

# Media Release



## **Rosie Batty's brave story demands urgent change**

**Monday 14 July 2014 – for immediate release**

The story of Luke Batty's death to be told to *4Corners* tonight by his mother Rosie Batty demands a decisive shift in action to stop violence against women and children around Australia, the Federation of Community Legal Centres said today.

"Through her bravery, Rosie Batty has made family violence visible in a way that cannot be ignored and demands to be met by coordinated and urgent action at government, community and individual level," said Dr Chris Atmore, senior policy adviser with the Federation, today.

"Sadly, many women remain outside the system supposed to help them, while those within it are placed at often lethal risk by fundamental systemic flaws," Dr Atmore said.

"Family violence is a pervasive and deadly problem, the responses to which have been tragically marked by pervasive and deadly failures," Dr Atmore said.

"Different parts of the system – police, courts and child protection – need to share information to enable proper risk assessment and management, including sharing all relevant information with women who have intervention orders.

"We also need to tighten the net around men who commit family violence by holding them to account when they commit violence and flout intervention orders, and work intensively with them where change is possible. Above all, however, we need to strengthen the supports for women and children facing family violence, including the free legal support that can be vital in securing their safety.

Victoria's 51 community legal centres see many women seeking help with family violence, including help with intervention orders to protect them and their children.

Around a third of the 23,500 new cases opened by centres each year in Victoria alone relate to family violence.

"All the evidence shows that demand is rising, while the capacity of services is not keeping pace due to chronic underfunding.

"The Federation and our members strive to work with women facing family violence, including Rosie Batty. Her story is a clarion call that no woman in this situation should remain invisible, no woman should struggle without help, and every woman and child deserves to be safe," Dr Atmore said.

She said it was vital that every family violence death received the specialist attention of a properly funded family violence death review to learn the lessons that could prevent deaths in similar circumstances in the future.

"Governments have the capacity to act. If they fail to do so, they are giving permission for preventable family violence deaths to continue. The brave and powerful message of Rosie Batty is that change is possible, and we stand with her," Dr Atmore concluded.

*Rosie's Story* will be broadcast on ABC1 at 8.30pm tonight on *4Corners*. The program will include an interview with Dr Chris Atmore.

**Media contact**

Darren Lewin-Hill  
Communications Manager  
Federation of Community Legal Centres  
0488 773 535