

MEDIA RELEASE

Landmark Funding to Help Fathers Change and Prevent Domestic and Family Violence

Odyssey House NSW expands program with \$1.75 million in philanthropic funding.

Landmark funding from the Paul Ramsay Foundation (PRF) will enable Odyssey House NSW to expand its T.R.A.C.K.S program helping fathers address harmful behaviours before they escalate and supporting safer homes for children and families.

The announcement comes after Australian Bureau of Statistics data this year revealed family and domestic violence offenders increased by 8 per cent in 2024-25, to 97,800 offenders nationally, and representing the largest annual increase since national reporting began.

The statistics on violence against women and children tell an alarming story:

- 1 in 4 (23% or 2.3 million) women have experienced violence from an intimate partner since the age of 15ⁱ
- 1 in 5 has experienced sexual violence.ⁱⁱ
- Rates of violence are even higher for certain groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Around 2 in 3 women who experience violence from a cohabiting partner report that children in their care have seen or heard the violence.^{iv}

The impacts have lifelong consequences for children's safety, wellbeing, and development.

Research also shows alcohol and other drug use can increase the risk and severity of domestic and family violence. Australian Institute of Criminology research found alcohol is involved in approximately one-third of intimate partner violence incidents.

However, alcohol and other drug use does not excuse, cause, or justify violent behaviour, highlighting the need for integrated responses that address both substance use and the accountability of users of violence.

As one of Australia's largest alcohol and other drug rehabilitation providers, Odyssey supports thousands of people each year through residential rehabilitation, withdrawal services, family support, counselling, and community-based programs.

The grant will enable the expansion of T.R.A.C.K.S (Towards Recovery, Accountability and Change for Kids and Self), a specialist behaviour change program designed to help fathers

recognise the early warning signs of using violence, take responsibility for their actions, address problematic substance use, and build safer, healthier relationships with their children and families.

Odyssey's Chief Executive Officer the Hon. Carmel Tebbutt said early intervention with fathers represents one of the most important opportunities to prevent harm before families reach crisis point.

"The ABS figures show we cannot afford to focus only on responding to violence after it occurs. We need to invest in prevention and earlier intervention with the people using violence. We need a much greater focus on the behaviours, attitudes, and choices of those causing harm. By combining accountability with practical support for behaviour change, we can create safer homes, stronger families and better outcomes for children."

The additional funding will support specialist staffing, and independent research to further strengthen and evaluate the program's impact.

The program focuses on:

- Recognising early warning signs of violence, abuse, and coercive behaviours
- Addressing alcohol and other drug issues associated with family harm
- Building emotional regulation and healthy coping strategies
- Accountability and personal responsibility
- Improving parenting skills and father-child relationships
- Supporting fathers to become nurturing, safe, and engaged parents
- Creating safer and more stable environments for children.

Odyssey House NSW has received \$1.75 million over five years through PRF's Dads on Track National Grant Round to expand this work, representing the most significant investment the organisation has received for programs addressing the intersection of family violence, fatherhood, and substance use.

The funding is part of PRF's announcement of more than \$24 million in support for 14 organisations across Australia working to change trajectories for men and keep families safe and strong. PRF Head of Families Jackie Ruddock said, "Addressing family and domestic violence requires working with the family as a unit, as well as tailoring supports to individual family or kin, and their roles. PRF's Dads on Track grants are about investing in early engagement, and holding accountability, so that we can further develop healing-focused models tailored to different communities."

Carmel Tebbutt said the investment would enable Odyssey House NSW to reach more families at a critical point.

"Everyone has the right to live safely and free from violence. Achieving this requires a coordinated, whole-of-community response that addresses the complex factors contributing to family harm. For almost 50 years, Odyssey House NSW has partnered with individuals and

families affected by alcohol and other drug dependence. This investment means we can expand our specialist behaviour program, working with fathers to address harmful behaviours before they escalate. The program will create opportunities to disrupt intergenerational cycles of trauma, disadvantage and harm."

- If you or anyone you know is in need or crisis, please call the National Domestic Family Violence and Sexual Assault, Counselling Service on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or Lifeline 13 11 14.
- Support and counselling specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is available at 13YARN on 13 92 76.
- Rainbow Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence Helpline - free and confidential. Available 24/7. 1800 497 212

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About Odyssey House NSW

Odyssey House NSW is one of Australia's leading alcohol and other drug rehabilitation organisations. For almost 50 years, we have worked alongside individuals, families and communities to reduce the harms associated with alcohol and other drug use through prevention, treatment, recovery, education and community services.

Key Facts

- Established in 1977
- Supports more than 3500 people annually
- Operates services across New South Wales

Website: www.odysseyhouse.com.au

ⁱ [Intimate partner violence - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

ⁱⁱ [Personal Safety, Australia, 2021-22 financial year | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

^{iv} [Family, domestic, and sexual violence data in Australia, Children exposed to their parent or carer's experience of domestic violence - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)