

## **How new funding helps victims, helps kids, helps courts**

### **Peak body welcomes \$18m to counter 79% incidence of DV**

New Commonwealth funding will help to address alarming levels of domestic violence in family law parenting disputes.

The Commonwealth funding announced today - \$18.5m over three years - is welcomed by National Legal Aid, the peak body for Australia's legal aid commissions. The money allows legal aid commissions to establish integrated duty lawyer and family violence support services in family law court offices across Australia.

#### **How this money helps**

"This funding can make a real difference at the pointy end of highly stressful parenting disputes involving allegations of domestic violence," says NLA Chair Suzan Cox QC (pictured).

"The new assistance in family law court offices will be more than just legal help. It is a more holistic approach – combining legal assistance with social support services.

"We also congratulate Attorney-General George Brandis QC for a 12 month funding extension for specialist domestic violence pilot projects, and health justice partnerships, developing new ways to provide greater legal and social support for victims of abuse."

#### **The scale of the problem**

An audit this year showed domestic violence is a factor in 79% of legal aid Commonwealth family law matters.

"It is vital for victims to access legal assistance safely and quickly from properly-funded service providers with the required depth of legal expertise," Ms Cox said.



**Suzan Cox QC is available for interview. Media contact: Jeremy Boylen M 0421 611 856**