



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**08.03.2017**

## **Working with Men to Achieve Gender Equality**

On International Women's Day, No To Violence incorporating the Men's Referral Service (NTV/MRS) celebrates over 23 years of working with men to protect the safety of women and children who experience family violence.

As the peak body for organisations and individuals working with men to end family violence in Victoria and New South Wales, NTV/MRS holds men who use violence to account through telephone contact and men's family violence training programs.

Our trained telephone operators, who work for the MRS, have had over 160,000 phone conversations with men about their use of violence. As the central point of contact for men taking responsibility for their violent behaviour, MRS also speaks to women seeking information about male family violence.

NTV/MRS acknowledges that family violence can affect anyone, regardless of sex, age, race, sexuality, disability, gender identity or lifestyle. However, violent behaviour is most frequently used by men, as a way to exercise power and control over women and children.

CEO of NTV/MRS, Jacqui Watt sees men as the key to ending violence against women.

"For too long domestic violence has been a hushed issue for women to speak up about. It's time to put men's behaviour in the spotlight so that this burden, can be shared by all of us, both men and women" says Ms Watt.

"Women can talk to each other as much as they want but until all of us unite to end violence against women, by challenging gender inequality and strengthening men's family violence programs, the violence will continue" says Ms Watt.

NTV/MRS believes men's use of violence against women is a choice and they must take responsibility for changing their behaviour.

NTV/MRS is a pro-feminist organisation that is committed to the safety of women and children and allowing their voices to be heard.

### **ENDS**

**Media enquiries:** Camille Gierck (Communications Officer, NTV/MRS) on 9487 4519, or camilleg@ntv.org.au **Interviews and/or photos:** Jacqui Watt (CEO) is available for further interview and photo opportunities.