



Evaluation snapshot.

Family violence in family services.

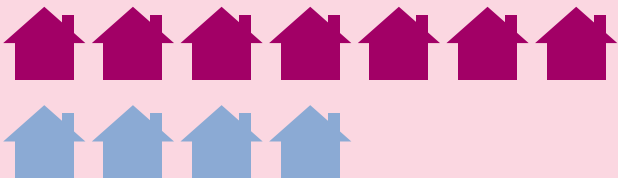
Promoting the safety, stability and development of vulnerable children, young people and their families.



We conducted an evaluation* to better understand the prevalence and nature of family violence within our family services, with the aim of informing service improvements and enhancing support for families.

Key findings.

Average family services caseload

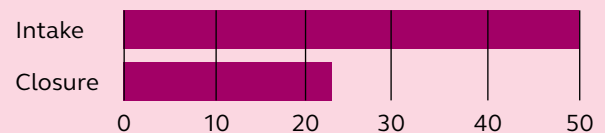


- 7/11 disclosed family violence
- 4/11 no family violence disclosed

65% of family services cases involve family violence, often presenting with high risk at intake.

Family violence is prevalent, but family services play a key role in reducing risk

Risk level at intake and closure: ■ High risk



By closure, risk levels reduce, and no cases remain at the highest level of concern, demonstrating the effectiveness of family services in reducing and managing family violence risk.

The most frequent forms of family violence identified.



Emotional abuse



Coercive control



Controlling behaviours

*A mixed-method approach was used in this evaluation including a voluntary survey of 72 practitioners and team leaders (representing 32% of our workforce), 2 focus groups, and 3 case studies including one from a consumer perspective.

We have skilled practitioners, but systemic and interagency challenges remain



What's working well:

- Strong leadership and collaboration
- High practitioner confidence in family violence risk assessments (MARAMs)
- Use of trauma-informed practices

"The support I get from my team leader. She is there every step of the way so I am not holding risk on my own." – Survey respondent



Challenges identified:

- Improved internal and external collaboration
- Limited adolescent-specific supports
- Practical training responding to family violence needed

"You can get all the information online, but sometimes it doesn't sink in as much as if you talk to people and if you discuss it." – Focus group participant



Improvement opportunities identified:

- Improve referral pathways and intake consistency
- Strengthen accuracy of family violence data recording
- Address workforce training gaps and build specialist support
- Enhance collaboration across internal teams and external partners
- Embed child and youth-centred approaches in practice

"Children are obviously like little sponges, they are hearing and seeing and observing a lot of things their parents think they are hiding from them." – Focus group participant

Why it matters.

This evaluation confirms that family services is central to reducing family violence risk and supporting safer outcomes for families. These findings inform practical steps for strengthening:

- Workforce capability
- Interagency coordination
- Child-centred responses

And ultimately, improving outcomes across the service system.

Acknowledgements.

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For more information, contact Uniting's Evaluation and Policy Team via polycysupport@vt.uniting.org