

# 2017/ 2018 Annual Report



## 2017-2018 Innovation and Acheivements.

### INNOVATIVE TRAINING

We developed tailored family violence training and resources for alcohol and other drug workers and delivered the training with Yemaya and the Drug Education Network in three locations across the state.

### RELEVANT SERVICES

We held a 6 week psychosocial group in the Women's Prison, provided counselling to women living in the prison and worked with Women's Health Tas to a produce a radio program with women who have been involved in the criminal justice system.

### MEETING DEMAND

We delivered the Shark Cage early intervention program to groups in the Kentish Region (with CatholicCare) George Town (with the Neighbourhood House) and Newnham (with the Neighbourhood House), partially funded by Anglicare Tas, Communities for Children.

### STRATEGY

We refreshed and safeguarded the Governance Board with skills based members, released a re-invigorated strategic plan and embedded HELLO Tas Health Literacy into our governance agenda.

### COMPLIANCE

We met the requirements of the DHHS Quality and Safety Audit, reviewed all of our operational Policies and Procedures and developed new systems for data reporting to Communities Tas, with 3 Tier Technology

### LEADERSHIP

We organised a highly successful 1 day conference on *Coercive Control* to provide information on the complexity of family violence in Tasmania, attended by 150 people. This event was supported by Bellendena, Our Watch and Relationships Aus.

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## Chair Report.

On behalf of the Engender Equality Board and staff it is with great pleasure we present the organisation's Annual Report for FY2018. It has been another busy year for the organisation as we continue to be a voice for those affected by family and domestic violence and deliver crucial counselling services, education and training as well advocacy.

As an organisation we believe to end domestic and family violence requires a holistic response from the government and the community and at the core of this is inequality in our society. In order to represent this fundamental philosophy and the evolution of the organisation beyond our core counselling services to a more active role in advocacy and training and education we undertook a name change in consultation with staff and clients. During the FY2018 year SHE (Support Help and Empowerment) became Engender Equality.

Led by our CEO Alina Thomas, we continued our advocacy role through preparing a number of submissions on key policy based decisions in order to represent and address the contributing factors to family and domestic violence and participate in industry working groups and reviews.

As an impactful and dynamic organisation we are privileged to have highly skilled and passionate staff and Board who I wish to thank for their continuing contribution to the organisation and to our core purpose of ending domestic and family violence.

Emma Terry, Chairperson



1926 people  
have  
attended  
our  
workshops.

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**Thank you,**



**with our whole heart.**

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## **Engender(ing) Equality.**

Over the past few years, family violence has received growing attention in the mainstream media, as well as from community campaigns and in government policy. There has been an increased focus on primary prevention as an important activity to reduce family violence. In addition, family violence has shifted to now be considered a whole of community issue. Family violence services are increasingly expected to see men who have been subjected to violent and abusive behaviours and we are seeing diverse communities wanting to be a part of primary prevention campaigns.

To reflect this changing landscape, we have adopted the new name, Engender Equality (Engender for short). The name, Engender Equality, promotes the need to address the primary drivers of family violence. The graphic device of the logo suggests movement and progress. The colours speak to the former SHE logo, a logo that we honour for the strong history that has forged an evolution of family violence responses in Tasmania. The new name does not affect the current service provision or frameworks.



Engender  
Equality

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## Specialist Services.

Specialised Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) and women's services like Engender Equality play a vital role in providing the best possible outcomes for people affected by violence, and in working towards the end of DFV and violence against women. The effectiveness of specialised services is underpinned by practice principles supported by international research and evidence-based practice (Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA) 2016). While the complex and varied needs of women affected by violence require the availability of a broad range of organisations and services for holistic support, Engender Equality recognises a shortfall among non-specialised family violence responses in the recognition and description of behaviours that constitute family violence, and how to safely respond to people who are using or affected by these behaviours. Specialised DFV services make an invaluable contribution to the safety and wellbeing of people affected by violence through comprehensive risk assessment and safety planning, as well as evidence-based and trauma-informed interventions. We lead much needed dialogue in the community about gender inequality and DFV, raising awareness and understanding of the causes and impacts of both. These conversations are informed by the practice philosophy of the service, the experiences of those who use our service, our frameworks and the values we bring to our violence prevention work.

Even so, an immense amount of community education about DFV is still needed – for example, less than 50% of people who witness violence, sexism, or discrimination in social or workplace contexts report that they would say or do something in response. The increasing demand for specialised services must be met with an increase in resourcing if we are to continue meeting the needs of the community and of women affected by violence.

Alina Thomas, CEO



## What do the Engender Equality counsellors do?

Engender uses a client-centred, strengths-based approach to counselling which emphasises the existing strengths and resources of clients. Engender Equality strives to maximise client choice and facilitates clients to be an active part of the counselling process.

Early phases of counselling at Engender Equality focus on safety and stabilisation. Clients may be in crisis and concerned with immediate issues such as protecting their children, legal processes, accommodation and financial concerns. Counsellors must be aware of safety risks if the client is living with abuse.

We aim to share with clients a few key things, for example:

- Issues and dynamics of family violence and recognising unsafe relationships such as an understanding of the cycle of violence, impacts of emotional abuse and barriers to leaving
- Agency and resistance strategies that have enhanced resilience
- The impacts of trauma on the brain, physiology of trauma
- Neuroplasticity to foster a sense of hopefulness and optimism
- Understanding functions of emotions and normalising distressing internal experience including those associated with disenfranchised grief, mixed feelings of love and hate towards the perpetrator, loss, shame, self-blame and anger



We  
provided  
2925  
counselling  
hours.

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## Who we are.

Established in 1989, as Support, Help & Empowerment, Engender Equality is the leading non-government agency in Tasmania for people who have experienced domestic and family violence (DFV). Engender Equality advocates for an end to all violence against women and other marginalised people. Engender Equality is a dynamic and evolving professional organisation with philosophies, practice and resources founded on current research. Engender Equality has a high level of skill, knowledge and experience working with and on behalf of women, children, families, and communities affected by violence.

Services we offer include trauma informed and evidence-based counselling, education and support for groups and individuals affected by violence, information and referral, community training and education, production of innovative and evidence-based resources, and advocacy for systemic change to gender inequity and violence against women.

Engender Equality takes part in many advocacy activities, including:

- Speaking out in the community via media interviews and at events
- Contributing to research on family violence in Tasmania and Australia
- Engages in government processes through policy submissions and representation
- Hosting events to raise awareness of family violence in Tasmania
- Delivering training and workshops

We are an active member of key advisory boards and networks.



We held 18  
groups on  
healthy  
relationship  
and family  
violence.

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