

## Family Violence Peer Support Group Program Brief

<b>Summary</b>	Good Shepherd is facilitating a peer support group pilot program for victim survivors of family violence. These are closed groups of around 10 participants running for 8 weeks
<b>Duration</b>	2024 calendar year, aligned with school terms
<b>Objective</b>	To support healing and recovery from the impacts of family violence
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>Participants will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase opportunities for social connectedness and reduce social isolation</li> <li>2. Start to build networks for emotional, practical, and informational support</li> <li>3. Be better equipped with tools, skills and strategies to effectively manage and cope</li> <li>4. Rebuild confidence, self-esteem, and resilience</li> <li>5. Feel more empowered with increased self-efficacy and independence to achieve their goals</li> </ol>
<b>Location</b>	<p><b>Bayside Peninsula Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wallaroo Community House, Hastings</li> <li>• Family Life, Sandringham</li> <li>• The Salvation Army, Frankston North</li> </ul>
<b>Key Contacts</b>	<p><b>Referrals: <a href="mailto:FVintake@goodshep.org.au">FVintake@goodshep.org.au</a>, 5971 9444</b></p> <p>Chelsea: <a href="mailto:Chelsea.Davies@goodshep.org.au">Chelsea.Davies@goodshep.org.au</a>, 0499 996 037</p> <p>Sally: <a href="mailto:Sally.Rumble@goodshep.org.au">Sally.Rumble@goodshep.org.au</a>, 0407 473 219</p>

### 1. Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand profile

Good Shepherd’s mission is to strive for dignity and social justice for women, girls, and families, collaborating globally and acting locally. We’ve walked alongside people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability for 160 years in Australia, and over 400 years internationally. We take a trauma-informed strengths-based approach to our work, which includes advocating for evidence-informed systemic change.

Good Shepherd’s programs and services include financial, family violence, youth and education services, parenting programs, community houses and the Good Shepherd chapel. Within Victoria our family violence team assist with recovery, crisis and housing services and work closely with emergency and protection services. Family violence counsellors assist in the healing and recovery process by providing free support and trauma counselling for victim survivors, including individualised case management and mental health support and referrals.

### 2. Background

Social connectedness is a key driver of wellbeing and resilience. Socially well-connected people and communities are happier, healthier, and better able to take charge of their lives and find solutions to the problems they face. Peer support models lead to improved outcomes for participants; however, peer support groups are limited within the family violence sector and there are limited, or no peer support

groups for victim survivors of family violence in Bayside Peninsula. Our service system offers case management, therapeutic interventions and group work that is mostly built around family dynamics, understanding family violence and its impact on families and children but with limited focus on the adult victim survivor. A peer support model embeds lived experience by having a program and agenda led by victim survivors. The need for and design of this pilot was informed by lived experience. A comprehensive literature review of the effectiveness and features of peer support groups for women who are victim survivors of family violence was also undertaken to inform the program. This pilot will continue to embed lived experience, ensuring a flexible and dynamic program with a strong learning and evaluation agenda.

### 3. Program Description

A peer support group creates a safe supportive space where victim survivors can continue their journey to be free from family violence, work on their recovery, build social connections and develop more insights into family violence and its impact.

The agenda for each group will be unique as the curriculum will be determined by the group to meet their desired needs and learning agenda. Options include facilitated discussions, art, music, and activities. Light snacks are provided, and childcare, transport, and interpreters can be arranged if required.

The group facilitators will also provide individualised support to ensure that the safety and support needs of participants are met, including referrals to other services such as family violence case management, family violence counselling, housing services, etc.

All group participants will be invited to participate in pre and post outcome measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Feedback will be embedded throughout the course of the pilot program to inform the topics and structure of each group as it evolves, to refine the model and ensure the program is meeting the needs of participants.

<b>Peer Support Group Details for Term 2</b>			
<b>Location</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Wallaroo Community House, 6 Wallaroo Place, <b>Hastings</b>	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> May	12.30 – 2.30 pm
Family Life, 197 Bluff Road, <b>Sandringham</b>	Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	1.30 – 3.30 pm
The Salvation Army, 17-21 Forest Drive, <b>Frankston North</b>	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> June	5.30 – 7.30 pm

### 4. Eligibility Criteria and Referral

Eligibility criteria for this program is as follows.

- Have experienced family violence
- Identify as a woman and aged 18+
- Live in Bayside Peninsula
- Capacity to commit to the group
- Not currently in crisis and would benefit from a peer support group

We welcome referrals from all agencies supporting victim survivors of family violence in Bayside Peninsula. **Please email the completed referral form to [FVIntake@goodshp.org.au](mailto:FVIntake@goodshp.org.au) or call Chelsea D or Sally R on 5971 9444.** Victim survivors may also self-refer using the same contact details.