

Thursday, February 3, 2022

MEDIA RELEASE: Increased funding and support services vital for sexual assault survivors, ABS data shows.

New data released by the Australia Bureau of Statistics today shows male sexual assault offenders have increased by 13% over the past 10 years, with 53,570 sexual assault offenders recorded between 2010/11 and 2019/20.

Full Stop Australia chief executive officer Hayley Foster said the data highlights a clear need for long term and consistent funding for sexual violence services across Australia.

"Everyone impacted by sexual violence deserves to be supported in their safety and recovery," Ms Foster said.

Full Stop Australia has coordinated the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline for almost 50 years, supporting survivors and their loved ones recover after experiencing sexual violence.

Last year, the helpline received 14,089 calls and online contacts. Yet at current funding levels, one in every three calls (29%) were unable to be answered.

"The NSW Sexual Violence Helpline has not received a substantial increase in funding in over 35 years," Ms Foster added.

"Demand for sexual assault services has continued to grow, yet there has not been a corresponding increase in funding to meeting increased client needs."

Ms Foster noted there are now strong community expectations that sexual assault services would be available to anyone impacted by sexual violence

She is hopeful the NSW Government will see this as a priority in the upcoming budget.

"Sexual violence is a major national health and welfare issue, impacting people of all ages, ethnicities and genders, but predominantly women and children," Ms Foster said.

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.

“Its time sexual violence support services were properly and adequately funded to make meaningful change across the country.”

About the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline.

The NSW Sexual Violence Helpline supports people of all ages, genders and ethnicities impacted by sexual violence in NSW. Established almost 50 years ago as the NSW Rape Crisis line, the service provides support to thousands of survivors on an annual basis. The helpline assists with managing the impacts of sexual assault, talking to family and friends about the survivor’s experience, providing information on reporting to the police and accessing medical help and referrals to other services who can help.

You can contact the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline on 1800 424 017 or access online counselling at www.fullstop.org.au

About Full Stop Australia.

Full Stop Australia supports people impacted by sexual, domestic or family violence. We believe they deserve to be listened to and supported in their recovery. We offer expert, confidential 24/7 telephone, online and face to face trauma specialist counselling to people of all genders who have experienced sexual, domestic or family violence, and help for their supporters and those experiencing vicarious trauma. We also offer professional training and support to business, government, and community organisations seeking to better prevent and respond to violence. Our advocacy with governments, the media and the community focus on putting a full stop to sexual, domestic and family violence through education, policy and law reform.

For more information, contact Full Stop Australia Strategic Communications and Marketing Manager, Ash Witoslawski on 0431 615 228 or at ashw@fullstop.org.au