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New program to support whole families experiencing family violence

A new service has been launched to support families to recover from family violence.

The program, called Keeping Safe Together, will see a number of existing support services working together in a new way to fill a gap in supporting families that has historically been unavailable.

Keeping Safe Together is a Victorian first, in that it will focus on supporting families to heal and recover from the impact of family violence whilst targeting the specific individual support needs for each member of a family, including men who use violence.

Women's Health West and LifeWorks will co-lead the program in partnership with a range of local organisations including the Bouverie Centre, cohealth, Good Shepherd, Catholic Care and Mackillop Family Services.

Keeping Safe Together has been designed to specifically meet the diverse needs of the community in Melbourne's western region.

The program is initially being piloted in Wyndham and Melton, which allows the partners involved to trial the innovative approach over the period of a year.

Dr Robyn Gregory, CEO of Women's Health West, said:

'Keeping Safe Together will provide intensive therapeutic support to families who have experienced family violence, and are seeking to recover and rebuild their lives.

It's important that women are able to access support both for themselves and their family members, given we know statistically that women and their children often return multiple times to their violent or abusive partners, leading to cumulative trauma and harm.

The collaborative approach that Keeping Safe Together will take provides us with an important opportunity to support families across the spectrum of service responses, from early intervention all the way to recovery.

We are delighted that this innovative approach to working with families will enable us to ensure that more women and their children are able to live safe, healthy lives in Melbourne's west.'

Referrals for the Keeping Safe Together program are now open.

Referrals for the Keeping Safe Together program are now open. To find out more about the program, call (03) 9448 5650 or email kstenquiries@whwest.org.au.

NOTES:

- For further information or comments please contact Women's Health West's communications manager, Kelly Ventress.
- Women's Health West provides specialist family violence services to women and their children. We also run prevention programs that promote equity and justice for women and girls in Melbourne's west.
- LifeWorks Relationship Counselling and Education Services is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to promote healthy, respectful and fulfilling relationships within the Victorian community