

domesticandsexualviolence@act.gov.au

Dear Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Office

Thank you for the opportunity for the Canberra community to provide feedback on the ACT Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Strategy, Consultation Draft.

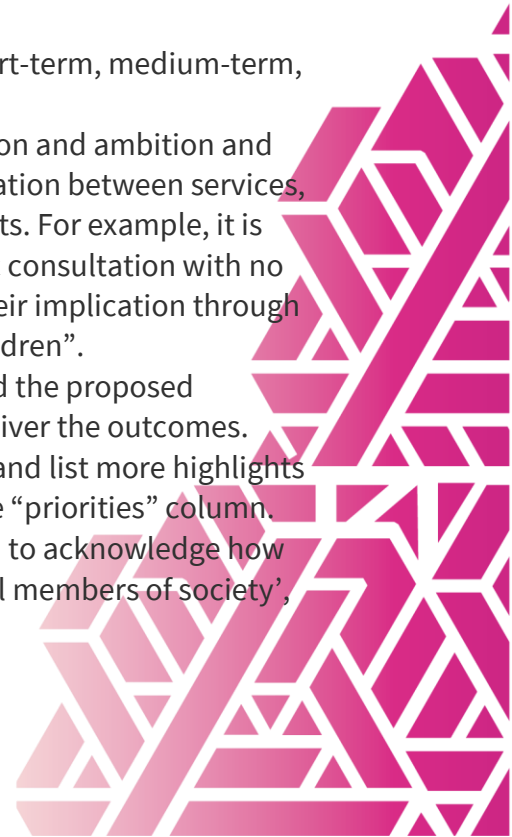
As a provider of domestic violence support services, primary prevention education programs, recovery support programs and a member of the Domestic Violence Prevention Council, Prevention Expert Reference Group ('the ERG'), YWCA Canberra has a strong interest in the draft which was first circulated to us in February 2024.

Our concerns with this document are abundant and systemic in nature.

We find the "Strategy" outlined in the consultation draft under-developed, underwhelming, and rudimentary. Given this, we find that providing comprehensive feedback across the pages of the draft would not provide constructive feedback to the ACT Government. Rather we urge that the drafters commence robust sector wide consultation on the objectives, priorities, and deliverables of the strategy to consider the latest in best-practice, evidence, and trends.

In lieu of this occurring, we provide the following high-level advice.

- There is no reference to the work of the *Sexual Assault and Prevention and Response Steering Committee* nor any of the five working groups which contributed to the *Listen. Take Action to Prevent, Believe and Heal* report which was delivered to the ACT Government in December 2021 and represented a significant body of work and future planning across the sector and government as well as victim-survivors. It is our view, that for the ACT to develop a useful 10-year DFSV strategy, a similar scale project must be undertaken.
- For a 10-year strategy, the omission of a timeline of either short-term, medium-term, and long-term deliverables and targets is an oversight.
- The list of "priorities" under each focus area are limited in vision and ambition and does not include any sense of staged prioritisation or coordination between services, government agencies or other notable community touch points. For example, it is disappointing that a 10-year strategy can be put out for public consultation with no reference to school level intervention strategies other than their implication through vague references such as "building the knowledge base of children".
- There is no connection between the future priority actions and the proposed outcomes or any conceptualisation of how the actions will deliver the outcomes.
- It is unclear why a 10-year strategic document would include and list more highlights under the "what we are already doing" column than under the "priorities" column.
- Despite the draft noting that that "principles" were developed to acknowledge how addressing violence requires 'commitment and action from all members of society',



there is no significant reference to the future sustainability and capacity of the women's specialist frontline services which are typically the first point of call for someone living with or being exposed to violence.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns with the proposed strategy with the Office and to participate in any future consultation on a revised document that addresses the systemic issues we have noted with this draft.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frances Crimmins', written in a cursive style.

Frances Crimmins
CEO YWCA Canberra