

# NATIONAL FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION LEGAL SERVICES

WORKING TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED JUSTICE OUTCOMES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER  
VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

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## **Welcome funding but greater investment needed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities being destroyed by family violence**

The National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum welcomes the Government's announcement of \$10 million a year over three years into the legal assistance sector to address family violence. However this investment is inadequate to stop women's lives being lost and communities being destroyed by violence.

"Having been overlooked for funding from the Prime Minister's Women's Safety Package announced in September 2015 it is imperative that Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service (FVPLS) secure much needed additional investment into our chronically underfunded services. Our clients are the most vulnerable women in Australia," said Antoinette Braybrook, Convenor of the National FVPLS Forum.

"This week's [Four Corners](#) recounted - in horrifying detail - the brutal killing of an Aboriginal woman Lynette Daley and the failure of our justice system was a tragic but timely reminder of the need for action. To protect women like Lynette we need urgent investment in the legal services and supports provided by FVPLSs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS) for the safety of Aboriginal women."

"Violence against Aboriginal women and their children is at epidemic levels. If you are an Aboriginal women you are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised and 10 times more likely to be killed by someone who purports to love you."

By 2021-22 violence against Aboriginal women is estimated to cost the national an extraordinary \$2.2 billion a year. Its moral cost - which sees lives lost and communities destroyed - is unquantifiable.

FVPLSs respond to this crisis by providing essential services for safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims/survivors of family violence. Our wrap around legal and support services would not reach those most in need, or at risk of violence, without our early intervention prevention programs to break the vicious cycle of violence.

"Women who come to us do so after being subjected to abuse and violence for many years. Our specialist, culturally safe services ensures women can access the support they need knowing they will not be judged."

The National Forum is also concerned the funding announced today will be inadequate to address the large funding cuts that are facing ATSILS and Community Legal Centres.

Read Antoinette Braybrook's Opinion Piece [Aboriginal women's lives really do matter](#) published yesterday on ABC's *The Drum*.

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Media Release