

A Matter of Life and Death: fostering a safe crisis accommodation landscape



Developed by lived experience
experts and domestic violence
advocates

There is a major crisis in Australia that no-one wants to talk about and policymakers continue to ignore. Victim-survivors of domestic and family violence cannot access safe and secure housing and services. We spoke to victim-survivors to learn more about the problem, its impacts, what they need and how we can fix this crisis. This is what they told us...

On average one Australian Woman is killed every week by their intimate partner.



The most dangerous time is when a woman decides to leave.

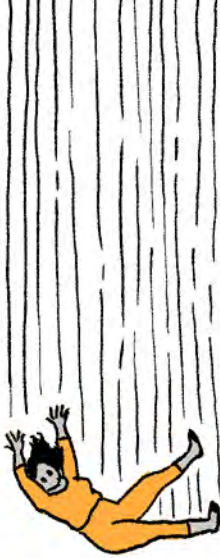


All she has to do is speak to the right person and they will help her find somewhere safe to go...

WRONG!

THE REALITY OF NAVIGATING
A SYSTEM OF SCARCITY
AND NEGLECT...

<p>HOUSING SUPPORT</p> <p>ON AVERAGE 108 REQUESTS ARE UNMET EACH DAY IN VICTORIA</p>	 <p>START!</p>	<p>1 SHITLOADS OF PAPERWORK</p> 	<p>2 TELL YOUR STORY 20 TIMES</p>  <p>So then he... Ah ha, ok, what next?</p>	<p>3 MEET A HOUSING WORKER WITH A NEGATIVE ATTITUDE</p>  <p>YOU'RE BEING DIFFICULT</p>	<p>4 FEEL LIKE A FOOTBALL</p>  <p>I need... You'll have to talk to your other service provider</p>	<p>5 NO CONSTRUCTIVE PLAN</p>  <p>So what next? Your application is progressing</p>
<p>HOUSING DESIGN</p> <p>60% OF HOUSING ESTABLISHMENTS ARE TO PLACES RATED AS UNSAFE</p>	<p>6 GET A ROOM YOU CAN'T ACCESS</p> 	<p>7 NO LOCK ON THE DOOR</p>  <p>There is nothing to protect us!</p>	<p>8 SUICIDAL GRAFFITI</p> 	<p>9 A ROOM IN YOUR EX'S NEIGHBOURHOOD</p>  <p>I'll be recognised in this neighbourhood!</p>	<p>10 A BROKEN MATTRESS FOR YOUR BROKEN BODY</p>  <p>If I don't move the spring won't dig into my broken rib</p>	<p>11 GET A MOULDY ROOM</p> 
<p>HOUSING ACCESS</p> <p>AUSTRALIA HAS A 173,000 BED SHORTAGE</p>	<p>12 SERVICES ARE CHOCKERS</p> 	<p>13 YOUR ACCOMMODATION IS DEFUNDED</p>  <p>BECOME HOMELESS</p>	<p>14 YOUR ROOM IS IN AN UNSAFE NEIGHBOURHOOD</p>  <p>BECOME HOMELESS</p>	<p>15 YOUR EX FINDS YOU</p>  <p>BECOME HOMELESS</p>	<p>16 LEASE RUNS OUT</p>  <p>BECOME HOMELESS</p>	<p>CONTINUING ? ? ? ? ?</p>  <p>UNCERTAINTY</p> 



THE IMPACTS

HEALTH SYSTEM

Women who are homeless due to domestic violence (DV) are at greater risk of sexual assault and physical abuse
(Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008)

NDIS

Despite widely reported higher risk of violence for women with disabilities they have the poorest access to services when dealing with violence.

NDIS is explicit, it is not a housing provider.

EDUCATION

DV results in poor academic performance, problem-solving and social skills and disruptive behaviour in children (Lloyd, 2018) and higher dropout rates (Victorian Auditor General, 2012)

HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

42% of women and their children accessed homelessness services in 2020-21 because of DV (AHURI, 2021)

3 out of 5 were returning clients (AHURI, 2021)

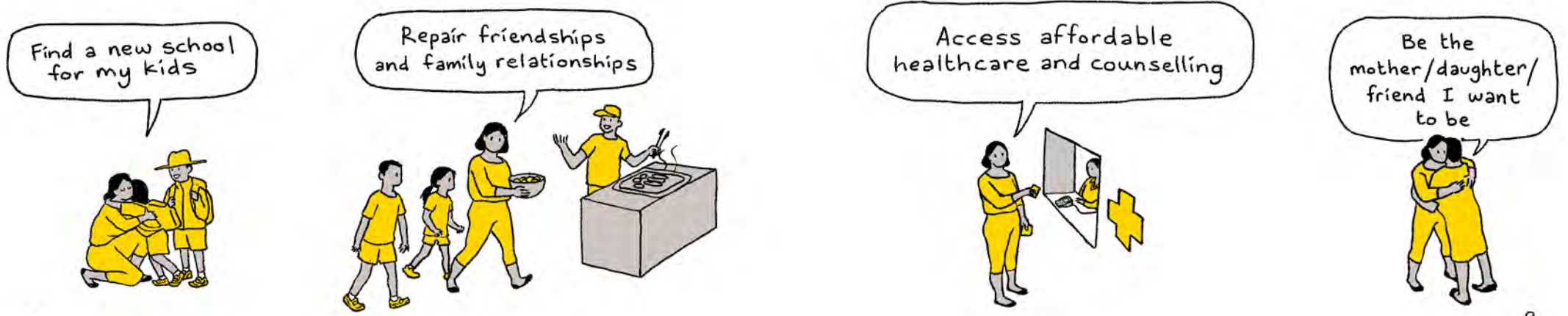
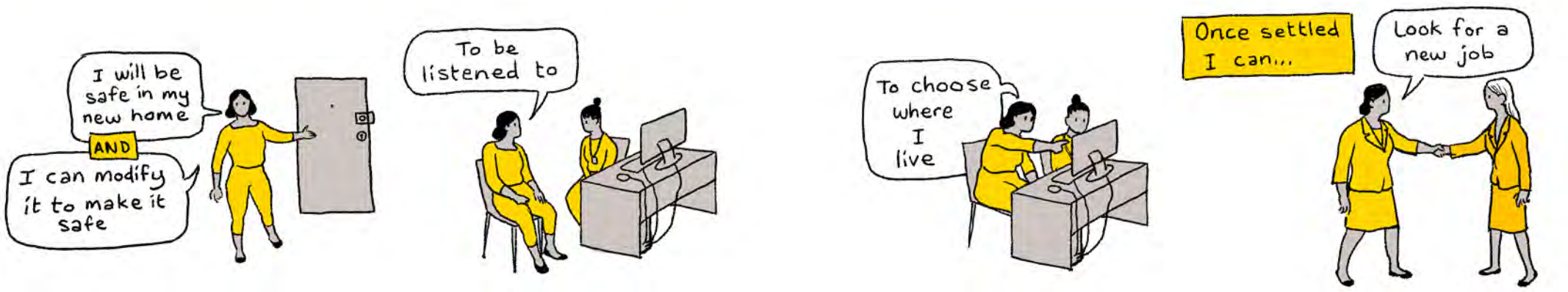
CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

There is a disconnect between Housing, Centrelink, and Child Protection Services. For example many mothers lose custody of their children simply because they have nowhere safe and stable to stay (AHURI, 2019)

THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

DV can lead to offending and criminal behaviour. As at June 2018, between 70 and 90% of incarcerated Australian women experienced DV (ABS, 2018)



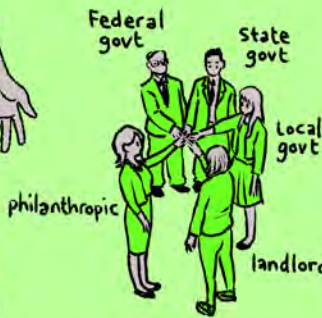


What can policy makers and service providers do to ensure my safety?



Long Term funding of services

Long term capital funding to social housing



2 - MORE DIVERSE

1. BETTER RESOURCING

Adaptive Reuse of existing infrastructure



Rent subsidies across different tenures



HOUSING AND SERVICE OPTIONS

There are legal and employment services for your use downstairs

Good to know!



Considering your back injury, what modifications do you think you'll need to maximise your mobility?

A handrail for the toilet would be great



We can offer you a long term lease based on your current income that can easily be adjusted in the future.

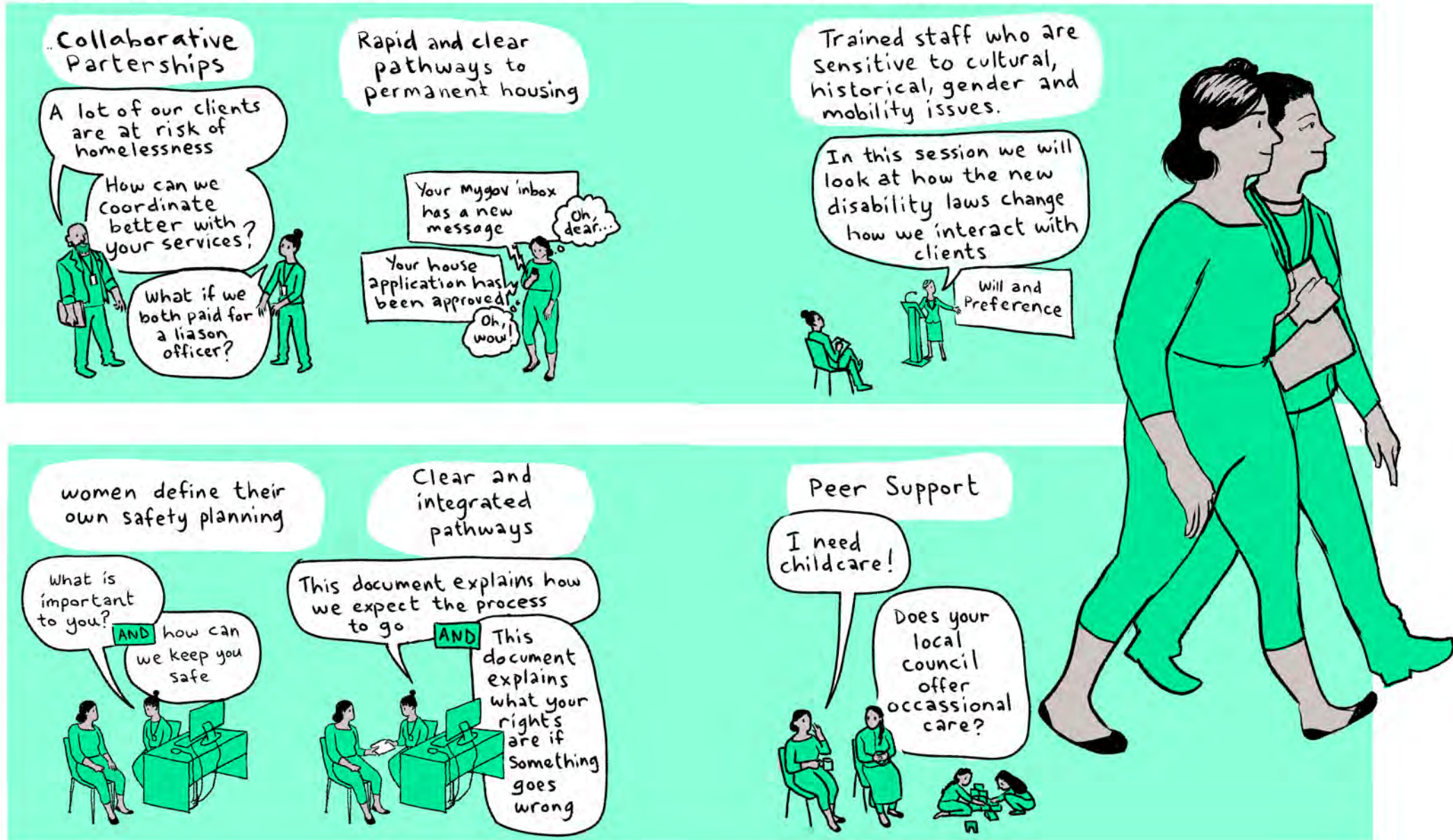


There is a great school for your son and public transport is close by



3. A SYSTEM BUILT FOR

CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT



And this is what change can look like *



It says welcome!
I feel nurtured here!



I can cook,
get dressed



We can eat at a table
like a family!



I'm grateful to have a
roof over my head, to
have them home, It is
irrelevant to me all
the stuff I used to
pick on them for



I took myself
back to school



Knowing I can
afford the internet
long term has been
such a relief

Welcome to
today's class!

I learned a lot
from what I went
thru that I can
apply to helping
others



Me
too!

I can foster
relationships with
my community



Health care... long term mental
health... special behavioural
schools... medication, there's
all these long term things
that minimise impact



Now I'm in a
lot stronger
place



I received all the care I needed
and met my best friend and new
husband while in crisis housing



It has built me
into the person
and made me into
who I am today



I can go to
sleep now.
My kids can go
to sleep



100%
I wouldn't be
here now.
I would be
dead



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Illustration and design: Sarah Howell



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"I feel welcome"



"I feel nurtured"

What's Next?

- * Meet with your local federal representative
- * Support women's housing organisations through advocacy or funding
- * Jump online and continue the conversation



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