

# PANEL EVENT: FAMILY VIOLENCE & THE IMPACTS ON MIGRANT WOMEN AND CHILDREN

VWL's Justice Committee proudly presents this panel event.

Family violence is unfortunately prevalent across Australia and can happen to anyone. However, statistics show that this issue disproportionately affects women and children in Australia.

Our panel of experts will discuss how migrant women and children on temporary visas are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of family violence. We will engage in a discussion on current laws, trends, impacts and supports currently available for women and children impacted by family violence.

We will discuss ways in which the legal profession can assist, how to spot crucial issues and how best to work with vulnerable clients.

**Date** Thursday, 18 April 2024  
**Time** 6.30pm - 8.30pm  
(includes light refreshments)  
**Location** College of Law  
Level 1/555 Bourke St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
**Cost** Free for VWL members  
\$10 for non-members

**Register** [vwl.asn.au/events-3/](http://vwl.asn.au/events-3/)



**Dr Chelsea Tobin** is the CEO of Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre, and a Board member of Outlook Australia. Having excelled in senior executive roles across both the profit and not for profit sector, Chelsea has a wealth of experience leading and empowering teams to deliver large scale socially and commercially impactful outcomes. Drawing from her lifelong commitment to social justice, award-winning PhD and proven ability to grow and sustain business and organisations, Chelsea is continuing to reach across sectors, forging partnerships, exerting influence and leading sustainable, profitable and socially impactful change. Chelsea has recently been awarded a Churchill Fellowship and later this year will travel internationally to research family violence crisis response models for children as victim survivors in their own right. Safe Steps is Victoria's statewide, 24/7 crisis response centre for people escaping family and domestic violence, taking and making some 150,000 calls and providing around 35,000 bed nights of emergency accommodation every year.



**Ajsela Siskovic** is the Executive Manager of Legal Services and Principal Lawyer of inTouch Women's Legal Centre, which is fully integrated within inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence. inTouch Women's Legal Centre is a specialist legal centre for migrant and refugee women with a focus on family violence, family law, migration and victims of crime law. Prior to joining inTouch, Ajsela worked as a senior lawyer in Civil Justice Program at Victoria Legal Aid practising in administrative law including merits review and judicial review in social security and complex NDIS matters.



**Stephanie Vejar** is a Senior Migration Lawyer at Women's Legal Service Victoria and works with women and children on temporary visas or with precarious visa statuses, experiencing family violence. She works in the intersection of family violence, family law, child protection and victims of crime applications to provide a holistic wrap around support to her clients. She has been recognised for her work in this space, most recently a finalist for the John Gibson Young Australian Migration Lawyer of the Year in both 2023 and 2024, as well as being a 30 under 30 Lawyer's Weekly Finalist in the Migration and Pro Bono categories. Stephanie is a member of the visa cancellation advocacy and national advisory group for women on temporary visas, both of which undertake policy work and advocacy as a sector for vulnerable persons. She was the first Latina to sit as co-chair of the VWL's Diversity and Inclusion Committee in 2022 and as a member of the executive committee as the Special Projects Officer in 2023.



**Zefy Souvlakis** will be the moderator for this panel discussion. She is a Partner at Ethos Migration Lawyers. Zefy advises and acts on behalf of individuals and corporate clients in relation to their migration matters, whilst liaising with the Department of Home Affairs and other government bodies. Through her experience working with women and children experiencing family violence, Zefy has been able to assist them navigate the tricky visa application and appeal process while witnessing first-hand the multitude of challenges and limitations they experience in their migration journey.