

2018 Impact Review



Significant client figures



251

clients were supported
(153 women and 98 children)



177 of 251

women and children
supported by Emerge
received multiple services



72 of the 78

emergency accommodation
and transitional housing clients
attended at least one special
activity provided by Emerge



164

women and children
attended group programs
during the year

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Our Vision

A community free of family violence.

Our Mission

Safety and independence for women and children.

Our History

Emerge is the only individual specialist family violence, high security refuge, in the Southern Metropolitan area that also offers outreach programs to support women and children experiencing violence. Established in 1975, it was the second family violence refuge to open in Victoria.



Momentous year for Emerge

The past year has been significant: Emerge was chosen by the Victorian Government to be in the first group of four family violence services to become a fully funded 24/7 early intervention and crisis centre which includes the building of a new refuge.

This decision allows Emerge to expand its services at a time when we are welcoming more vulnerable women and children into our housing and outreach programs. An increasing number have been living on the street, in cars, tents and emergency accommodation.

Several highlights over the last year include gaining international recognition for our multi-layered arts therapy program; attracting research funding to set up a new program for young children and technology based trauma and learning programs; establishing partnerships with a range of different businesses; and setting up a program for volunteers which is growing exponentially.

While we are proud of the impact we make, it is disheartening that the reason why Emerge exists is because of endemic family violence. Most women and children who arrive at our high security refuge come with only a backpack. They have no money, support networks and face continued risk of being found by their abuser.

Last year's figures paint a revealing picture of how essential our programs are to women and children. All women use our housing and transport service; **77 per cent** of women access our legal and court service; **50 per cent** access financial counselling; and **25 per cent** use our interpreters. All children use our refuge playroom, **41 per cent** access the Mother Child Health Network through Emerge; **28 per cent** are immunised through our medical network; **37 per cent** access childcare and **58 per cent** are assisted into school. Our art therapy and children's services attract strong attendance with **34 per cent** taking part in Little Sparkz, **37 per cent** in Peek-a-Boo and **31 per cent** in individual art therapy.

The link between family violence and homelessness cannot be stressed enough. Data from the most recent Census shows that one in 56 Victorians received homelessness assistance, and that in 44% of cases, family violence was the reason.

It is for this reason that we provide a voice into government for funding and support services. The last year has seen Emerge, alongside other family violence services, advocate strongly for more social and public housing.

We thank the staff for their passion, commitment and resilience which enables them to undertake the difficult, complex work with women and children and the Board who also volunteer their time to ensure that Emerge is not only governed properly but also lives its mission.

None of our work would be possible without government and philanthropic funding, community and corporate donations and partnerships, or our volunteers. We thank you all for this support.

Above all we acknowledge and thank the women and children that we have supported throughout the year. Your courage and determination is inspiring. It's the reason we do the work we do.

With your continued and ongoing support Emerge is able to help more women and children stay safe and live free from family violence.



Paula Westhead
Executive Officer



Karen Morley
Chairperson

Accommodating women and children

Demand for Emerge’s housing services – from refuge through to crisis and transitional housing – has grown throughout the past year. This is despite the fact the refuge was closed for three months before demolition.

Over the past year:



78 women and children were housed in refuge and crisis accommodation.



10 women and **20** children were in transitional housing.



74% of the women in refuge were from CALD backgrounds.



100% of women without PR had no income.



57% of the children under school age.



45% being primary school age.



12% attending high school.



77% of clients had legal proceedings.



64% in refuge were children under the age of 18.



38% of the children being infants (0-2 years).



Most common age range for women was between **30-34** years.



51% diagnosed with a mental health issue.

A new Emerge refuge

A new Emerge refuge is being designed by the award-winning architectural practice Harrison and White and overseen by Family Safety Victoria and Department of Health and Human Services Victoria.

It will include state of the art one, two and three bedroom units with disability access. There will also be common areas, including a communal kitchen, living room as well as a support hub for women in outreach. The gardens will be properly landscaped together with a children’s playground, offering increased support and security for women and children.

The new refuge is being carefully designed to provide personal and communal space to allow women and children to recover from the impact of family violence and homelessness. The refuge will offer improved accommodation and support for teenagers who are accompanied by their mother or female guardian.

The old refuge was home to many thousands of women and their children for over 40 years.



Reaching out to women and children

Emerge is one of the few family violence services in Victoria offering an outreach program to women and children living at home with their perpetrator, or in crisis and transitional housing.

Over the past year:



172 clients were supported by outreach, 98 of whom were children under 18.



3.6% of clients identified as Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander.



79% of women were from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds (CALD), including China, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Indonesia, Lebanon, South Korea, Russian Federation, Sudan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam.



73% of persons under the age of 18 were born in Australia.



The average length of support period was **2-14** weeks; followed by **14-26** weeks.



The leading **source of referrals** came from Specialty Homelessness Agencies/Outreach Workers (14%), Family and Child Support Agencies (16%) and Child Protective Agency (7%).



Main reasons for seeking support were domestic and family violence at **82%**; sexual abuse at **5%** and disengagement from school at **2%**.



One week before coming to Emerge **83%** were living in a house/townhouse/flat and **24%** in emergency accommodation.



The main **source of income** was parenting payments.



Programs

Arts therapy

We are currently facilitating several therapeutic groups to assist women and children in refuge, crisis accommodation and in the outreach service.

Over the past year, a therapeutic, strengths-based women's arts therapy group continued, taking on from a smaller group held last year. This group included women and mothers who have experienced family violence, and focused on empowerment through facilitated & therapeutic art-making.

The refuge arts therapy program continued to provide intervention within the refuge for families, through individual therapy and group therapy. The children's arts therapy program provided long term individual intervention as children and families heal from family violence.

Emerge has one of the longest running arts therapy programs in Victoria and will be celebrating our 10 year anniversary in 2019. This milestone highlights Emerge as a leader in the field of arts therapy, specifically in relation to family violence and working with the trauma experienced by women and children.

Holiday program

The Little Sparkz school holiday program is a three-day intensive therapeutic group for primary school aged children who have been affected by family violence. This program ran four times during the year with children mainly from the Kingston area. Little Sparkz utilises different aspects of the creative arts including painting, dance and drama therapy.

Peek-A-Boo Club™

The Peek-A-Boo Club™ provided significant parent-infant psychotherapeutic support for mothers in refuge or crisis accommodation properties, as well as outreach clients. This program helps strengthen the relationship between mother and baby which may have been detrimentally impacted by violence within the home. This group ran four times in the last year.

TRAK

Emerge women attended the Beyond the Violence program as part of the demonstration therapeutic model - TRAK – in partnership with Anglicare and Stepping Up. BTV is an eight-week program for non-offending parents and their children who have experienced family violence.

Financial counselling

The past year 69 women have been assisted with a range of financial issues, including large debts with banks, car leasing agencies and Centrelink. These women had a range of complex issues, including fines from the perpetrator, leases in their name, large unpaid utility bills and a range of other pending issues. Most of the women were from CALD backgrounds and have limited English.

Intake and Assessment service

All women who entered crisis accommodation were provided with an Intake Pack on the first day of their arrival. This includes support and educational material about family violence, rights and responsibilities, a safety plan, safety and planning around technology, and a journal and pen.

An age-appropriate children's pack is provided to the mother or to the children depending on their ages. This pack includes information on Children's Rights, and other relevant information about the effects of domestic violence and trauma on children. This pack is made up individually to suit the age of the children in each new family.

“Emerge helped me find a new path, and I don't look back. There's so much still to do but my children and I are excited about what our future will be.”

Partnerships

Emerge wishes to thank its many partners who supported our work throughout the year.

Corporate partner

Marco Polo

New partners include:

FareShare
 Glen Eira City Council
 Goodstart
 HoMie
 LaTrobe University
 Melbourne Period Project
 Moorabbin Court
 Mordialloc Neighbourhood House
 Next Steps
 Peter Wright & Associates
 Royal Melbourne Golf Club
 SheSafe
 St Kilda Legal Service
 St Peter's Football Club
 Swinburne University

Donors

Lions Club of Mordialloc - Mentone
 Rotary Club of Camberwell
 St Matthew's Anglican Church
 and other individuals who
 continue to support us.

Ongoing partnerships

Anglicare Victoria
 Bayside/ Peninsula FV partnership
 Brighton Quilters
 DV Vic
 Frankston City Council
 Impact for Women
 Kilfinan Australia
 Kingston City Council
 Lions Clubs
 Myer Northland
 Rotary Australia
 St Augustine's Southern Opportunity Shop
 Stepping Up
 StreetSmart
 TaskForce

Philanthropy

City of Kingston
 Myer Northland
 R E Ross Trust
 Street Smart Australia
 The Funding Network

Emerge would like to acknowledge
 the ongoing support of the
 Department of Health and Human
 Services and Family Safety Victoria.



Health
 and Human
 Services

How you can help

Emerge has been helping women and children live free from family violence for over 40 years.

We rely on support from government, philanthropic organisations, businesses and the community to help deliver our vital services, housing and support programs.

By donating or partnering with us you will make a direct impact to helping women and children rebuild their lives after surviving family violence.

We thank you for your ongoing support.

Donate

Donations are vital to our ongoing work and allow us to develop innovative therapeutic programs for women and children that fall outside of our government-funded services. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

To donate please visit our website: emergesupport.org.au/support-our-work/donations

Partnerships

Emerge is committed to long-term, mutually-beneficial partnerships with local community groups, philanthropic organisations and businesses who share our vision of ending family violence and assisting women and children to rebuild their lives.

Our major donors and partners enable us to ensure our financial stability and continue to deliver our innovative services.

We can offer a diverse range of activities for businesses to engage with our work. This includes enhancing your profile by aligning with our brand, pro-bono work, helping to build staff motivation through volunteering and fundraising work, workplace giving and more.

Schools and community groups

Community groups, such as Rotary and Lions' groups, church groups, and others also work as volunteers on specific projects. We can come and present at your school or your church, and we welcome clubs willing to assist us.

Workplace Giving

Every pay day, you can help change lives.

Workplace giving is a simple, convenient and tax-effective way to support Emerge, and the women and children we work with. It also provides us with a steady, regular source of income, enabling us to plan.

Volunteer

By becoming a volunteer and supporting Emerge, you will form part of a team working to help women and children have safer, brighter lives, while also gaining a unique and valuable personal experience.

