



MEDIA RELEASE

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WLSA welcomes the launch of the ground-breaking Lighthouse Project which will work to keep women and children safe in the family law courts

Women's Legal Services Australia applauds Chief Justice William Alstergren and the Family Law Courts for working to address the safety of women and children travelling through the courts.

Since 2015, when Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA) first launched its five-step plan for reform, *Safety First in Family Law*, with Rosie Batty, former Australian of the year, WLSA has been campaigning for safety reforms which are now being implemented through the *Lighthouse Project*.

Angela Lynch, WLSA spokesperson, said "It is critical for the family law courts to act now to implement safety and risk management processes to keep women and children safe. The Lighthouse Project will ensure that these safety and risk management processes are implemented which is ground-breaking and long overdue."

"Nearly 70 percent of matters lodged in the family courts involve allegations of family violence, but the system is not set up to deal with this – and neither are the many professionals who work within the system," Ms Lynch said.

"Until the Lighthouse Project the family courts have not had case management processes specifically designed for family violence cases, so safety risks have not been managed. This is putting women and children at grave risk."

The Lighthouse Project includes risk screening and triaging of matters, and a specialist high risk list (the Evatt List). The Lighthouse Project will be piloted in Adelaide, Parramatta and Brisbane.

Angela Lynch said the Government needed to show its commitment to ending violence against women and children. The implementation of the Lighthouse Project is an important step. The Government also needs to take further action by fully implementing the [reform plan](#) developed by specialist women's legal services around Australia.

"Women's legal services across Australia work on the frontline to represent family violence victim survivors – we know just how urgent the Lighthouse Project reforms are, and how the current family law system is failing women and children," Ms Lynch said.

Further information

[Safety First in Family Law 5 step plan](#)

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