships.
- High level of visibility at key strategic meetings both locally and nationally.
- Systemic advocacy is foundational in all areas of CRCC planning.
- Networks developed and maintained.
- Collaboration with Community, Government and Systems.



Empowerment

Empowerment of people impacted by Sexual Violence in all its forms through Advocacy, Social Action, Primary Prevention, Education, Capacity Building, Systemic Advocacy, Training, Crisis Intervention, Counselling, Group Work and Professional Consultation, and community awareness raising. We empower individuals and communities to stand against sexual violence.

- Services to survivors and their supports seeking assistance for sexual assault and child sexual abuse, whether the trauma has been recent or historical.
- Telephone crisis response to those seeking support for the impacts of sexual violence.
- A 24 hour call out service to police and medical forensic services.
- Counselling, court support and advocacy for women, children, young people and men, who are survivors of sexual assault, their families, and supporters.
- Acknowledge the overlap and collaboration between crisis, counselling and advocacy for a whole of team focus.
- Deliver services for those seeking support and information about the Australian Sports Commission sexual misconduct schemes, Financial Assistance, Legal Responses through our Legal Aid partnership.
- Community support and engagement, capacity building, and counselling for people from First Nations communities.
- Developing strategies with schools to assist in the prevention of sexual assault, and assisting with policy and procedures for disclosure of sexual assault and child sexual assault.
- Developing processes for online services, telephone and online counselling for the needs of marginalized people, young people and vulnerable groups.
- Developing group settings to build knowledge and awareness regarding psychosocial education and providing support.

PRIORITIES

- Services for survivors of recent sexual assault, those who have been sexually assaulted in the past, and for those sexually assaulted as children within families, institutions, and other settings, are provided through crisis and call out services, telephone support, advocacy, counselling, group work, outreach, and other support services.
- Reduce barriers for groups and communities who face multiple difficulties of disadvantage, disability, or culture to accessing sexual assault services through innovating programs and strategies that fill gaps and better meet the needs of community groups accessing CRCC services.
- Maintain service practice with international best practice guidelines and continue to develop and engage the community in specialist training services.
- Maintain service funding and seek alternate funding for new innovations and growth.
- Maintain visibility of the impacts of child sexual assault, trafficking and slavery within and outside of war zones and the military to support the important focus of UN Women in these areas.
- Developing processes for online services, telephone and online counselling for the needs of marginalised people, vulnerable people to reduce accessibility barriers.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Crisis and first response service is maintained with an increasing number of services provided.
- Counselling, groups, advocacy, and support services are provided to survivors of sexual assault and child sexual assault.
- Clinical practice is continually updated in line with international best practice.
- Community engagement and specialist training programs are provided.
- Funding levels remain stable with increases to meet new service demands demonstrated.
- Client feedback on services and education programs is used in quality review and improvement of service provision.



Diversity

We invite diversity meaningfully as we recognise the importance of our Organisation reflecting the difference of the community we serve. Sexual Violence does not discriminate. Any person can be impacted by sexual violence. We use this knowledge to respond to Sexual Violence in all its forms. We will use diverse strategies to reach the communities who need us most.

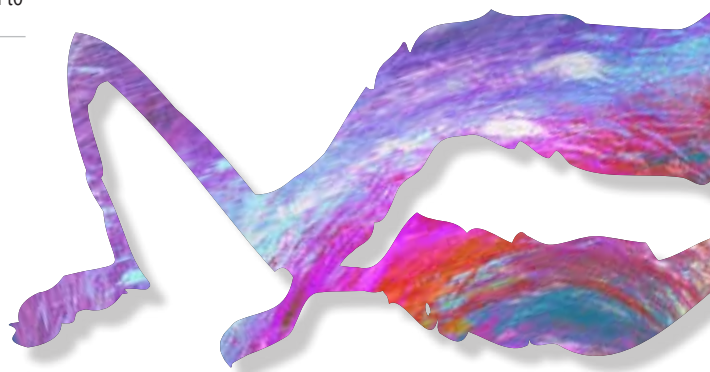
- Build upon existing CRCC Training and Education programs to focus on Consent training and Responding to Disclosures in schools, universities and workplaces.
- Services providing support, advice, engagement and advocacy for older persons and those with a disability, in home or institutional care, for recent and/or historical sexual assault.
- Supporting engagement and supporting capacity building within First Nations communities to empower communities to lead culturally safe responses and prevent sexual violence.
- Focus on the needs of young people impacted by sexual violence and their right to seek Justice.
- Bring the voices of those not easily seen by communities to discussions on directions and issues facing survivors of sexual violence by providing solutions and expertise locally and nationally.
- Model respectful inclusion in all interactions to ensure that communities engage proactively with diverse people and communities, to ensure they are visible to the broader communities.
- Ensure that CRCC Staff and Board reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.
- Bring understanding to the multiple complexities faced by community members who belong to different communities- recognising there is an intersection between many groups impacted by sexual violence making it crucial that diverse strategies are developed to meet the needs of these groups.

PRIORITIES

- Connection with Service Providers offering services to Gender Diverse communities.
- Connection with international groups responding to Military Sexual Assault.
- Connection with ACT Community Services
- Initiatives that better meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities recognising the broad intersection between many diverse groups.
- Connection with Services representing older people in our Community
- Create visibility of Sexual Violence in related systems such as mental health, health, justice, homelessness and drug and alcohol services.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Rainbow Accreditation
- Reconciliation Plan
- Older Persons Advocacy Network relationship is maintained.
- Detainees in the Alexander Machonachie Centre(AMC) have access to CRCC services.
- Child Youth Protection Services
- Legal Aid- Specialist legal services for Victim/Survivors pilot.
- Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Centre(FAMSAC) MOU
- Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team (SACAT) MOU
- Australian Federal Police (AFP) MOU
- Everyman collaboration continues to be successful for CRCC Staff and Service Users focussing on leadership and partnership.
- Men's Forum on Sexual Assault
- Primary Prevention Pilot is delivered in 2 schools
- National Office for Child Safety- Practice and Systems Improvement Panel to maintain a focus on those living with historical trauma.
- National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children engagement
- Partnership with A Gender Agenda
- Representation on the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women(MACW).



Organisational chart



Chair's report

The Board is pleased to report that the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) has, as an organisation, successfully come through the last few difficult years remarkably unscathed. The CEO and staff are, no doubt, relieved their own personal normality's are being restored after carrying each other, and the organisation, through multiple historically extraordinary years.

CRCC not only increased its capacity this year, but continued to maintain very high standards of service delivery. This ongoing high performance was clearly reflected in the respect shown by funding bodies, service providers and most importantly, by clients. It is the wellbeing of clients that has always been, and remains, the focus and purpose of the organisation. The Board is grateful for the consistent manner in which the CEO continues to carry out her onerous responsibilities. The Board is especially grateful also for the incredible commitment of CRCC's staff, all of whom make the critical work of CRCC possible.

We were disappointed to lose Valerie Papin as our Board Chair this year. Valerie was always an energetic and committed Board member. Prior to becoming Chair, she was a great asset to the Board, serving as a focused, informative and responsible Treasurer. We will miss her energy, informed input, wisdom and initiative.

This year we also saw the departure of Rossana Carr after many years of service as a Board member and as Vice Chair. We will miss Rossana's quiet stability. Rossana could always be relied on for her thoughtfully considered opinions and input. She was

particularly adept at identifying and addressing unusual issues which arose from time to time.

It is always a privilege to work with the focused, intelligent and committed people who serve on the Board. They all have busy lives, with many and varied commitments. They volunteer their time to CRCC and never shy away from the work their role on the Board brings. They are all proud of and actively supportive of the service CRCC provides to clients and to the community at large. As is so often the case with voluntary Boards, members are challenged with balancing their commitment to the Board alongside their other 'life' commitments to their families, their paid employment and their other volunteer duties for a wide range of equally-important local and national not-for-profit services. We fully support members who find themselves having to make a choice between their varied commitments and understand that when choices need to be made regarding how they balance their time, they may need to step away from their CRCC Board duties.

The Board is looking forward to the continued growth of CRCC, with the knowledge that the work of this organisation not only saves lives but also actively aims to ensure quality of life for the most vulnerable.

Lessli Strong
CRCC Board Chair



CRCC Board

Chair	Lessli Strong
Deputy Chair	Greg Aldridge
Treasurer	Melinda Tarrant
Secretary	Michelle Coffill
Members	Kathryn Hayes
	Deborah Inge

LESSLI STRONG – CHAIR

Lessli was admitted to practice as a solicitor in 1984. Since then she has practiced primarily in family law matters. During that time she was also employed at UTS as a legal researcher, family law lecturer, student mentor and examiner. She did similar work at ANU as an instructor, mentor and examiner.

In 2001 Lessli established her legal practice in the ACT which specialised in family law, domestic violence and child welfare matters, Wills and Estates.. She represented children in the Family Court, the Federal Circuit Court and in the ACT Children’s Court.

Lessli has been the Vice President and founding member of the Canberra and Region Family Law Professionals Association. She was a member of the advisory panel for the introduction of Working With Vulnerable People Legislation in ACT and also a member of the advisory panel for the introduction of Sexual and Violent Offences Legislation Amendment Legislation in ACT. Prior to her attempted retirement at the beginning of 2022 she was the Chair of the Family Violence and Children’s Committee of the ACT Law Society.

Lessli has failed at retirement and is now working for ACT Legal Aid as supervisor of their Family Law Duty Service and Family Advocacy and Support Services.

MELINDA TARRANT – TREASURER

Melinda has worked as a financial services senior executive and business leader, contributing to strategy development and driving business results. She has a Bachelor of Commerce (UNSW). She has served on the Board of Bicycle NSW since 2014 to create a better environment for bicycle riders and currently holds the role of President.

She has contributed to several other Boards and not for profits in both Director and management roles. She recently retired and is transitioning to Canberra where she is keen to be an active volunteer supporting the local community. Melinda joined the Board in February 2022.

MICHELLE COFFILL OAM – SECRETARY

Michelle is a Senior Advisor to the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal, the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal and the Australian Public Service (APS) Commissioner. Over the last 2 decades Michelle has worked in various other executive-level positions across the APS, specialising in organisational performance and capability. Michelle holds a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) and a Bachelor of Arts (Sociology) from the Australian National University. She is an active volunteer for various other charities and not-for-profits.



Michelle served as Secretary of Hear No Evil – Australian Deaf Dog Rescue (HNE) from 2014 – 2020 and is now an expert advisor to HNE, Australia’s first and only nation-wide rescue for dogs and cats that are deaf and/or blind and/or have significant neurological conditions.

Michelle is a Caretaker for Sleepbus, providing safe sleeps for people experiencing homelessness. She also volunteers with Ngunnawal Street Pantries, helping provide free food, clothing and other essentials to people in need. In June 2022 Michelle was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to public administration and animal welfare. Michelle joined the Board in May 2023.

GREG ALDRIDGE – DEPUTY CHAIR

Greg Aldridge has worked in the community sector in the ACT for over 40 years. He is the current CEO of Everyman Australia and a founding member, having worked there for the past 18 years. Greg has focussed on building a sustainable and respected Organisation responding to the needs of men and their families who present with complex needs.

Greg has developed effective leadership pathways within his Organisation and values collaboration and community sector alliances that build better community connections to improve services to people who have multiple and complex needs.

Greg is a registered psychologist.

DEBORAH INGE

Deborah Inge is a Clinical Psychologist with 40 years experience working in clinical, community and forensic settings. Deborah is dedicated to social services with dual qualifications in Social Work and Psychology. Deborah started her clinical career working in Adelaide as a prison Social Worker and in probation and parole after a year working as a Correctional Officer.

As a registered Psychologist she later established a private practice and managed community allied health teams in rural Queensland before relocating to Canberra where she has worked in Senior roles in Child and Adolescent and Forensic Mental Health Services, The Bushfire Recovery Programme and Family Court.

Having worked exclusively for the past 18 years in private practice in Canberra, Deborah is dedicated to Mental Health excellence in service delivery with a strong focus on supporting the vulnerable and advocating against sexual violence.

KATHRYN HAYES

Katherine Hayes is the Director of Hayes and Co. She has been working in financial services industry since 2004. Katherine has won multiple awards for her role as a risk specialist as well as customer service awards. She is a published author and co-host of the personal-finance education podcast Mobey Madams. Catherine is a Director and member of her professional Association, the for Financial Advice Association of Australia, (FAAA) and sits on the advisory board of a major insurance company.

Treasurer's report

All recurrent funding for the Centre is received from the ACT Government and the Australian Sports Commission. During the financial year, the following funds were received (ex GST): \$3,077,352.

2022-23 has shown continued demand on the Service. New funding has become available because of these difficult times and following other unfortunate events which increased the spotlight on sexual assault and consent.

CRCC has continued as a financially robust and viable organisation through accountable financial management and reporting processes. However due to the increasing demand for services, we have invested in additional staff and consultants which has led to a reduction in our reserves. As a result, we will receive increased grants in the next financial year. As the organisation continues to grow and evolve, we will build a

management structure to support the larger organisation which will in turn enable us to drive further efficiencies. CRCC will continue to maximise the funding deployed to the crisis services as it continues on this trajectory.

CRCC would like to thank the auditing team at Nexia Canberra for ensuring that there are no irregularities in the accounting and internal control systems and that CRCC has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements.

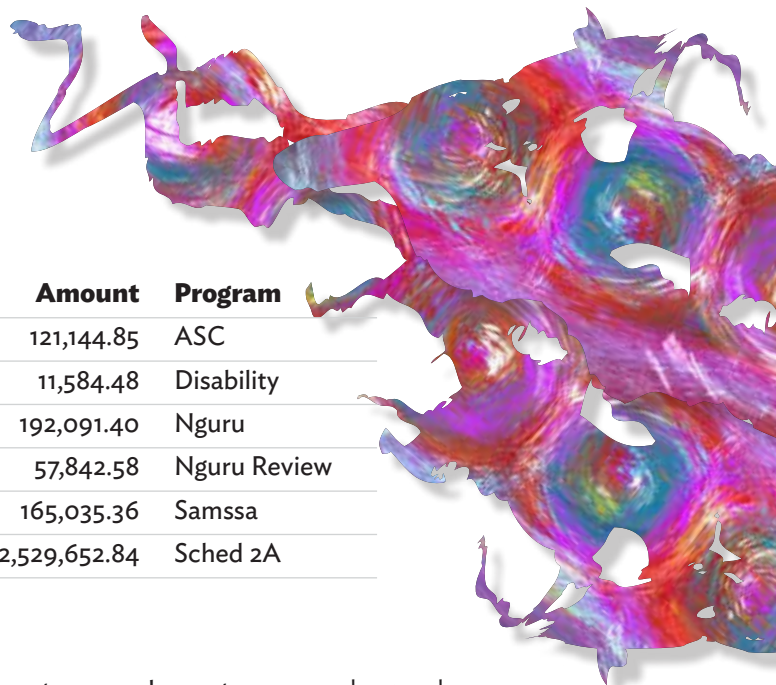
CRCC would like to thank Curtis & Co for the accounting services provided over the last eight years. We look forward to working with First Class Accounts in the next financial year and transitioning to a new accounting platform.

If you would like a detailed copy of the CRCC audited financial statements, please email crcc@crcc.org.au.

Melinda Tarrant
CRCC Board Treasurer

PROGRAM INCOME

Who	Amount	Program
Australian Sports Commission	121,144.85	ASC
Community Services Directorate	11,584.48	Disability
Community Services Directorate	192,091.40	Nguru
Community Services Directorate	57,842.58	Nguru Review
Community Services Directorate	165,035.36	Samssa
Community Services Directorate	2,529,652.84	Sched 2A



Chief Executive Officer's report

Firstly this year I would like to thank the Board and Staff of CRCC for all efforts to keep CRCC thriving and effectively navigating all of the challenges before us. The Staff teams have united to respond with professionalism, humour and care to the record high demand on CRCC services. These efforts are not easy at times as everyone on the team of CRCC have their own challenges to manage, and this year the team have managed everything with integrity and dignity. To you all I say well done!

This year has seen CRCC called to both the national and international space as systems and governments try to improve responses to sexual violence in all of its many forms. Internationally we have responded to the issue of sexual violence and suicide in Defence. Nationally our peak National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) has stretched its capacity to meet the Commonwealth Government on many issues affecting survivors of Sexual Violence. As a result CRCC and NASASV are represented on a number of different groups across Australia. CRCC is part of the National Office for Child Safety Systems Improvement Panel, the National Centre Advisory Council and the National Sexual Violence Working Group as well as the enormous brief of the Board of NASASV. NASASV is the oldest peak in the violence space and is unfunded, which means the efforts of the group are coordinated off to the side, whilst we advocate for 120 services across Australia and manage the services, we work in. This systemic advocacy is crucial to improving

responses to survivors and their supporters as we know if we can improve responses at the highest level of government, it will influence positively down to the states and territories.

Locally CRCC is part of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women (MACW), inquiries, and the DSVS Roundtable. This year CRCC has also needed to meet the requirements of the ACT Housing Commissioning process, ACT Review of Policing, and the ACT Government Review of Crisis Services, as well as respond to all the areas of sexual violence being focussed on in the ACT. This year has undoubtedly been a complex navigation for CRCC, as our priority is always the people in need of our services.

We cannot do the work we do without the support of our funders within Government. We would like to thank Kim Williamson and Biljana Petrova from ACT Government for their support of the work we do at CRCC. Both Biljana and Kim have worked with CRCC over many years, and often would not be aware of the great impact of their support. Thanks also go to the Office of Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault, to Kirsty Windeyer and Juliette Ford and their team, for their ongoing focus on the needs of those impacted by sexual violence, from a government perspective.

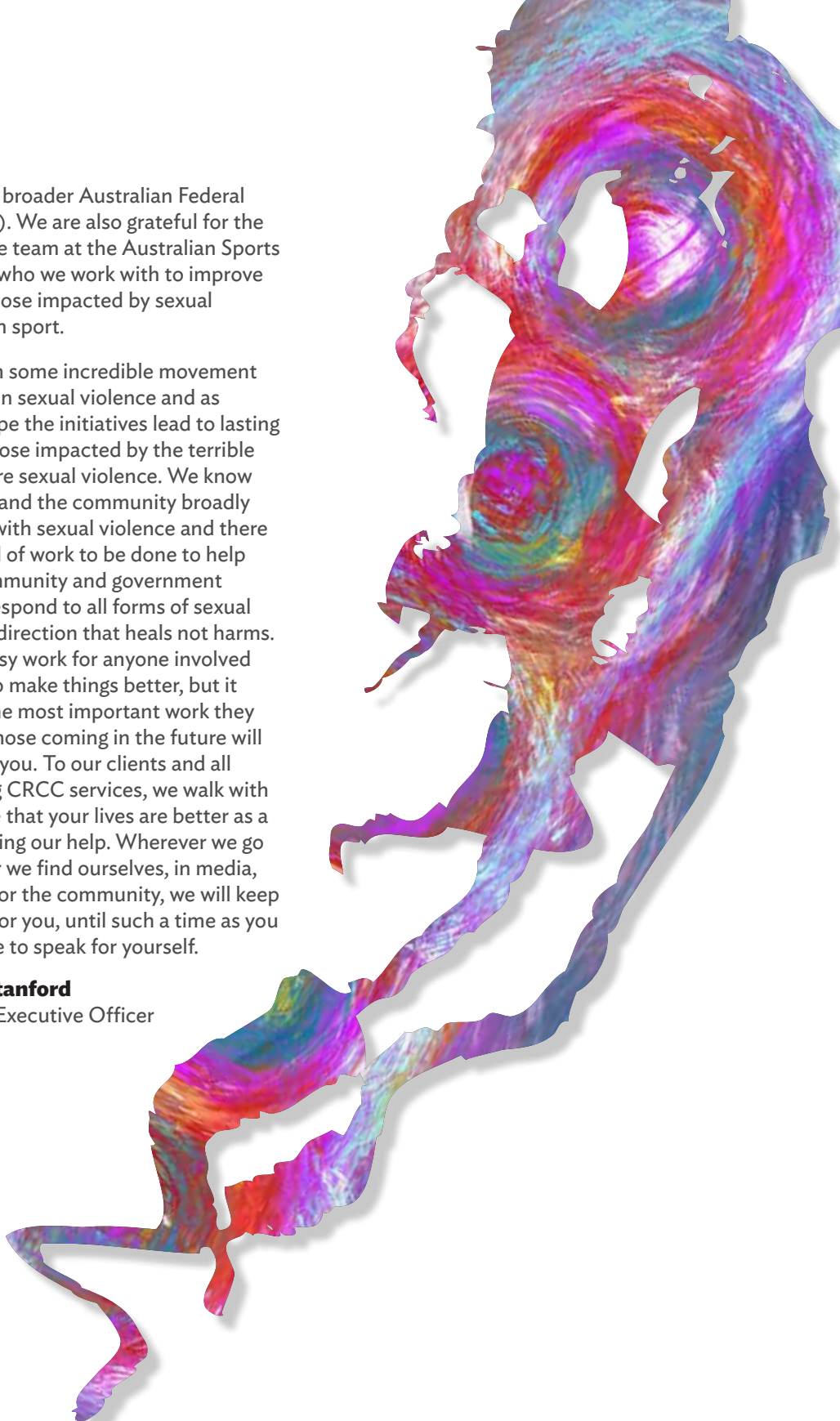
We thank the Ministers of the ACT, in particular Minister Berry and Minister Rattenbury for driving change in the ACT sexual assault response system, as well as all the MLA's involved in the focus on sexual violence.

We also thank our close stakeholders at Everyman, Beryl Women's Inc, Victim Support ACT, Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Centre (FAMSAC) and Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team (SACAT)

as well as the broader Australian Federal Policing (AFP). We are also grateful for the support of the team at the Australian Sports Commission who we work with to improve the lives of those impacted by sexual misconduct in sport.

We have seen some incredible movement in the focus on sexual violence and as always we hope the initiatives lead to lasting change for those impacted by the terrible crimes that are sexual violence. We know that systems and the community broadly still struggle with sexual violence and there is a great deal of work to be done to help build the community and government capacity to respond to all forms of sexual violence in a direction that heals not harms. This is not easy work for anyone involved in the drive to make things better, but it is for many the most important work they will do, and those coming in the future will always thank you. To our clients and all those seeking CRCC services, we walk with you and hope that your lives are better as a result of seeking our help. Wherever we go and wherever we find ourselves, in media, government, or the community, we will keep on speaking for you, until such a time as you can or choose to speak for yourself.

Chrystina Stanford
CRCC Chief Executive Officer



Nguru report

The Nguru Program has been a part of CRCC for over 10 years. The program is to assist Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander community in various ways. Nguru will continue to boost its employment with the hopes of increased funding to employ more staff. Nguru/CRCC proudly has employed its second staff member.

The Nguru program has been very busy with gaining momentum on engagement with other services in ACT and surrounds. Nguru spoke to students at Queanbeyan High School for their NAIDOC open day. This was a success for Nguru, as we had a request to also present at a local surrounding School.

Meeting was held with ACT Aboriginal Education Assistants which was informative and positive. This part of network community relationship building is essential to Nguru's success. Nguru will progress relationship building with the view of programs being delivered in community in the new year. Gugan Gulwan has agreed to host a training day from Nguru staff to educate about Nguru and the services we provide.

Nguru also assists the wider CRCC team with any cultural knowledge supports. Nguru will continue to support the wider team in areas of, CYPS, DFAT, in particular AMC and working with Indigenous clients. Nguru is in the process of registering with AMC approval to support one of the client programs.

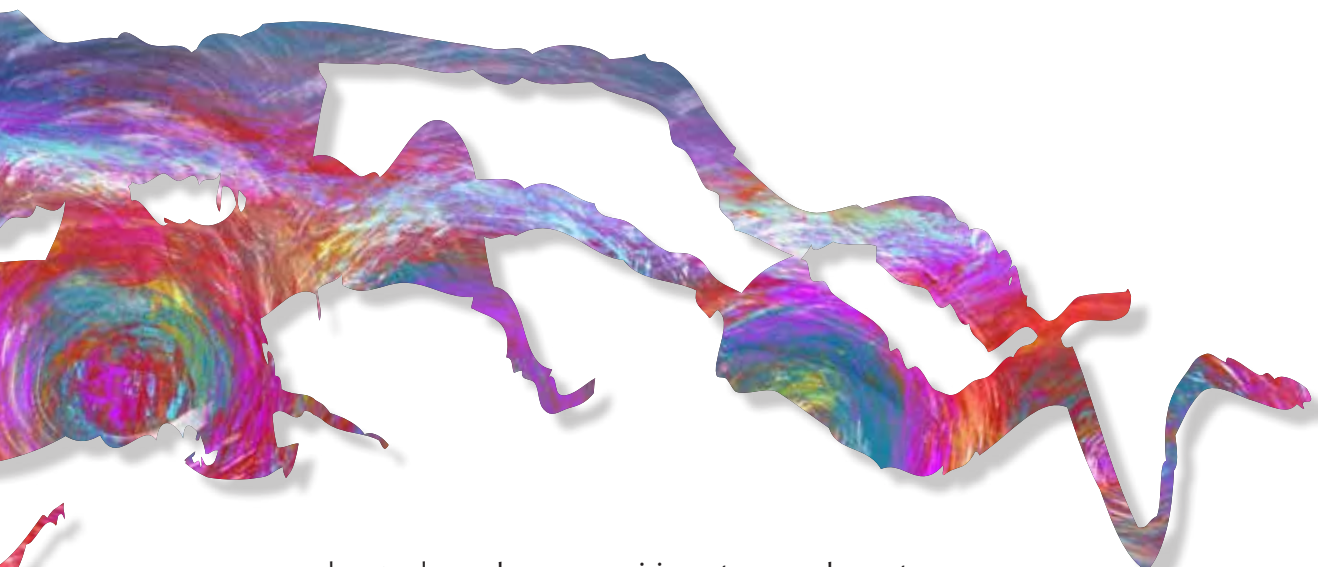
Nguru was approached to deliver a presentation in Forbes NSW, materials were sent to the Aboriginal Organisation from Nguru.

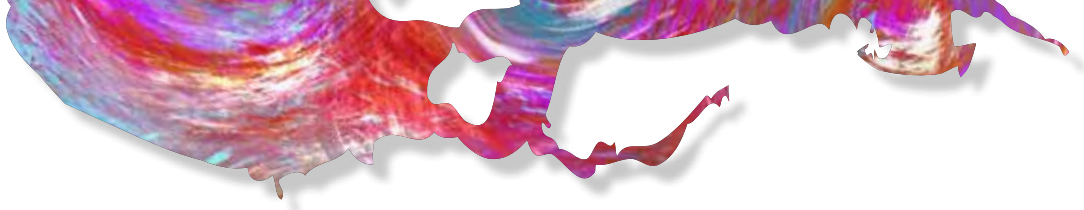
Nguru will continue to advocate on a local and National level, educating around sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities.

Nguru has the support of CRCC Team in particular Chrystina, our program needs to increase its public awareness in the community. This is ongoing and on track and in the right direction.

Nguru has plans to work in partnerships with community. This Nguru will pursue into the New Year.

Paula and Cecilia
CRCC Nguru





Coordinator's report

The crisis team navigated a changing and challenging landscape within the sexual violence space in 2022–23 with an ongoing and committed passion and drive to provide trauma informed, empathetic and caring support to victim/survivors.

The Canberra Rape Crisis' vision statement is to be an active, inclusive voice and presence against all forms of sexual violence until we are no longer needed - the crisis team embodies this vision and works tirelessly to ensure all users of our services access support that is individually tailored to their needs, and continues to do so through roster and staffing changes.

Notable events in 2022–23, such as changes in legislation for affirmative consent, the Inquiry into the Bruce Lerhman trial, the following recommendations from the Board of Inquiry, and increased media coverage saw an increase of callouts, as well as calls to the crisis line, for information, debriefs, and support.

The crisis team has continued to support service users to navigate the justice system through callouts to Court, Hospital, medical and forensic care via the Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care (FAMSAC) team, and investigation processes with General Duties AFP police and the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Team (SACAT) throughout a changing and evolving landscape.

The whole CRCC team responded to 26,104 phone contacts, and separate to counselling appointments there were almost 700 face

to face requests for support through crisis appointments and callouts. The team provided more than 45,000 text messages and emails throughout this period and remained in contact with 1,300 follow ups. We saw an increase in new clients, where previously returning clients were accessing the crisis line for support. We welcomed 790 new clients who have never accessed CRCC before requesting support accessing support via the crisis line, referrals and callouts, and provided continued support to existing and returning clients.

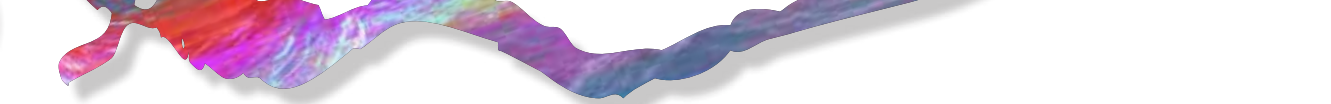
More recently the crisis team saw an increase in referrals for support, following our work with the Family Violence Unit in identifying and recognising the rates of sexual violence within Family and Domestic Violence.

The crisis team managed and navigated a busy year with incredible empathy, compassion and strength, as individuals and as a team - I am incredibly proud of the achievements of the team over the year and the support that was provided to each and every victim/survivor, parent, supporter, or professional who accessed the service.

It has been an honour to coordinate the crisis team, I cannot highlight or emphasise enough how hard the team works and how lucky Canberra Rape Crisis Centre is that the heart of the organisation is made of members who are passionate, have incredible strength and empathy, and work to drive change in the sexual violence space. I have no doubt that the team will continue to make significant differences in the lives of victim/survivors, and their families and supporters.

Lauren Clarke

CRCC Crisis Program Coordinator



Face-to-face counselling services and support letters

For another year, counselling services have continued to be extended to individuals who have been affected by trauma related to sexual assault and encompassing women, young people, children, families, and men from all walks of life. During this reporting period, after the uncertainty and isolation brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic within our vulnerable community members, we have fully resumed face-to-face engagement. Nevertheless, the advantages of telehealth cannot be disregarded. There are specific situations, such as physical disabilities, the inability to leave home, temporary residence outside the Canberra region, where telehealth has proven particularly valuable. In such instances, we continue to offer telehealth services, thereby reaching out to a wider range of communities.

Australian Sports Commission has significantly supported us in providing services to those impacted by sexual misconduct in sport, as our national clients may contact from various states across Australia. The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) Restorative program was established to acknowledge and address the harm experienced by AIS scholarship athletes, coaches, or support staff members involved in high-performance sports due to inappropriate practices or abuse during their time at AIS. The collaborative plan operates through the CRCC referral network and provides counselling along with assistance in completing application forms for financial aid. This program has been in operation for less than a year, with four referrals received to date, and we anticipate this number to rise in the future.

Over the past 12 months, we have conducted a total of 6200 sessions for our clients. Our dedicated counsellors have worked tirelessly to cater to the diverse needs of our community, considering factors such as age, gender, history, culture and developmental requirements.

We have also issued a substantial number of support letters to clients to aid them in securing financial assistance, housing, deferred university courses, and work certificates, at an average rate of one to two requests per week. Past clients have directly reached out to CRCC to access summaries of their counselling notes, and we have provided them with adequate support in this regard.

While 90% of our clients are women, we have observed a growing proportion of men seeking our assistance in navigating their challenging journeys. Additionally, a small fraction (approximately 3%) of children under the age of 12 have sought our services due to experiences of sexual violence, often perpetrated by family members. Despite high rates of gendered violence among youth, young women have historically faced difficulties in reporting to authority figures. However, we now witness an increasing number of young women coming forward to report incidents of sexual violence and to seek support and counselling. It is incredibly gratifying to see these young women taking control of their lives and holding those responsible accountable. In the last 12 months, approximately 30% of our clients have fallen into this category.

Although CRCC has a long history of collaborative work with other systems and government agencies to meet the community's needs, former clients continue to return due to their confidence in receiving the necessary assistance. Additionally, we consistently receive an average of approximately ten new clients each week who are making their initial contact with us. Notably, roughly half of these newcomers express a desire for continuous counselling and actively engage in our intake process.

Theodora Volti
CRCC Counselling Coordinator

Community Engagement Program

The Community Engagement Program at CRCC has grown considerably in the past year which has resulted in increased visibility of our service within the ACT and surrounds. We have continued to provide consent education to secondary school students and have expanded this to include responding to disclosures training for school staff. The team facilitated six education sessions across the year. These education sessions have been well received by students and staff and feedback from schools has been positive. CRCC have also continued to provide responding to disclosures training to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as part of their consular training held each month.

We have also hosted presentations and educational sessions with a range of units within ACT Policing including the Sexual Offences Child Abuse Program as well as the Family Violence Units. Further, we have continued to work alongside Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) in an effort to promote the interests and safety of children and young people in the ACT and surrounds. This year, CRCC began fortnightly visits to CYPS offices to provide consultation and offer information relating to referral pathways.

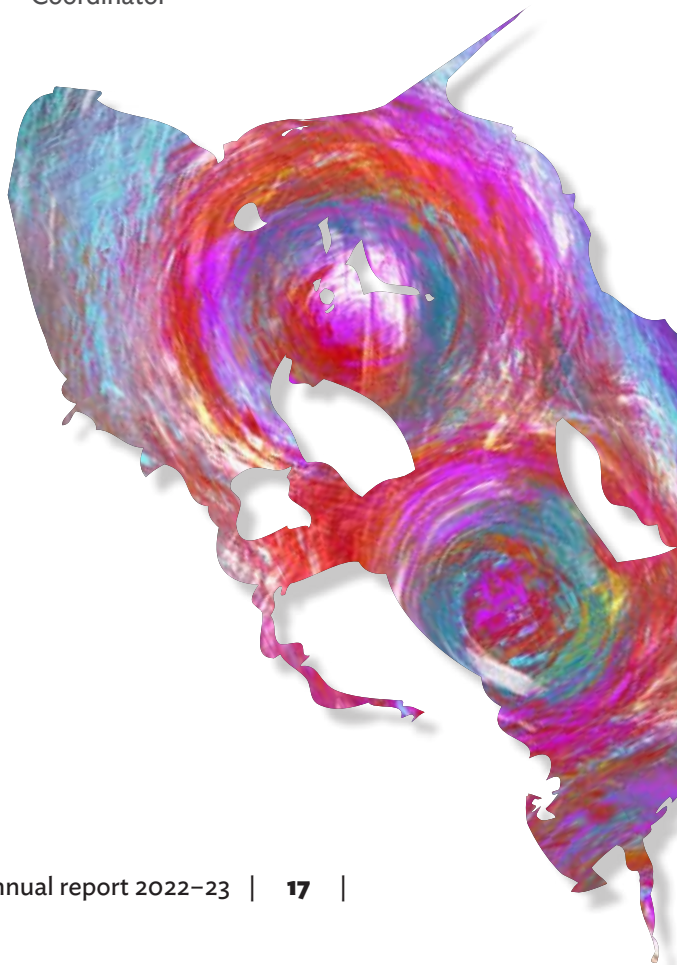
Lastly, 2023 has also seen CRCC increase our visibility within tertiary institutions around Canberra. This has been achieved through hosting stalls at a number of wellbeing events at Canberra Institute of Technology and the University of Canberra.

I am so proud of the work that CRCC does to promote sexual violence awareness within the community and I would like to extend my thanks to each team member who has enthusiastically volunteered to attend an event in the past year. I look forward to even more growth next year!

This year has also seen CRCC introduce a new program which helps clients access legal advice in a safe and supportive environment. In partnership with Legal Aid ACT, CRCC offers free legal appointments with a solicitor onsite to provide legal advice on a range of legal issues. Since the inception of this program in July this year, CRCC has supported 13 clients in accessing this service.

Eleanor Borgelt

CRCC Community Engagement Coordinator



Services

CRCC continues to grow and respond to all areas of sexual violence. It is always a challenge to such a large area of violence with so many different crimes that are an abuse of power. Sexual Assault Services across Australia, including CRCC respond to sexual harassment and sexual violence in the workplace, stalking, indecent assault, intergenerational trauma, enforced child marriage, trafficking and child pornography, date rape, drug-facilitated sexual assault, tech-facilitated sexual assault, rape within marriage, organized abuse, institutional child sexual assault and child sexual assault within the family and broader groups, as well as harmful sexualized behaviours in children and young people. This means there are enormous amounts of legislation governing the response- and not one but many areas of government tasked with the responsibility to respond. This makes the response to sexual violence much more challenging as no single area of government is responsible.

Sexual violence affects some groups in our community more than others. This is because in marginalised and diverse there is greater vulnerability to be targeted for sexual violence because of the vulnerability the communities have. We often look at these communities and hold them accountable to the harm they are living with. This reasoning allows us to continue to blame the victims/communities where the harm occurs and serves to disconnect us more from those who need help the most. The problem also with this dynamic is that the perpetrator/s are invisible. This form of systemic victim blaming needs to be a focus for any initiative responding to sexual violence. If we bring people into the system, we need to be able to ensure the system

can do no further harm, otherwise there will be more harm. If the system is ill-equipped the community will be worse for it, and the potential for a lifetime of untreated trauma.

In the field of sexual violence we are aware of the reasons so many reports, inquiries, taskforces are unsuccessful and incomplete in terms of recommendations. It is because people are the drivers of systems and people struggle with sexual violence. This is why we need to focus on building community capacity to respond first, so that those impacted by sexual violence have somewhere safe to come, that believes and validates their trauma. This knowing is possibly one of the largest misunderstandings about responding to sexual violence and if the focus was here- in a sustained way the community would be better and the lives of survivors would be better.

Despite the many years of advocacy and fight for the rights of survivors of sexual assault, and the horrific stories that follow, there is still much to do. Belief and disbelief remain the largest stumbling blocks with sexual violence, and community attitudes slip when there is not a movement, and government investment to drive change for the better.

A total of 13,990 Canberrans accessed the Canberra Rape Crisis Service in the 2022-2023 period. Young people aged from 12-25 remain our largest group accessing crisis services.



CRCC Services

For all clients, services include:

- Crisis Intervention
- Counselling and Group Work to women, children, young people, families and men
- Support to attend Police and Forensic Services
- Systemic and individual advocacy for clients with government and other agencies
- Community engagement, education and training
- Cultural connection -Nguru Primary School programs
- Redress Support Services to those sexually assaulted as children within institutions
- Systemic Action and Advocacy-Social action through representation on a broad range of local and national forums and expert reference groups
- Professional Consultation
- Sexualised behaviours intervention for those under 18.
- Support to non-offending parents, carers and supporters.



Organisational strengthening

Donations, Community Support and Thanks

We thank the Canberra Community for their support and willingness to contribute to the work of the CRCC.

CRCC uses donations for client services and brokerage to support people throughout the year. We use donations for groceries, care packs, one off support to get to CRCC, motels when clients homes are unsafe or unable to be returned to. We have purchased phones and other items people need such as clothing and toiletries.

Professional Training and Development attended by Staff

- Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)
- Bullying and Harassment Training
- Security Awareness—Corrections ACT
- Tatra- Conspiracy Theories & Political Radicalisation—Clinical considerations
- Byron Clinic—Bessel Van Der Kolk
- Tatra—Practical strategies for responding to personality disorders
- St Johns—CPR Training
- Blue Knot—Three Phased Approach: Processing and Integration
- Lifeline—Accidental counsellor
- Professional Development
- Smallwood Coaching—Leadership Team
- Leadership Training Group
- Havening Techniques—Annette Riddell
- Susan Flemming Counselling, Consulting and Training
- Birdwood Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Sandi Plummer Psychology Services
- ASC Distance Education—supervision course
- IFS Institute—Internal Family Systems Level 1
- Wire- Dealing with difficult calls
- Pesi—Complex Trauma Certificate
- Psychotherapy.net—annual membership



The CRCC Staff team have remained relatively stable over the past 12 months and we thank the current Staff for all their efforts.

Our Current Staff	Farewelled Staff
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Abigail Cherian	Catherine Elrick
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Amal Adan	Eshra McCulloch
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Aashna Rana	Maddi Aldridge
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Bec Hyland	Keira Jebb
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Cecilia Mckenzie	
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Cherie Rojas	
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Chrystina Stanford	
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Courtney Radanovich	
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Eleanor Borgelt	
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Gurjeet Sandhu	
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Kathryn Cripps	
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Lauren Clarke	
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Lea Collins	
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Lily Joy Mureverwi	
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Lizzie Waddell	
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Maninder Sandhu	
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Melissa Wightman	
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Paula McGrady-Swan	
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Ruth Young	
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Savannah Ruppert	
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Stephen Sedgwick	
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Summer McGinty	
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Theodora Volti	
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Zara Trinity Theeng	
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An open letter to the Australian media

You are telling the wrong story!

There was a time in the not too distant past where Canberra Rape Crisis Centre was often contacted by media asking about how they should report sexual assault so as to not cause further harm to people in the community impacted by sexual assault, should they read or see the proposed story. There was a time where media guides for reporting sexual violence were endorsed by local and commonwealth governments. This was such a good time because we were working together using the power of the media and the power of trauma knowledge, to ensure we did no further harm and were educating the community at the same time.

Recently CRCC have been contacted by media a number of times asking us to confirm different things that relate to Brittany Higgins. The reason seems to be to publish yet another story aimed at shaming, blaming and discrediting a young woman—who very well could be our friend, partner, child—In fact she is all of those things. It is the wrong story.

These are not positive experiences for us as we were contacted because it was about criticising a young person publicly tearing at her story, her life and her pain. The media wanted us to join the circus, we wanted no part of it.

Sexual violence happens because power is abused..it has terrible consequences for children, adults and young people. It divides communities, and silences people. It causes disconnection, creates grief and it's prevalence rates shock and horrify us all. In response we pick at the story to put holes in it, act in disbelief, blame the victim, shame the impacted! By doing this we close the door on them feeling like they can't seek help and are taking the easy way out and it is not the right story.



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2/.

Survivors of sexual violence are the people in front of you, those you work with, friends and family—you just may not know it. When they see the headlines, read the stories, it tells them to stay silent. We know that does not work, we know it harms more. We can be better than this.

Headlines come and go, but the impact of headlines can last a life time. How can we ever move through this time and be better at responding to sexual violence if we are hurting people more as we dissect their lives publicly and consistently? How will we ever end the scourge of sexual violence in our community if we do not take control of ourselves and our narratives? How will those impacted by sexual violence ever tell their stories, if we weaponise sexual violence in this way?

We wanted the media to ask about the Australian sexual violence prevalence rates (1 in 2 women, 1 in 3 girls, 1 in six boys, and one in 16 men). We wanted them to ask about why Aboriginal people are sexually assaulted more, and why people living with disabilities are targeted for sexual violence, or young people, or those from the LGBTIQ+ communities. We wanted them to ask how we are working towards a world where there is no sexual violence and how they could help end the impact of this these horrendous crimes. We wanted them to ask about how the local government joined together to try and work out how to fix this problem. We wanted them to ask about where to go to for help? That is the right story—the real story—the one with concern, compassion and humanity.

Lets try for that story!

Chrystina Stanford
CEO Canberra Rape Crisis Centre



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We all have
a part to play



Responsible reporting of sexual violence.

MEDIA REPORTING OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE HAS AN IMPACT EVERYWHERE.

We cannot have a situation where sexual violence is never in the media or headlines as it creates a silence about the issue and people affected by sexual violence can feel like what has happened to them is not seen or not important. Given how high the prevalence rates of sexual violence are within the community (1 in 3 girls and 1 in 6 boys are affected by sexual violence—1 in 2 women and one in 16 men) it means we have a responsibility to ensure that people are seen and heard.

We need visibility of sexual violence to help people work out where to go to for help, and to feel like they are not alone. The media has such a powerful and important role in helping communities navigate through the issues and impacts of sexual violence that we need to ensure we are sending the right messages to those looking on and those affected.

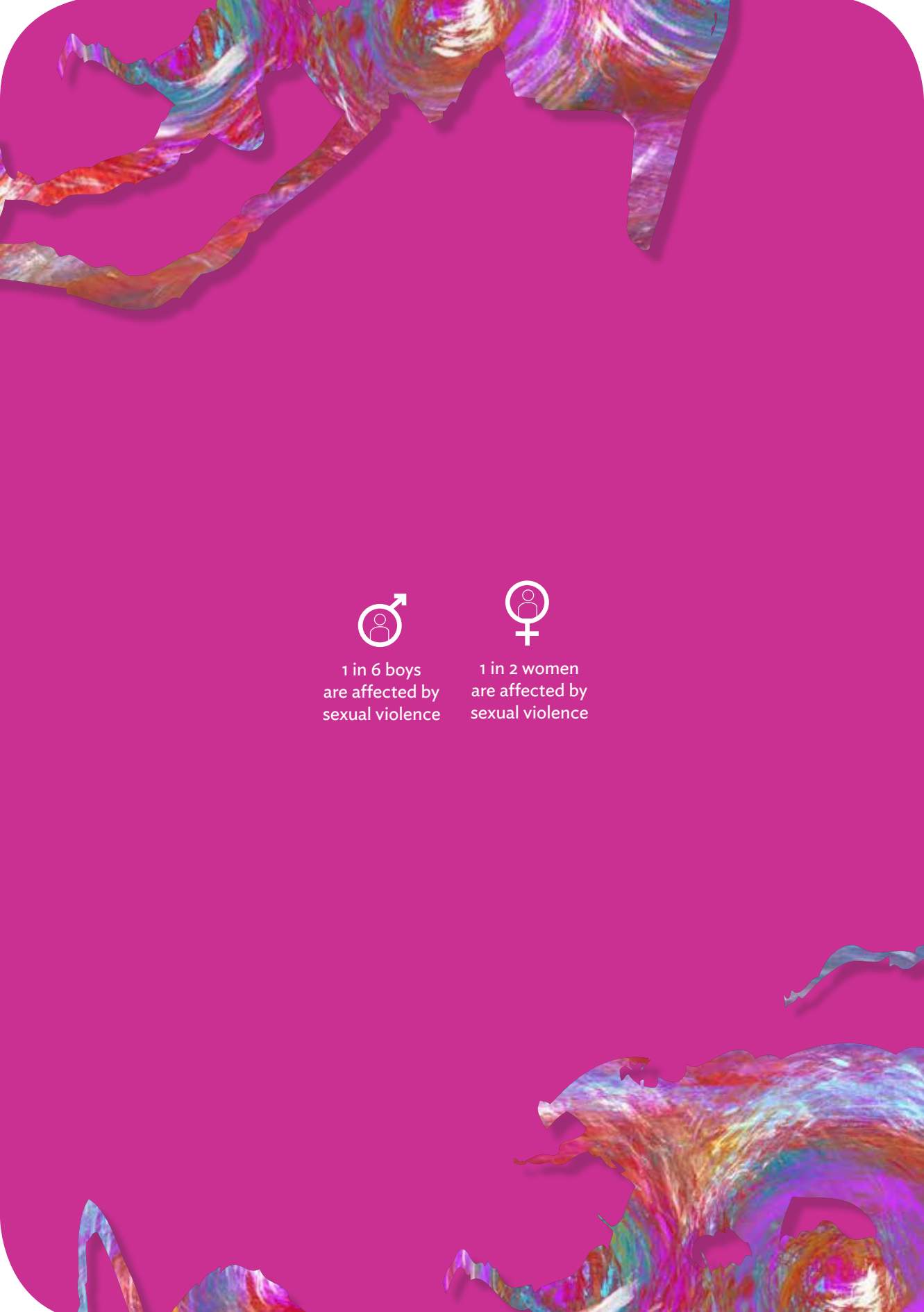
Below are some important tips for navigating this space respectfully and responsibly **Avoid Victim Blaming**—People who are sexually assaulted are also most often affected by self blame and shame about what has happened to them. This is compounded by the reaction their

community has to their disclosure. We need to respond with compassion.

Media coverage about where a person was when they were sexually assaulted, what they were wearing, whether they were intoxicated (or not), is also victim blaming. It is insidious and does further harm. It creates many societal myths about sexual violence—things that are not true that then risk becoming common beliefs by those who are not yet aware.

Avoid Value Judgements—Media messaging affects our culture and attitudes. Messaging can become the dominant story about how the community views sexual violence and those impacted by it. A recent report found that 15 per cent of Australian incident-based media reports included elements of ‘victim blaming’: that she was drinking, flirting/went home with the perpetrator, or out late at night. Just as many offered excuses for the perpetrator: he was drunk, using drugs, jealous, “snapped” or “lost control” (ANROWS, 2016).

Think of Safety—Imagine for a moment reading a story about yourself where information you thought was private was published to the whole country. Most people would feel a compounded sense of shame. It affects their ability to move freely through the world, in case they are judged or abused, threatened or worse.



1 in 6 boys
are affected by
sexual violence



1 in 2 women
are affected by
sexual violence



crcc.org.au