

# ANROWS

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL RESEARCH  
ORGANISATION FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY

*to Reduce Violence against Women & their Children*

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Report reveals critical gaps in support for young people to disclose and address their use of violence**

Responding effectively to young people who use violence in the home requires whole-of-system interventions tailored to their needs, according to an ANROWS report released today.

The new research led by Professor Kate Fitz-Gibbon of Monash University finds there are critical gaps in the current supports available for children and young people using adolescent family violence (AFV) and it highlights the need for trauma informed responses.

The first report related to this project was released last month. Its findings showed that one in five young people who participated reported that they had used violence against a family member. The survey of over 5,000 young people living in Australia, aged 16 to 20, also found that 89 per cent of those young people who used violence had experienced child abuse during their lifetime.

[“Adolescent family violence in Australia: A national study of service and support needs for young people who use family violence”](#), which is the second report to be published on this project, focuses on the service and support needs of young people who use AFV.

Of the 1,006 young people who self-reported using violence in the home, 34 per cent disclosed this use of violence to a family member, 18 per cent to a friend, 7 per cent to a formal service, and 1 per cent to another member of the community.

Professor Fitz-Gibbon remarked that “this study reveals the range of ways in which the support needs of young people who use family violence, and their family members are not being met”.

“Children and young people consistently told us that they seek consistent, supportive and validating responses from the trusted people to whom they disclose their use of violence. At present, the responses children and young people all too often receive often fail to provide any short- or long-term meaningful support”.

By speaking directly to young people who use AFV, researchers learned that they are seeking support in the form of “somewhere to stay in moments of violence”, “a more supportive environment”, and “someone at school e.g. psychologist that I could tell”.

Effective responses to AFV and a reduction in the rate of domestic and family violence (DFV) across generations requires skilled and child-centred risk assessment, professional and trauma informed support for whole families, and education on DFV and respectful relationships.

ANROWS CEO Padma Raman PSM noted that a holistic response to young people who use violence is particularly important in the context of what we know about the overlap between young people's use and experiences of violence in the home.

"Young people need to know there are safe support mechanisms in place for them. They need to feel heard and supported when talking about violence at home, including their own action. We can't expect them to make changes to their own behaviour if they are unsafe."

"This research provides the basis of understanding for all people connected to young people to better recognise and respond to adolescent violence in the home, so their disclosures to trusted adults are met with consistency and care."

Minister for Social Services Amanda Rishworth said tackling domestic and family violence is a priority for the Albanese Government and listening to young people will be key to reform.

"We know that domestic and family violence creates a huge amount of emotional strain for children and young people and they often feel guilty that they cannot fix the situation. We welcome this ANROWS report for giving young people a say in their own right about the support and services they need".

"The recommendations will inform the next National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children which we will release in October."

**Journalists are invited to request an embargoed copy of this report.**

**For further information, contact Johanna Gleeson +61 426 529 959 or by email at [johanna.gleeson@anrows.org.au](mailto:johanna.gleeson@anrows.org.au).**

### **About ANROWS**

Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety Limited ([ANROWS](#)) is a not-for-profit independent national research organisation. ANROWS is an initiative of Australia's *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*. ANROWS was established by the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments of Australia to produce, disseminate and assist in applying evidence for policy and practice addressing violence against women and their children. ANROWS is the only such research organisation in Australia.