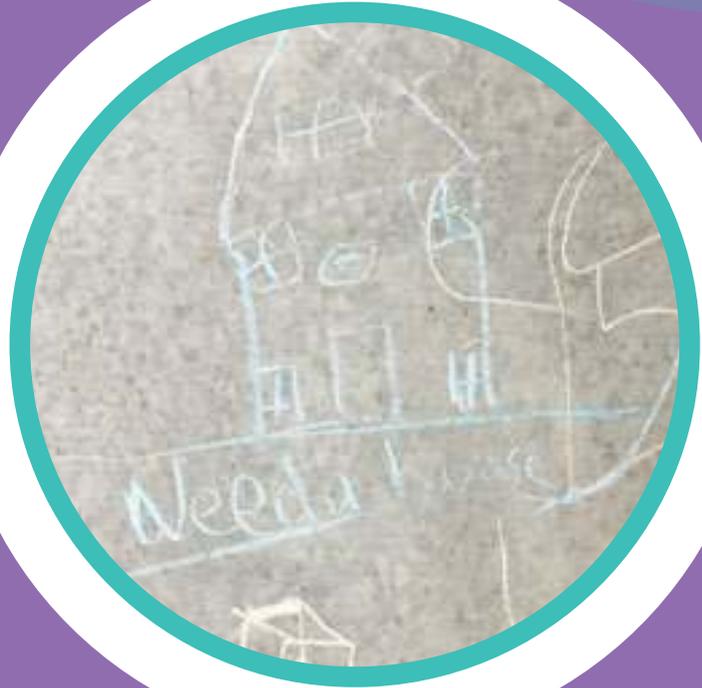


# ANNUAL REPORT

2018/2019



Support, housing and advocacy for women and children experiencing homelessness and all forms of violence.

## Number of unassisted requests for accommodation

2839 this year

3011 last year

## We accommodated and supported

**147**  
women

**188**  
children

## Main reason for seeking assistance

**43.2%**  
Domestic and family violence

**22.9%**  
Inadequate or inappropriate dwelling

**16.2%**  
Housing crisis

**8.1%**  
Previous accommodation ended

**9.6%**  
Other reasons

43.2% of support periods were due to domestic and family violence which continues to be one of the major reasons women seek crisis accommodation.



**63.29%**

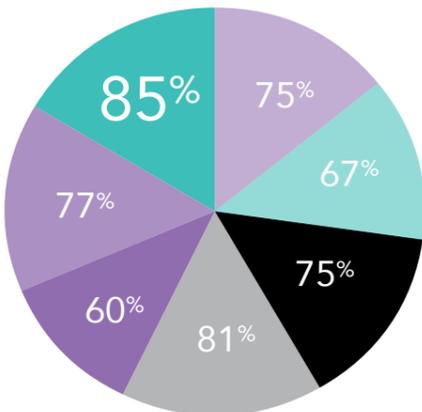
HAD A HOUSING OUTCOME  
vs. 67.3% the previous year

## HWS CURRENTLY HAS

**15**  
ACCOMMODATION PROPERTIES

6 x 1 bedroom, 7 x 2 bedroom  
2 x 3 bedroom

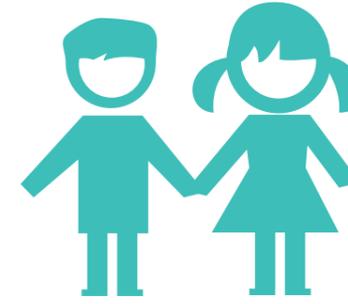
## Exceeded Expectations



- Overall experience with accommodation
- Quality of work and outcomes
- Time it took for maintenance worker/contractor to fix any problem
- Attitude, knowledge and professionalism staff
- Communication
- Time frame to resolve the issue
- How rent or maintenance issues were resolved

we provided  
**7299**  
NIGHTS  
of accommodation

**84.5%**  
OCCUPANCY RATE



## CHILDREN'S THERAPY PROGRAM & TOY LIBRARY

In the past year we have seen a 74% increase in the number of children staying at the Shelter. Children who have experienced family violence grow up in an environment that is unpredictable, filled with tension, anxiety and dominated by fear. This can lead to significant emotional and psychological trauma. Instead of growing up in an emotionally and physically safe, secure, nurturing and predictable environment, these children are forced to worry about the future; they try to predict when it might happen next and try to protect themselves and their siblings.

We found it increasingly difficult to connect children with counselling services, due to long waiting lists, and we had to look at different options for helping the children staying at the Shelter.

With the generous support of Myer Hobart, Myer Community Fund, individual donors and the Westpac Foundation we have been able to employ our own Children's Therapeutic Worker and to also develop a Toy Library.

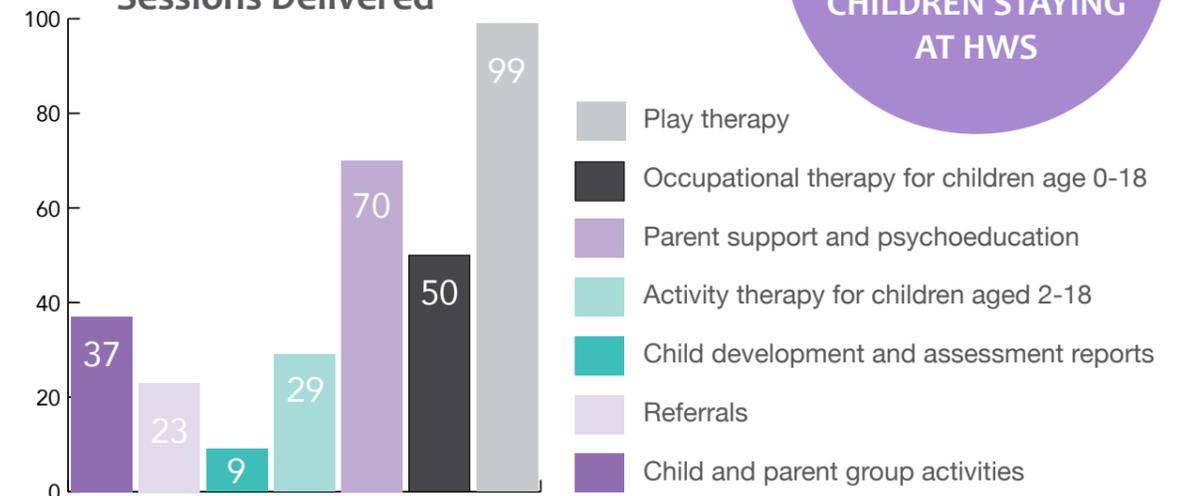
Children often arrive with none, or few possessions. Having toys they can borrow, and spaces where they can play, make them feel more secure as well as supporting their caregiver. Often the children we accommodate are traumatised. Exposure to trauma affects children's ability to regulate, identify, and express emotions.

Our Children's Therapeutic Worker utilises the 'Theraplay' treatment method, which focuses on healthy, attuned interaction between parents and their children; the kind of interaction that leads to secure attachment and lifelong positive mental health.



**74%**  
INCREASE IN CHILDREN STAYING AT HWS

## Sessions Delivered



# From the Chair and CEO

The Hobart Women's Shelter (HWS) continues to be committed to innovation and best practice as we provide support, housing and advocacy for women and children experiencing homelessness and all forms of violence.

Over the last year there were 2839 unassisted request for accommodation, compared with 3011 for the previous year. 147 women and 188 children were accommodated during 2018/19. 43.2% of support periods were due to domestic and family violence, which continues to be one of the major reasons for women to seek crisis accommodation. Housing crisis and affordability was at 20% and Inadequate or inappropriate dwelling conditions has been on the rise at 22.9%. 13.9% cited 'other' reasons for requesting support, which includes previous accommodation ending and/or relationship and family breakdown.

Accessing affordable rental accommodation continues to be the biggest challenge for our clients, many staying longer at our crisis shelter. It is unlikely that we will see a reduction in the number of calls we receive for assistance. We are, however, pleased to be in discussions with Department of Communities regarding an expansion of crisis accommodation on-site and the addition of 7 units off-site for transitional accommodation. This will increase our total properties from 15 to 32.

It has been a busy year, settling back into our new shelter after the flood in May 2018. Our team has settled well into our new service delivery model. We have a great team, a group of women supporting women and when women support each other, incredible things happen. A number of projects and Initiatives over the last year have enhanced our current service delivery to clients.

## Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program

With support from a donor and the Myer Foundation we were able to bring 2 trainers from the Northeastern University in Boston to conduct a 3-day train-the-trainer workshop on the Mentors in Violence Prevention program. 30 participants from various community services attended the training.

Our aim is to embed a sustainable model for bystander intervention training and to 'build a movement' of skilled community members across Tasmania that:

- Understand the nature and causes of family violence
- Understand the positive and non-violent roles that active bystanders can take in preventing family violence
- Contribute to building a culture of peer accountability in Tasmania where violence against women is not accepted as a cultural norm.

We are very excited to continue this work with our partnering organisations, Women's Health Tasmania, Women's Legal Service and Engender Equality to roll out a state-wide program.

## Attendance at the Council of Australian Governments, Reducing Violence Against Women Summit

National consultations took place over July to September in 2018. This Summit was held to inform the development of the Fourth Action Plan "Turning the Corner".

This is the final Action Plan under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 and will continue to foster a coordinated approach to reducing violence against women and their children through collaboration across all Australian jurisdictions. It will outline evidence-based priority areas including prevention activities, responding to workforce capability concerns and improving access to justice.

## Volunteer Program

We successfully appointed a Volunteer Coordinator this year who has successfully recruited several other volunteers who have generously donated their time and expertise to assist with haircuts, transport, fundraising and deliveries. Our volunteers do an amazing job! They all want to have an impact on the families to make our community a better place and recognise that even the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people. Thank you, Sue, Lessah, Anita and Jane for all that you do, you are an inspiration to us all.

## Strategic Plan

It is hard to achieve anything of significance without a good plan and alignment of values.

During the year we consulted with our team to realign our values and develop our new 3-year Strategic Plan that highlights four key priorities:

- Service Delivery
- Team member engagement
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Organisational growth

These strategic priorities are based on the recognition that we need to widen our capacity to meet the needs of clients, identify opportunities to build the capacity of the community to challenge the behaviours, structures and power imbalances that impact gender equality and support our team to implement best practice service delivery.

## Board Governance

To ensure effective governance we have been reviewing our approach, skills, knowledge and priorities for the year. This ensures that we continue to meet our board responsibilities, focus on our strategic priorities and be flexible and responsive to meet unexpected needs and challenges.

## Official Opening

Our new Shelter was officially opened by the Honourable Roger Jaensch MP on the 23rd November 2018 and named Janet Edith House. The Board thought it fitting to pay tribute to Janet Edith who, in 1998, made a large single bequest to the Shelter of \$52,000.

"The Hobart Women's Shelter holds no records relating to any relationship Janet Edith may have had with the Shelter. There is no correspondence from Janet to shine a light on her motives.

The generous action of this quiet, humble Tasmanian woman reflects the ethos of the Hobart Women's Shelter – to help women and their children with a safe place to stay in times of crisis.

Janet did not leave any instructions in her will relating to publicising her donation and no documentation has come to light related to her relationship with the Hobart Women's Shelter, we wish to respect her anonymity by leaving out her family name". (Dr. Nicolás Goc)

## With thanks

We would like to thank Dr. Nicolás Goc (past Board member) for her work in researching the history of the Hobart Women's Shelter and so eloquently sharing this rich information at the opening of the new Hobart Women's Shelter.

We continued to see support from the community grow this year, receiving many donations from generous individuals and businesses wanting to make a difference by supporting us in what we do. Without these donations we would not be able to introduce some of the initiatives that have made a difference to the families that we support at the Shelter.

As Chair I would like to thank Mary Anne Ryan. Mary Anne has served on the board for 13 years, 4 as Chair. In 2018 Mary Anne stepped down as Chair and continues to serve on the Board to support me as I transition into my new role as Chair. Women like Mary Anne Ryan have helped to shape and grow the Hobart Women's Shelter and continues to be a leading voice for women in our community. Her individual and collective impact cannot be underestimated. Mary Anne has positively and indelibly changed Tasmania as a whole but, more specifically, the roles and ultimately the identity of women within it.

We would like to thank our dedicated and passionate staff, volunteers, and our Board for their hard work, professionalism, humility and respect. It has been a big year with many challenges, a new way of working, and a flood, but still the staff and Board have been patient, flexible and responsive to the needs of our families. We are excited to expand our services next year and roll out our Mentors in Violence Prevention training in the community. There are many opportunities that this creates for us to continue our Vision to, "Create a safe and inclusive community free from violence, inequality and injustice".

Miriam Moreton, Chair and Janet Saunders, CEO



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