



Domestic
Violence
Action Centre



2025–2026

IMPACT REPORT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We pay our respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise the unique journey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and the contributions their voices make within our organisation and the wider community.

Message from the CEO and Chair

Thank you to our sponsors, partners and supporters whose generosity and commitment have made this event possible. Your contribution helps us continue our vital work supporting victim-survivors and building safer, more respectful communities.

This year we supported 9,216 individual clients plus 9,452 children who are victim-survivors in their own right.

This event is an opportunity to come together, celebrate achievements, strengthen connections, and raise awareness of the importance of ending domestic and family violence.

Thank you for joining us, sharing in this purpose, and helping to create meaningful change. Together, we are making a lasting difference in the lives of individuals, families and communities across our region.

AMIE CARRINGTON
CEO

LAURA MARSCHKE
Chair



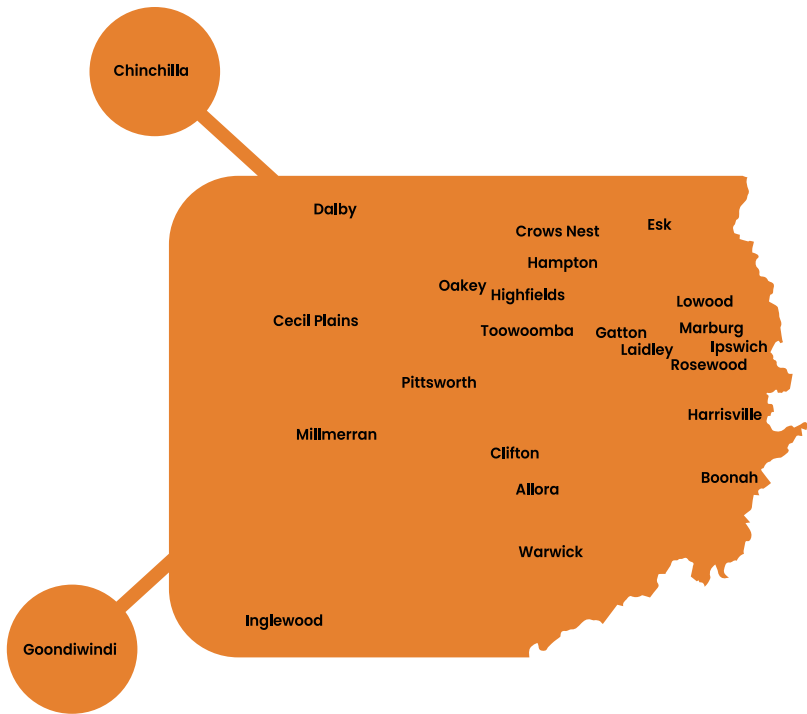
Art by Alysha Blackley for DVAC's Cultural Safety Framework: Wambinya Way. Alysha's artwork speaks of cultural sensitivity and the commitment to healing and empowerment DVAC endeavours to deliver through their services.

The Domestic Violence Action Centre (DVAC) is a not-for-profit organisation that provides support to those who have experienced or are currently experiencing domestic, family and/or sexual violence. We exist to reduce the impacts of gender-based violence in our local communities through quality grass roots services.

Who we are

DVAC is a grass roots organisation delivering services in our local communities to support victim survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence. We work with people who are using violence to create long lasting change and partner with the community and services for results. We are a values-based charity with specialist service delivery standards and accreditation.

Regions we cover



Our approach

DVAC’s approach to supporting survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence centres on the understanding that each survivor seeking our support has their own unique strengths, risks, experiences, values and support needs. Each survivor’s journey through DVAC is different and our support is tailored to meet their individual needs.



DVAC’s purpose

- We provide services that support victim survivors on their journey towards freedom, safety and healing from domestic, family and sexual violence.
- We deliver quality services in our local communities.
- We partner to create lasting change for the women and families who we service.

Our story

DVAC began over 30 years ago as a small team of nine dedicated practitioners providing crisis response, court support and counselling services in the Ipswich region. Since then, DVAC has evolved and grown to keep pace with the needs of our changing community. In 2010 we began working across parts of the Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim and Somerset areas and by 2017, we were working across both the Ipswich and Toowoomba regions. With our services expanding to provide outreach to Goodna, Springfield, Laidley, Gatton, Lowood, Toogoolawah, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Chinchilla, Dalby, Pittsworth and Goondiwindi we were able to reach more of our regional and rural surrounding communities.

Today our teams work across the Greater Ipswich and Toowoomba regions, reaching into regional and rural communities to support survivors where they are and delivering services by phone, online, in person and through outreach. Our staff provide support across four police stations and eleven courthouses to ensure we meet survivors where and when they need support.

DVAC remains an independent not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity. Our services are funded by the Queensland Government Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, the Australian Government Department of Social Services, generous donors and philanthropic investment.

Governance

DVAC’s governance model ensures strong leadership, accountability, and continuous improvement across the organisation. Oversight is provided by the Board, which is responsible for strategic direction, organisational sustainability, risk management, and ensuring compliance with legislative and funding obligations.

As a specialist service, DVAC maintains Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) accreditation, demonstrating its commitment to high standards of governance, service delivery, and client outcomes. The organisation is further strengthened by its Lived Experience Governance Group, which ensures the voices and perspectives of people with lived experience inform strategic planning, policy development, and service design.

DVAC’s commitment to cultural safety and meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is embedded through its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which guides actions to advance reconciliation, build stronger relationships, and promote culturally responsive practice throughout the organisation.

What we do

DVAC provides a wide range of victim supports for people who have experienced domestic and sexual violence (DFSV), and services working with people who use violence to reduce the prevalence of DFSV in future relationships. Our services include:

Domestic and Family Violence Victim Support

We provide crisis support, risk assessment and safety planning, along with court support across 10 courts and co-location services at 4 police stations.

“DVAC was incredible, the team were so kind, patient and understanding. They gave me information and made the next steps clear and easy. They helped me at the police station and made everything so much easier.”

45-YEAR-OLD FEMALE CLIENT
Survivor of domestic and family violence

Our Child and Family DFV Counselling and psychosocial educational programs support children, young people and families to understand and recovery from their experiences.

“I can talk about stuff I don’t like talking about at home at DVAC, and they help with it. I want DVAC to be able to help more people that need it.”

11-YEAR-OLD FEMALE CLIENT
Survivor of family violence

Women’s Health and Wellbeing

Women’s Health and Wellbeing support includes individual holistic case management and advocacy, as well as support groups and psychosocial, educational, healing and recovery programs.

“DVAC has helped break generational domestic violence, supported me to learn my boundaries, and feel uncomfortable emotions. The counselling and groups are so helpful, I wouldn’t have been able to have had all this growth without their support from crisis point to reflecting and learning.”

DVAC CLIENT

Sexual Violence Support

Support includes crisis support, risk assessment and safety planning, individual holistic case management and advocacy, and therapeutic, trauma-informed individual counselling.

“I felt completely lost and couldn’t see a way forward. Through your kindness, patience and support, you’ve helped me find parts of myself I thought I lost. You gave me hope when I genuinely didn’t think I would ever feel it again. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for believing in me, standing by me and helping me through one of the darkest times of my life.”

25-YEAR-OLD MALE CLIENT
Survivor of sexual violence

Men’s Behaviour Intervention Program (MBIP)

The MBIP supports men to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour and to develop safer, healthier ways of relating to partners and children. Court support assists with safety for victim-survivors and families.

“Everything with my partner is going really well now. Since finishing the program he stops and thinks, is open to men having emotions and I feel so proud of him. He isn’t throwing things, slamming doors or yelling at us. He talks to me and the kids with respect. He now knows how to de-escalate our son with ASD without becoming angry.”

36-YEAR-OLD FEMALE CLIENT
Survivor of domestic and family violence and partner of MBIP participant

Break The Cycle (BTC) Supporting Adolescent Boys Program

Individual counselling and therapeutic support for boys and young men at risk of using, or using intimate partner violence.

“The BTC program has been really good. Last year I was on reflection all the time and I used this time for criminal type of activities and getting up to no good. I started with BTC at the beginning of 2025 and I learnt to regulate and manage my emotions. I also didn’t miss hardly any school and even got an award for attendance, honesty and integrity.

I have learnt heaps and really enjoyed the program. I would recommend BTC it was the best thing I did.”

17-YEAR-OLD MALE CLIENT
BTC Program participant

Homes for Hope Initiative

Homes for Hope is a new project that provides social and affordable transitional housing for people who have experienced domestic and family violence, giving them a secure place to rebuild their lives and look towards a safer future.

“I couldn’t understand how one man could take so much from me. But within that, my children lost their mum and I lost the time I needed to start building a new normality for the sake of them.

As a newly single mum of two I was confronted with the harsh reality that the chances of us finding a safe place to call home was pretty bleak.

Then my support worker called me with the news that we were no longer at the risk of homelessness. The absolute relief I felt in knowing that finally it was our turn to live the life we deserved is indescribable.”

TENANT
DVAC Pilot Affordable Housing Initiative

HER STORY

Louisa

Louisa is a 35-year-old culturally and linguistically diverse woman whose second language is English. She was referred to DVAC by a community member. She received specialist case management support to navigate post-separation violence. Louisa has three children aged between 2 and 8 years old and separated from her ex-husband and the children's father Malcolm a year before contacting DVAC. Louisa had experienced significant violence throughout her relationship with Malcolm but had not known there was support available in Australia. Louisa has very little knowledge of the Australian legal system. Malcolm utilised his knowledge of the legal system to sell the family home, keeping all proceeds from the sale and leaving Louisa and the children homeless. He used his knowledge of the legal system, child protection system and police responses to avoid accountability for his use of violence and post-separation financial abuse, including by trying to take the children overseas without Louisa's knowledge or permission.

Our approach

Our support for Louisa centred on breaking down the barriers for her to get the legal help she needed, ensuring agencies supporting her utilised appropriate interpreters to provide her with advice and representation in family law proceedings in a language she understands.

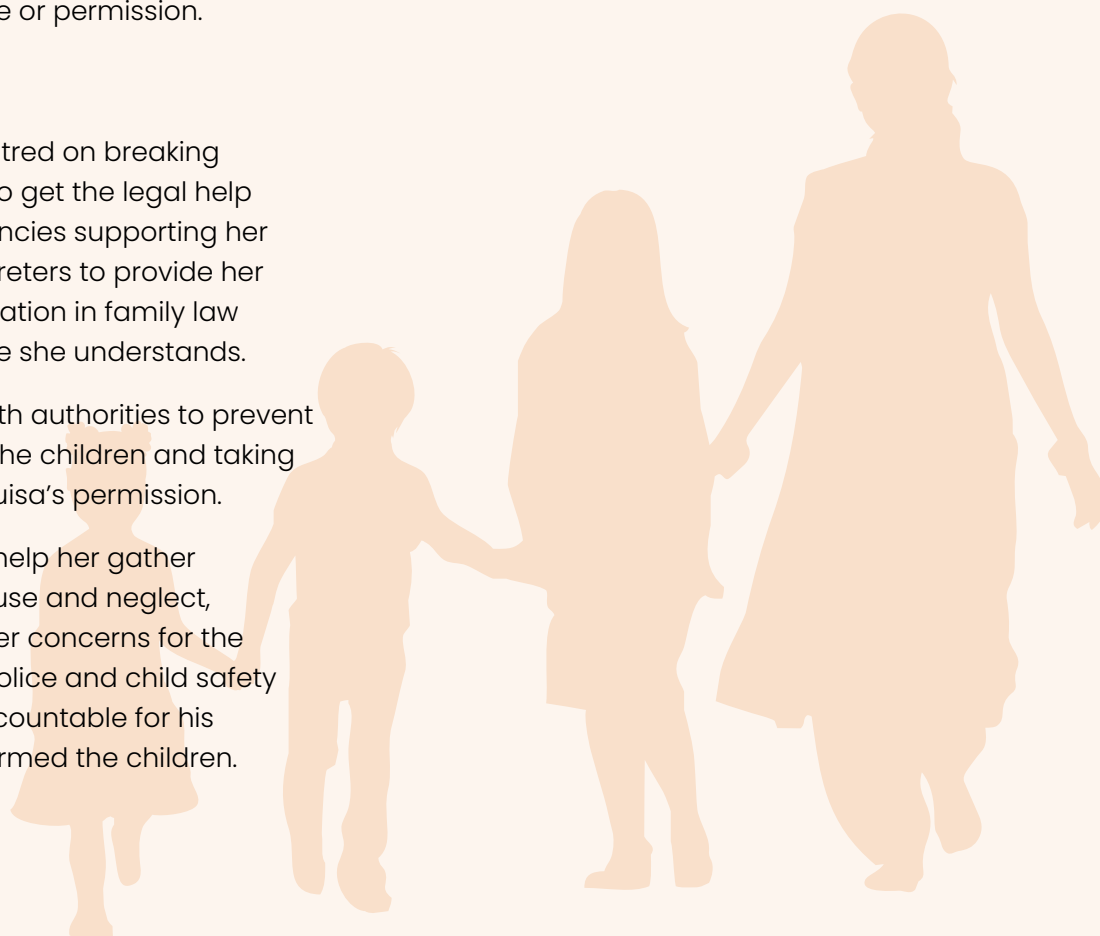
We advocated strongly with authorities to prevent Malcolm from abducting the children and taking them overseas without Louisa's permission.

We worked with Louisa to help her gather evidence of Malcolm's abuse and neglect, supporting her to report her concerns for the children's safety to both police and child safety authorities to hold him accountable for his parenting choices that harmed the children.

We helped Louisa access financial support that helped her overcome homelessness and find safe housing for her and her children.

The impact

- Louisa's children were returned to her care and remained in Australia
- Louisa and her children obtained safe rental accommodation and were no longer homeless
- Louisa was able to maintain her employment and gain financial independence
- Malcolm was investigated and charged by police for systems abuse
- Louisa obtained legal representation to navigate parenting and property proceedings in Family Law Court
- Louisa reported feeling safer, stronger and listened to.



HER STORY

Katie

Katie, a 29-year-old Aboriginal woman and mother of a three-year-old child, sought DVAC's support when she was pregnant after separating from her partner and baby's father. Katie disclosed he had been abusive throughout her pregnancy, threatening to kill her and her unborn child, strangling her and physically assaulting her while she was pregnant.

Katie was scared about how to stay safe while pregnant and giving birth, not sure about what her ex-partner was capable of and was worried about child safety authorities not reunifying her three-year-old to her care because of vexatious reports by her ex-partner. Katie was supported by a DFV Specialist to receive specialist case management over a three month period.

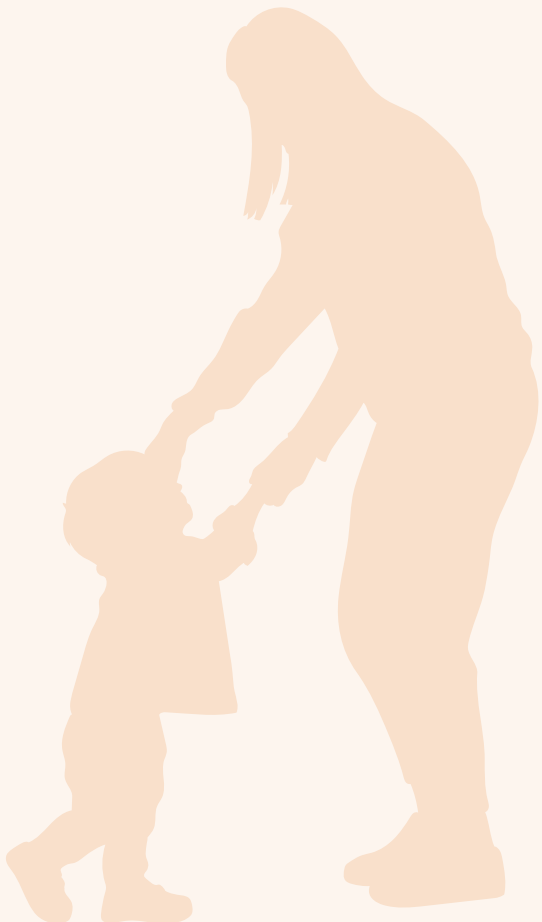
Our approach

Katie worked with her DFV Specialist to explore and assess the perpetrator's pattern of violence, ways to share information and devise a safety plan to hold him to account and increase her and the children's safety. The DFV Specialist shared information with, and advocated on Katie's behalf with police to vary the conditions on the current protection order and supported her to attend the police station and report the many breaches of the order. The DFV Specialist helped Katie document the breaches and gather the evidence from her phone, a process she had found overwhelming on her own.

Katie was supported to attend DVAC's Circle of Security Group to build her parenting confidence and help demonstrate her protective parenting behaviours to the Department of Child Safety. Katie was supported to attend meetings with the Department Child Safety about reunification and show them the safety plans she had in place to support the safety of her and the children.

The impact

- The person using violence was held accountable for his use of violence with additional conditions placed on the Domestic Violence Protection Order and breach charges laid by police
- Katie's baby stayed in her care, with child safety authorities working to reunify her three-year-old daughter into her care
- Katie developed a stronger understanding of her legal rights, how to advocate for herself with authorities and how to get legal support
- Katie reported feeling safer, heard and knowing how to support her children to recover from the impacts of the perpetrator's violence
- Katie reported feeling better able to connect with her baby, understand attachment and how to repair her relationship with her daughter.



HIS STORY

Harry

Harry, a 16-year-old young man, was referred to us by his school for support about his experiences of sexual violence. Harry had experienced sexual violence perpetrated against him by a trusted family member. He and his family had reported this to police and the perpetrator no longer lived with him and his family. Harry felt isolated, described himself as a burden and took on a lot of caring responsibilities for his younger siblings at home. He told us he wanted to stay strong for his family but was struggling. Harry thought that being sad or showing his feelings was a sign of weakness and not something he should do. Harry felt like he was hopeless, was struggling with his self-esteem and self-confidence. This was having a big impact on his education, he was struggling to regularly attend school, and he was also experiencing bullying from his peers.

Our approach

Our specialist sexual violence counsellors worked with Harry, his family and his school to explore ways to support him to get to counselling, with transport and financial hardship a big challenge for him and his parents. DVAC provided support for Harry to get to our centre for sessions and helped him with a mobile phone, so he could schedule appointments with his counsellor and have phone sessions when he wasn't able to come in person.

We provided Harry with a safe non-judgemental counselling environment, helped him learn about the ways sexual violence can impact our bodies and brains, about different trauma responses, identifying triggers and strategies to help Harry cope with these. The counsellor helped Harry unpack his beliefs about emotions, feelings and gender, helping him discover healthier ways of thinking about emotions and that being a young man didn't stop him expressing his feelings of sadness over what had happened to him.

We supported Harry to learn about healthy relationships, what power and control look like in relationships and what Harry's rights and responsibilities are in his relationships with others so he could better advocate for his needs.

The counsellor supported Harry to explore his goals for the future, identifying his strengths, agency and ability to create change in his life, as a young person navigating the end of secondary school and what comes next.

The impact

- Harry's depression, anxiety and stress levels improved from moderate and severe levels to mild by the end of counselling
- Harry described being able to talk about how he was feeling openly with his loved ones without feeling shame or embarrassment
- Harry felt able to cry without believing he was weak
- Harry was working to get his driver's licence, engaging in school more regularly and felt more supported by his teachers and school staff
- Harry described his relationships with his parents and friends as stronger and feeling like he knows what he wants in his future to look like.





Our impact 2025 – 2026 financial year

1 PROBLEM Complexity and risk

CLIENTS EXPERIENCING DFV

48% of clients who answered the question reported experiencing non-lethal strangulation

34% said this occurs 'All the time' or 'Often'

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

9,452 children and young people identified as victim-survivors in their own right

INTERSECTIONAL NEEDS

Clients identified as:

- With a disability
- Culturally & linguistically diverse
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
- LGBTIQ+

DISCLOSURES AND EMERGING RISK

774 clients disclosed coercive control **492** clients disclosed violence during pregnancy

382 clients disclosed financial control **709** clients reported increased technology-facilitated abuse

2 WHAT WE DID Our response and activity

TIME WITH AND FOR CLIENTS

90,933 hours spent on client related work **27,767** hours in 1:1 appointments with clients

INTEGRATED COLLABORATION

Co-location and case coordination across:

4 QPS Stations **11** Courts **332** high risk case consultations on average each month

DIRECT SERVICE RESPONSE

9,216 individual clients of our services received support

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

4,878 material supports **461** safety upgrades **584** safety audits **117** safe phones **658** emergency relief supports

3 IMPACT Outcomes and change

OUTCOMES REPORTED AT CLOSURE

“ Compared to when I started coming to DVAC, I feel more hopeful for the future. **”**

97% of clients said this was True or Very True

“ The support I have received from DVAC has helped me feel heard, understood and validated. **”**

99% of clients said this was True or Very True

“ I feel safer since working with DVAC. **”**

97% of clients said this was True or Very True

30 years of service to Ipswich and Toowoomba

1996

Where it all began

A team of nine, first known as the Domestic Violence Regional Service (Ipswich and Surrounds), began providing crisis response, court support and counselling services.

2001

A new identity

Became the Ipswich Women's Centre Against Domestic Violence with a staff of 10.



2002

Connecting online

Our first website launched.

2005

Connecting people with support

Established the Goodna Assisted Referrals Project (GARP) with Goodna Police and DVConnect Mensline.



2006

Making a measurable difference

GARP's independent evaluation demonstrated the impact of assisted referrals, with 182 police referrals in its first year and 82% successful follow-up contact by DFV services.



2009

Community comes together

Hosted the first "I Fight Like a Girl" Charity Concert.

2010

Leading a coordinated response

Developed the Coordinated Community Response (CCR) model that brought agencies together to respond to domestic violence (an approach since evolved into our Integrated Service Response model).



2011

Investing in prevention

Established the Greater Ipswich Region LOVE BITES Facilitator Team, delivering the LOVE BITES program designed by NAPCAN.

2012

Community engagement

Launched the Ipswich Says No to Violence campaign and chaired the Ipswich Coordinated Community Response to DFV.



2013

Walking together

More than 170 people marched in solidarity against violence at our Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event.

2014

Expanding our reach

Became the Domestic Violence Action Centre Inc. with expanded geographical coverage to include Ipswich, Toowoomba and the Darling Downs, with outreach to Stanthorpe and Warwick areas.



2015

Building a movement

Joined with community groups and individuals to create 4,000 stars for the One Million Stars to End Violence project.



2016

Expanding into sexual violence support

Service Against Sexual Violence (SASV) launched, and services expanded to Goodna, Springfield and the Lockyer Valley.



2017

Increasing our impact

Expanding services across Toowoomba, Darling and Southern Downs, becoming one of Queensland's largest specialist domestic and family violence and sexual assault service providers.

2018

Change, action and new direction

Established the Ipswich High Risk Team. Our school-based initiative Being Heard won the 2018 Ipswich Community Safety Crime Prevention Awards.



2019

Sharing our expertise

Delivered fee-for-service training to services in the Paroo Council region at Chinchilla.

2020

Supporting communities through COVID

During COVID-19, we rapidly adapted our service delivery, introducing virtual and telephone support while continuing court services across 11 locations.



2021

25 years of impact

Celebrated 25 years of supporting and empowering people in our communities and launched our new brand, website and Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

2022

Strengthening connection with community

Delivered 39 community education workshops and reached 2,695 students through school programs.

2023

Working together for change

DFV Specialists embedded within key community services and police. Helped deliver the inaugural The Swich Speaks Out DFV Summit.



2024

Creating safe futures

A philanthropic donation enabled us to purchase two homes for families who had fled domestic violence. Break the Cycle Pilot Program launched.

2025

Reaching more people, in more places

Supported 8,382 primary service users and more than 8,000 children. Awarded tender to build 10 cottages for people who have experienced domestic violence to live safely.

2026

30 years of making a difference

Celebrating 30 years of supporting people in our community. Launched new Client Services Team and single phone number, simplifying access to support and achieving a 96% call response rate.





Domestic Violence Action Centre

The Domestic Violence Action Centre provides free and confidential services for people who are experiencing, have experienced, or who use violence in their relationships.

When you speak to us, we will
RESPECT you, BELIEVE you, and help you to feel COMFORTABLE.

Contact us:

07 3816 2567

In an emergency call 000



We acknowledge and respect that we provide services across the lands and waters of the Bundjalung, Barranggam, Jarowair, Jagera, Ugarapul, and Yuggera Peoples. DVAC is an inclusive service to all eligible members of the community experiencing domestic, family and/or sexual violence. People from all religions, ethnicities, LGBTIQ+, ages, and abilities are welcome.

Funded by



www.dvac.org.au