



ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

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Starick acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of this country and its waters. We pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal people seeing this message.

Chair's Report

As we reflect on the past year, I cannot help but be torn between despair and hope yet again. We have all seen the terrible toll that family and domestic violence (FDV) has taken on Western Australian women, children, and the broader community, but I hope we have also seen a planning and funding step-change at both state and federal government levels with clear focus on prevention and early intervention.

Federally, we saw the launch of the first Action Plan under the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children. This is a welcome broadening of the scope of the problem of gender-based violence while introducing a greater focus on coercive control and children as victims of violence rather than observers.

At a State level, the Family and Domestic Violence Taskforce was convened between September 2023 and March 2024. This provided guidance for the State's efforts to address FDV. This led to over \$160 million in funding to essential services, supported by a campaign to raise awareness and 'play your part' by calling out violence and disrespectful behaviour during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence in WA.

Starick has been working alongside the State Government throughout the year, providing data, media, and participation on the taskforce working groups as part of our strategic advocacy pillar. Also, importantly, Starick continues representation on the Supporting Communities Forum Child Safe Organisations Working Group, which aligns with our emerging and sector-leading focus on the wellbeing of children.

Starick has continued to expand its commitment to our strategic prevention pillar, collaborating with more schools and sporting and recreation groups to deliver the Respectful Relationships Program, including expanding services into the regions. As we move into a tendering environment for this program, we are very keen to remain a core provider in the delivery of this program across the State.

The work of Starick continues to be challenging, with increasing demand for our services, accommodation blockages in the middle of the housing crisis, and real difficulty in recruiting a skilled workforce. Whilst our financial position remains healthy, I acknowledge that much of the surplus generated this year

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stems from vacancies across the business that we have struggled to fill. The impact on staff holding down the fort has been great. I thank you for your tireless commitment to ensuring that Starick continues to provide high quality services to victim survivors and the community.

Community support has been a cornerstone of our success. The generosity of our donors and the dedication of our volunteers across the business are well and truly part of our organisational backbone and I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board members, staff, volunteers, and partners. To the many women and children survivors who have shared their stories and trusted us with their journey, your courage inspires us every day.

Our commitment to ending family and domestic violence remains steadfast. We will continue to advocate for systemic change, expand our services, and support survivors in their journey. The Board and Starick team move into developing our next Strategic Plan in the coming months, and our focus will continue to be a future free from violence for women and children.

I could not end without a huge congratulations to our CEO, Leanne, in securing a Churchill Scholarship in 2025 to continue her commitment to ensuring that children touched by FDV are brought to the front of our thinking. Leanne will be interviewing and observing in universities in Scotland, England and Germany, and attending a European Conference on Domestic Violence in Spain. Her learning will be shared in the WA sector to make sure our precious next generation has every opportunity to break out of the FDV cycle and thrive in life. We are all looking forward to the outcomes of Leanne's journey and are very proud that she is stepping up to the plate yet again.

Natalie Sangalli | Chair



Treasurer's Report

The 2023-2024 financial year has been a strong one for the Starick organisation.

Comprehensive income for the year was \$798 067 compared to \$565 969 in the previous year, an increase of 41%. This was primarily the result of:

- 1 Increased funding from the Department of Communities, the main provider of funding for Starick, especially in the Safe at Home and Respectful Relationship programs.**
- 2 A 19% increase in fundraising income from the previous year, providing \$332 705 in the 2023-2024 year.**
- 3 A significant increase in investment income as a result of higher interest rates available on term deposits.**
- 4 Reduction in administrative expenses primarily due to reduced legal and consultancy costs.**

Income diversification through both fundraising and investment returns continues to be a focus, enabling the organisation to de-risk some of its strategic initiatives and services. The key fundraising events for Starick are growing year on year with our signature events gaining in support and profile.

The organisation's Balance Sheet continued to strengthen during the year, with year-end Net Assets of \$3.77m compared to \$2.97m in the previous year. A strong Balance Sheet provides long-term sustainability and growth of our services, including focused programs on supporting children who experience domestic violence, and delivering respectful relationship courses in schools and sporting organisations to reduce the incidence of family and domestic violence.

Liza Dunne | Treasurer



CEO's Report

In 2023/24 Starick continued to focus on supporting victim survivors of family and domestic violence (FDV) and building safer communities through our work across the continuum of prevention, early intervention, crisis intervention, re-establishment and recovery.

In spite of our efforts and those of the broader FDV sector, and increasing government and community awareness about the incidence and impacts of FDV, 2023/24 has seen a significant increase in FDV statistics, including a 30% increase in the rate of women being killed by a current or former partner.

“The cost of living crisis and lack of housing also continue to have a devastating impact on the safety and wellbeing of victim survivors and is being felt across the sector and community.”

These issues are all part of the daily challenges of working in the FDV sector, and I acknowledge all Starick staff for their ongoing commitment and resilience.

Our Services >

PREVENTION

Starick has worked towards our vision of futures free from violence through primary prevention programs which aim to educate the community about abuse in its many forms, address the drivers of FDV, and challenge and change community attitudes and behaviours.

Respectful Relationships Teacher Support Program

Starick continues its important work with WA public primary and secondary schools to implement the Respectful Relationships Teacher Support Program.

In 2023/24, 34 schools engaged in the Respectful Relationships Program.

Starick supported schools to embed a whole of school approach to respectful relationships by providing online resources, information workshops, meetings with schools, and presenting at school open nights. We acknowledge our project partners Stopping Family Violence, Sexual Health Quarter's Mooditj Leader Training Program, who provided culturally appropriate tools for schools, and Geraldton service Desert Blue Connect who helped ensure a local context for prevention efforts in the mid-west.

Respectful Relationships Program for Sport and Recreation Clubs

In the second half of 2023, Starick finalised our co-designed Respectful Relationships Sport and Recreation Program. Six WA sporting organisations and two regional local governments contributed to the development of the programs framework to support healthy and positive relationships and prevent FDV.

Since then, we have recruited and worked with organisations and regional local governments and developed an e-learning package, an interactive website and other resources for the sport and recreation sector.



ADVOCACY

In addition to our Respectful Relationships programs, we advocated for safer communities and for safe and just service responses for victim survivors. In 2023/24, this work included participation/representation on:

- Preventing Violence Together Steering Committee to develop a primary prevention framework for WA.
- Executive and Board membership of the national peak body for women's specialist FDV services, WESNET, and on the Organising Committee for the 5th World Conference of Women's Shelters to be hosted by WESNET in Sydney in September 2025.
- Coercive Control Campaign focus group with the Department of Communities
- FDV Task Force System Reform Group Working Party on Risk Assessment.
- Expert Reference Group on Code of Practice and Audit Tool for refuges.
- Supporting Communities Forum Child Safe Organisations Working Group.

A strength of our work in prevention is that we are providing programs in two of the spaces where many children and young people spend significant amounts of time, thus maximising our capacity to create safer spaces now and generational change in the future.

CEO's Report continued

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, 25 November to 10 December 2023

Starick's 7th year of our signature 16 Days social media campaign sought to reach a broad audience and to educate and influence, with a call to action for everyone to 'Play Your Part'.

Our 2023 campaign achieved:

- A reach of over 2 200 Facebook and 420 Instagram users.
- Engagement of around 600 individual Facebook users - an increase of 138% on the previous 90 days.
- 93 page views and 45 unique visitors to the Starick LinkedIn page – an increase of 153% on the period in 2022.

The campaign culminated in our 5th Corporate Fundraising Breakfast and Spirit of Starick Awards Ceremony. Our thanks to Monadelphous for their sponsorship and to everyone who presented and attended this moving and powerful event helping us to raise over \$30 000.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Starick provided a range of early intervention services to mitigate the effects of FDV on children and young people, to improve their safety and wellbeing in the immediate to long term, and to break the cycle of violence.

Our Early Intervention Project (EIP), developed in partnership with Curtin University School of Allied Health, is an innovative world-first project that brings social work, speech pathology and occupational therapy students into our services to develop programs and other interventions to support children and their mothers.

Starick's Early Intervention Project received recognition for its innovation this year, winning the WACOSS 2023 Community Sector Award for a Medium Size Organisation.

The EIP has seen hugely positive outcomes, including improvements in children and young people's school engagement and in their language, physical development, literacy and emotional regulation skills. The program has also resulted in referrals to essential services that will continue to support families after they leave our services. 172 children received support throughout EIP in 2023/24.

In addition, our Children's Program in the refuges and transitional housing program supports children and young people to settle into the refuge or a new home, provides a space for them to talk about their experiences and concerns, and supports connections with school and community resources. Our work in this area is supported by generous donations from the community which enable us to provide activities and programs including protective behaviours workshops, homework clubs, playgroups, school holiday activities, breakfast clubs and an annual camp.

In 2023 Starick initiated our Thriving Through Connection program, funded through Telethon. This pilot program provides support to young people aged between 11 and 17 years who are victim survivors of FDV.

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Starick's crisis services continued to provide immediate safety and reduce the risk of further violence against women and their children. These services also 'pave the way' for women and children's ongoing healing and recovery by providing a safe and supportive space.

Crisis services remain the bedrock of our service delivery because the safety of women and children is so critical. The terrible statistic of one woman a week being murdered by a current or former partner speaks to the ongoing need for these services.

In 2023/2024:



143 women & 235 children

received emergency accommodation and support at our Mary Smith and Starick House refuges. Their average length of stay was 6 months, compared to 3 months in previous years.



184 women & 106 children

living in the community were supported by our mobile outreach team.



880 women

were supported by our Advocates in Armadale, Cannington and Kensington police stations.



229 women & their children

were supported to stay safely in their homes by our Safe at Home program.

We acknowledge Department of Communities and Lotterywest for providing the flexible support package and emergency relief funding respectively, enabling us to support women with urgent needs such as food, clothing and other essential items, schooling costs, utility and medical bills and medications. Community donations supplemented the support we are able to offer women and children in crisis.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT

Our re-establishment services address the impact of perpetrators' use of violence and coercive control on the financial security and social connectedness of women, both during the relationship and after a woman flees.

Our work in this area included meeting practical needs such as securing an income, looking for employment, engaging in study, finding long term housing, furnishing a new home, settling children into schools, and re-connecting with family, social networks and local community supports.

Starick's transitional housing program provides women and children exiting refuge accommodation with a medium term supported housing option. We have access to 10 houses and are exploring partnerships to develop other supported housing options. In 2023/24, we moved 7 new families into our transitional housing. Through generous community support, we were also able to provide a woman and child with unit accommodation and subsidise the rents of women to support their access to private rental accommodation.

CEO's Report continued

In addition, our outreach programs supported women in the community, including women exiting refugees.

Flexible Support Funding from Department of Communities, an ongoing partnership with Starting Over Support, and generous donations of furniture and household items from the community enable us to assist women and children to re-establish themselves and re-connect with social and other supports.

Through a partnership with Jacaranda Community Centre, we provide financial counselling to refugee clients to address the impacts of financial abuse and support their ongoing financial independence.

RECOVERY

Recovery and healing are important components of our work.

While the importance of recovery programs such as counselling is increasingly being recognised in state and national plans, this is not yet reflected in funding programs, and much of our work in this area is still funded on a short-term basis through donations and grants from philanthropic foundations.

Women's Counselling

During 2023/24, 35 women participated in counselling. They were referred to us by WA Police, hospitals, schools, justice services, Department of Communities, housing providers, Legal Aid, other FDV services, as well as internally by Starick and by women referring themselves. These referrals demonstrate the increasing recognition of both the need for recovery services and of the FDV expertise of our counselling team.

This year we established a partnership with Cyrenian House to add an Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) specialist to the team. This enabled us to better respond to the intersection between FDV and AOD for our clients and increase the capacity of our staff to respond to women with AOD issues.

Children's Counselling

During 2023/24, 145 children received counselling through our specialist children's counselling services, delivered in our refuges, outreach services, and in schools.

Our partnership with Communicare's Communities for Children continues to provide counselling for children in the Gosnells, Armadale and Mundijong areas. We also provided counselling and play therapy for children and young people in our refuges through generous donations from individuals and philanthropic foundations.

STARICK OP SHOP

The Starick Op Shop continues to go from strength to strength, thanks to the efforts of our team of volunteers and the support of our Marketing and Communications team.

I would like to acknowledge all of our volunteers, and particularly Sandie Hunt, who stepped down from the Op Shop Manager role this year due to family responsibilities. The Op Shop makes a significant contribution to our service by receiving and sorting donations, supporting our clients to access essential items, providing return-to-work opportunities for volunteers, playing an integral role in increasing awareness in the local community, and helping us to raise funds for our services.

My special thanks to Wendy Ellis for her ongoing support of the Op Shop, including regular donations of new and high-quality stock.

GOVERNANCE

My thanks to the Board and Administration team for providing the 'glue' that helps all of our work come together - by ensuring the sound financial management and operations of Starick so that we meet our contractual, accountability, and human resource requirements; seeking out funding for new initiatives; driving our fundraising and communications with stakeholders, including supporting many out of hours events; and by a range of other tasks that sit outside contracting arrangements or individual job descriptions.

Thank you to the Management team who walk that constant line of providing on the ground support for our services as well as contributing to the strategic directions of Starick - it's quite an art.

Lastly, I would also particularly like to acknowledge and thank all of our donors, whose ongoing support is much needed and greatly appreciated.

It has been a pleasure to continue in the role of CEO in 2023/24, and to look back on all that we have achieved over the last 12 months. I look forward to working with the Board, management, staff and stakeholders to continue to provide an innovative and holistic response to address FDV in the year ahead.

Leanne Barron | CEO





Building futures free from violence

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Starick is a registered charity with 39 years' experience in supporting women and children escaping FDV in Perth's south-eastern metropolitan corridor.

If you would like to assist us in our work, please visit our website at www.starick.org.au

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Starick is proudly supported by:



Government of Western Australia
Department of Communities



Starick is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission
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