

MEDIA STATEMENT

10 November 2020

Rebuilding lives through specialist counselling for victims of crime

Relationships Australia South Australia (RASA) brings many decades of trauma-informed counselling experience to its specialist service for victims of crime.

Since the service started in July 2020, *rebuild – Counselling for Victims of Crime* has already supported more than 500 victims, working in close partnership with the Commissioner for Victims' Rights, peer support and advocacy agencies and SA Police.

Chief Executive, Dr Claire Ralfs, said RASA was first established in 1948 to assist returned service men and women experiencing, what we now know is PTSD, to re-engage with their families – and has continued delivering trauma support through multiple programs for nearly 70 years.

“Today, over 60% of our services and programs involve a response to family and domestic violence, often including impacts of childhood sexual assault,” Dr Ralfs said.

“We have consistent evidence that people who receive RASA’s services report improvements to their mental wellbeing, feel safer and are better able to deal with life’s challenges.

“We offer many specialist services that involve helping people with trauma related to gambling harm, child protection concerns, parenting stress, family mental health, post adoption, and growing up in out of home care.

“All of these services are evidence-based, trauma-informed and accessible to victims of crime if needed.”

Luci Lovelock, Manager of Trauma Services, said counsellors support victims to rebuild a sense of safety, rebuild trust and rebuild their lives.

“Victims of crime can experience significant and sometimes complex trauma, and our specialist services are tailored to help them with their unique situation,” Ms Lovelock said.

“Our focus is on healing and resilience, reducing the likelihood of re-traumatisation, and achieving sustained post-traumatic growth and recovery.

“Our counsellors are highly trained and experienced to provide a specialist service that is respectful of individual needs and personal circumstances.

“We have male and female counsellors working with family and domestic violence, sexual assault, physical assault, homicide, home invasion, road trauma and historical child sexual abuse, among other crimes.

“The *rebuild* team includes child counsellors, disability specialist counsellors, and we work with language and cultural interpreters. A peer education worker, focused on lived experience, will soon be joining the service.

“I encourage all victims to contact us for tailored counselling services to help them rebuild their lives and look to the future with confidence.”

RASA’s counsellors work closely with the Commissioner for Victims’ Rights office, police, victim advocates and contact officers to provide suitable referrals and service delivery to clients, as they progress through the court system.

Clients can access *rebuild - Counselling for Victims of Crime* at physical locations in Adelaide, Hindmarsh, Port Adelaide, Marion, Salisbury, Elizabeth, St Agnes, Berri and Mount Gambier, and a new office soon to be opened in Port Augusta.

Regular visits to regional locations and online telehealth appointments provide comprehensive state-wide coverage for anyone living in South Australia.

For more information about *rebuild – Victims of Crime Counselling Service* please call 1800 310 310 or visit www.rasa.org.au/rebuild

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About Relationships Australia South Australia

Supporting you through change

As an independent, not-for-profit organisation, we support our work involves improving the health and wellbeing of people by providing a broad of range services including trauma based counselling, gambling help, post separation services, elder relationships services, post adoption support, health and multicultural services and much more to individuals, couples, families, older people, children, young people, schools and communities.

Our Registered Training Organisation, the **Australian Institute of Social Relations** offers courses and nationally recognised qualifications to the human services sector and the family law system.

For more information about how we can support you through change, call 1300 364 277 or visit our website www.rasa.org.au

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