

PUTTING A FULL STOP TO SEXUAL, DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE.

 **1800 FULL STOP**
1800 385 578
 **fullstop.org.au**

Full Stop Australia Welcomes Focus on Sexual Violence as Expert Panel Reports Findings.

Rapid Review on Evidence Based Approaches to Prevent Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence*

Statement by Full Stop Australia

Full Stop Australia CEO, Karen Bevan, welcomes the report's calls for urgency, focus and resourcing to end domestic, family and sexual violence. Full Stop Australia particularly welcomes the much-needed focus on sexual violence.

"The work required under the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children includes improving responses to sexual assault, making recovery and healing services available and investment in sector capacity," she said.

Full Stop Australia welcomes the recommendation by the Expert Panel that the Commonwealth, state and territory governments urgently invest in capability to respond appropriately to disclosures of domestic, family and sexual violence, with a particular focus on disclosures of sexual assault.

Full Stop Australia supports the Expert Panel's calls for federal and state governments to honour commitments made in the National Plan and to increase investment in front line services.

The National Plan sets out the scope and nature of work required to end gendered violence, including workforce, resourcing and systems infrastructure. Federal and state governments should hasten to action in full all components of the National Plan.

National rates for reported sexual assaults are at a 31-year high and sexual violence is a risk factor in intimate partner homicide. Sexual violence responses are specialised and require deliberate and focused government policy and funding.

Full Stop Australia supports conversations that address the intersection between gender-based violence and alcohol, gambling and violent pornography.

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We acknowledge the focus on young people, who are disproportionately impacted by sexual violence, and critical need to prevent and address the impact of child sexual abuse.

Systemic abuse remains a significant issue with urgent reform needed. This is particularly the case in criminal courts for people seeking justice after being subject to rape and sexual assault. These systems were not designed with victim-survivors in mind and keep justice just out of reach.

The sector needs to be adequately resourced to provide trauma- and gender-based violence-informed support so that victim-survivors are given choice about how and when to access specialist trauma-informed services to recover and re-establish their independence.

We continue to call for reform of the criminal justice system so that it better responds to the experiences of victim-survivors and holds perpetrators to account.

Full Stop Australia is calling for:

- Significant increases in resourcing for national trauma-specialist support services responding to domestic, family and sexual violence, including our unfunded national service, 1800 FULLSTOP.
- A major focus on healing and recovery services, including substantial investment in healing and recovery from sexual violence.
- Development of a national workforce strategy to underpin growth in domestic and family violence, and specialist sexual violence workforce.

Free 24/7 trauma-specialist counselling is also available to anyone in Australia who has been impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence. Call 1800 FULL STOP (1800 385 578).

* In May this year the Federal Government convened an expert panel to assess existing and required approaches to end sexual, domestic and family violence. Findings from this rapid review have been released and outline approaches for ending the epidemic of gendered violence.

END

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