

Philosophy of the Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault

The Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault Forum is committed to addressing the inequalities within society which result in the perpetration of sexual violence and family violence against women, children and men. The Victorian CASA Forum therefore acknowledges that:

- Sexual assault is both a consequence and a reinforcer of the power disparity between men and women and children.
- Sexual assault occurs along a continuum of behaviour which includes any uninvited sexual behaviour which makes the recipient feel uncomfortable, harassed or afraid, unwanted touching or remarks, sexual harassment, coerced sexual activity, rape with physical violence and threat to life and sexual assault of children and the grooming of children that accompanies this crime.
- The impacts of sexual assault and family violence on the lives of victim/survivors is multifaceted and complex. It includes emotional, social, psychological, legal, health, spiritual, economic and political consequences. To facilitate recovery from sexual and family violence, the Forum recognises the importance of responding to each aspect.
- Recovery from sexual assault and family violence is influenced by a range of factors reflecting positions of men, women and children in society and the power differences between them. These include difference of gender, culture, ethnicity, age, sexuality, religion, ability/disability and socio economic class.
- The entire community and other institutions are responsible for sexual assault and its consequences. Working towards its elimination is the responsibility of all in our society.

All CASAs work towards the empowerment of service users, through a Victim's Rights Model, informed by the Victims Rights Charter and the Human Rights Charter. The focus of service provision is the needs of recent and past victims/survivors of sexual assault.

Objectives of the Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault

Direct Service - CASAs will provide the best practice service drawing on evidence based clinical practice, research and evaluation.

Education - CASAs will provide information and education to raise community and professional awareness of the nature, incidence and impacts of sexual assault and family violence.

Prevention - CASAs will provide advocacy for prevention programs. CASAs will develop, support and participate in programs that work to prevent women, children and men becoming victims of sexual assault and family violence.

Advocacy - CASAs will advocate for systemic reforms and social change to maximise the outcomes for victim/survivors of sexual assault and family violence.