



Patricia
Giles
CENTRE



Annual Report
2018/19





Our story

Patricia Giles Centre is committed to ending family and domestic violence in our community.

For over 30 years we have been providing a range of services for women and children experiencing and escaping family violence and abuse.

- We help them find safety, security and stability.
- We support and empower them to get mentally and physically well so they can get their lives back on track.
- We educate and collaborate – always working towards a future free from family and domestic violence.



Who is Patricia Giles?

Patricia Giles AM was an Australian Senator for twelve years and a lifelong active and passionate advocate for community services and women's rights.

Patricia founded the Perth branch of the Women's Electoral Lobby in the early 70s. As a non-party political lobby group, they work to create a society where women's participation and potential are unrestricted, acknowledged and respected. She was also President of the International Alliance of Women, working globally to advance women's interests.

By strongly supporting the introduction of a refuge in her electorate, Patricia played a vital role in helping to get us up and running.

We always strive to reflect her commitment, her wisdom and her courage.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the Country on which we live and work, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and pay respects to the Elders past, present and future.

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How we work

Our approach is personalised to suit each woman - her situation, her family, her culture and her needs. We concentrate on empowerment so women can make their own decisions, maintain their safety and build a life free of violence for themselves and their children.

Safe accommodation

We have three refuges that provide a safe place for women on their own or those with children up to 18 years of age. Our staff offer emotional as well as practical support to all families at the refuges. We assist them to access the right information they need to understand their legal, housing and financial options. Our ongoing support and assistance are offered for up to 12 months after families leave our refuges.

Housing support

Following a stay at one of our refuges, our Housing Support staff can assist with finding safe, appropriate accommodation. Depending on the circumstances that can mean short-term transitional housing, subsidised or community housing, or a more stable long-term home. We aim to help our clients to settle into their new home and community and can advise on strategies to help keep them safe.

Counselling for women and children

Our free counselling service offers a safe, confidential, non-judgemental and relaxed space so women can speak freely and receive emotional support from our highly experienced counsellors.

We have a specialised counselling service for children who have experienced or witnessed family violence. Children's counselling can be provided at a range of different places including community outreach centres or at one of our refuges. To help break the cycle of violence that can emerge, we provide women with parenting information to help them support and understand their children.



Group programs

We offer a variety of group programs to provide support and information, as well as the opportunity to meet others in similar situations. Topics covered in our group programs include self-esteem, understanding family violence and parenting.

Staying safe at home

Our Safe at Home and Keeping Women Safe programs concentrate on assisting women and children affected by family and domestic violence to remain safely in their home. By offering a holistic and client-centred service we provide a range of practical supports and regular assistance to enable women to build a safe life for their family.

Crisis Response Service

We work in partnership with WA Police and Department of Child Protection to provide a Crisis Response Service for family and domestic violence. Our staff who are located at Mirrabooka and Joondalup police stations, conduct home visits and assess family violence reports.

New start kits

For those who have fled their homes with nothing, we can provide new start kits which contain essential household items, appliances and utensils.





Chairperson's report

Patricia Giles Centre has a proud history in supporting women and children who have been impacted by family and domestic violence.

In recent years, the organisation has explored new models of service delivery however in 2018/19 the Board reoriented its priorities to focus on core business with the modernisation of our corporate governance processes and a review of our clinical governance framework.

The priority areas this year have included a review of our organisational structure, updating board and operational policies, embedding a new risk management framework and restructuring our budget and finance processes. These reforms have directly contributed to the achievement of greater efficiencies and improved service delivery for clients and partner agencies. By establishing a strong foundation of effective corporate governance and the delivery of quality services we have ensured that we are once again a leader in the field of family and domestic violence services.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of being appointed to the role of Chair and we have subsequently recruited six new Board members. We are proud to have members who bring diversity, new skills and expertise and a commitment to delivering positive outcomes for the organisation, staff and clients. Success can only be achieved if there is collaboration between the Board, the CEO and staff. The Board would like to acknowledge the support that we received from the Management team and the CEO in rebuilding the organisation and servicing the complex needs of our clients.

Our journey will continue as we seek to strengthen our relationships with government and partner agencies and create safe spaces for women and children.

Shona Zulsdorf



Joyce's story

For many years Joyce had been physically, financially and verbally abused by her husband. Due to his controlling behaviours Joyce had been completely socially isolated. When she got in contact with us, she had no self-esteem, little ability to make decisions, no support network and no knowledge of daily life outside the home. Simple tasks such as catching public transport were terrifying to her. Adding to her fear and distress, her husband and his family continued to threaten Joyce by phone.

Through our counselling and by accessing our Empowerment Program, Joyce built up her confidence and resilience. She was empowered to successfully negotiate the complex web of government agencies and legal processes needed to get her life back on track. With further assistance of our advocacy and support services Joyce moved into a safe property, took up study and began a work placement.

**All names have been changed to protect privacy and safety.*





CEO's report

Our focus this year has been on stability – safe clients, safe staff, safe organisation.

To achieve this, we have strengthened our governance, reporting and contractual compliance systems, alongside developing a strong internal 'clan' culture that has been embraced by Board and staff. This focus has provided a platform to manage the continuing increase for all of our services.

This year has seen significant increase in requests for service provision, particularly illustrated by the need for 24/7 crisis beds up by 300% to prior years. This means more women are having greater clarity on options to keep themselves and their children safe.

We welcomed seven new Board members including our Chair, Shona Zulsdorf, as well as farewelling some long-standing members this year. I thank all members for their hard work and commitment to ensuring we remain a sustainable agency into the future.

This year we have been working to develop a new strategic direction. While acknowledging provision of crisis services will continue, we are committed to extending our work in prevention and intervention of family and domestic violence. We will continue to collaborate with sector partners and funding bodies to develop new initiatives to deliver systemic impact over time and welcome the Federal and State plans and strategies for reducing family and domestic violence.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff, both past and present, for your commitment, passion, hard work and determination. Without you our clients' stories may look very different. To those who have walked alongside me this year, I thank you for entrusting me, following my lead and always doing your best in what is one of the most challenging work environments. You continue to inspire me every day.

Kirsten Shearn



Bethany's story

Prior to coming into one of our refuges with her 3 children Bethany had obtained a Violence Restraining Order, however her partner continued to threaten and stalk her via phone and in person. As he had criminal connections Bethany was in fear for her life. Bethany arrived with extensive physical injuries from previous assaults, severe debt due to the partner's substance abuse, and a high risk of homelessness due to an imminent eviction from property damage during the violent assaults. We prioritised Bethany and her children's physical needs as well as their safety.

We referred her to agencies that could assist with her tenancy, legal and financial situation and provided counselling for her and her children. Our housing support service helped Bethany to access and then settle into their new home.

All names have been changed to protect privacy and safety.

About 2018/19



1423 clients assisted



213 women and **499** children admitted to refuges

49 women and children stayed in our transitional housing



140 nights – average length of time in transitional housing



Housing support provided to **33** families



160 women attended 1 or more counselling appointments

137 children attended 1 or more counselling appointments

138 families assisted through Crisis Response Service

Safe at Home helped **112** families

Keeping Women Safe helped **45** women

48 staff

Diane's story

Diane arrived at one of our refuges with her two children and her mother. The long term emotional and psychological abuse from her partner had recently escalated into physical violence, resulting in multiple facial and dental injuries. Diane was the primary carer for her mother who had a physical disability and special needs. Their immediate needs included a safe place to stay, necessities such as food, toiletries and clothing, counselling and financial assistance. Over the following days we assisted Diane to take out a Violence Restraining Order, access medical and dental appointments, and undertake safety planning. We also advocated with Centrelink to fast track applications for a carers allowance and crisis payment.

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It takes a village

Working collaboratively within the sector and across the community is a vital part of who we are and how we operate. Only by sharing knowledge, raising awareness and empowering and embracing innovation will we collectively create a future free of family and domestic violence.

Our Board

Shona Zulsdorf (Chairperson) is the Principal of Springboard Solutions.

Dr James McCue (Deputy Chairperson) is a clinical and forensic psychologist, as well as a teacher and research academic.

Jonathan Smith is the CEO of ECHO Community Services.

Vicki Banham is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean at Edith Cowan University.

McKenzie Reed is the Sales and Compliance Consultant at Total Home Frames.

Kirstin Stewart (Treasurer) is the Partner, Business Advisory Services for HLB Mann Judd.

Simone Soliman (Secretary) works with Local and State Government agencies on strategically significant projects.

Gabrielle Trenbath works in the Mental Health sector and is currently also completing a Graduate Diploma in Applied Corporate Governance.

Sarah Kepert is a Senior Analyst at the Department of Treasury.

Our team

Kirsten Shearn – CEO

Narelle Finch – Executive Manager Operations

Royce Gelmi – Executive Manager Corporate Support

Melissa D'Amico – Team Leader, Refuges

Dawn Mills – Team Leader, Outreach services

Catherine Broughton – Team Leader, Counselling and Advocacy

Our funders



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **the Premier and Cabinet**



Australian Government
Department of **Human Services**

Our supporters

We are very grateful to all of our donors for their generous support over the year.

AK Ahlquist Family Camp	NGALA
Anita Clayton Centre	Nola Criddle Fund
Atlantis Play Centre	Northern Suburbs Women's Friendship Group
Bank of Queensland Hillarys	Padbury Primary School
BP Developments Australia Pty Ltd	People Who Care
Bunnings Joondalup and Mindarie	Pilbara Iron Co Services
CBA Joondalup	Rendezvous Hotel
City of Joondalup	Revlon
CTAS	Rio Tinto
Direct Couriers	Rotary Club of WA
District 32 Ladies Club	Satterley Property Group
Dulux	Settlers Ridgewood Rise
ECU Student Life Team	Share the Dignity
Goodstart	Shree Kutchi Leva Patel Community
Graphic Construction	Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital (Rehabilitation and Aged Care)
Haynes Bar & Grill	Southland Sewing
Inspirations Paint	Tamala Park Regional Council
Jelly Beans Childcare	Taubman's Paints
Keystart Homes	The White Dove Spiritualist Church
King Edward Memorial Hospital	True Blue Containers
King Living	Twisted Peacock Yoga
Kingsley Men's Shed	Two Good Co.
Ladies Cosmopolitan Golf Club	Variety
Lake Joondalup Baptist College	WA International Trade Ball 2019
Lavan	WA Quilters Association
LD Total	WA Roller Derby
Lions Club Whitfords	Workcover
Magic Circle Childcare	Zonta House
My Cause.com.au	
Myer Karrinyup and Kewdale	

Why we are needed

WA has the **second highest rate** of reported physical and sexual violence against women.

Number of reported family assaults to WA Police has increased by **708%** over the past two decades.

On average, **one woman a week** is murdered in Australia by her current or former partner.

1 in 4 women have experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner since the age of 15.

1 in 5 women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

Almost **40% of women** continued to experience violence from their partner while temporarily separated.

1 in 6 women have experienced stalking since the age of 15.

Intimate partner violence is a leading contributor to illness, disability and premature death for women aged 18-44.

Domestic and family violence is the **leading cause of homelessness** for women and their children.

Australian police deal with domestic violence **every two minutes**.

Violence against women is estimated to cost the Australian economy **\$22 billion a year**

As horrific as the statistics are, they are not what drives us.

Every day we work to make a positive difference in the lives of the women and children affected by family and domestic violence.

Here are just a few comments from some of the women we have supported ...

"I have the ability to be my own person and not be tied down to controlling people."

"I realise I am worth it."

"The staff showed me what support really means. I have come so far with them behind me."

"All the women who I have met here are beautiful and so welcoming."

"That feeling of independence was amazing."

"I know I'm not alone."



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Patricia Giles Centre operates in the northern suburbs of Perth. For more information on any of our services please call us on **(08) 9300 0340**. Our office hours are 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.
patgilescentre.org.au