

Help for victims

BY JOCELYN GARCIA

A NEW domestic violence service has been introduced to Beaudesert as domestic violence cases continue to rise in the region.

YFS has partnered with Beaucare to deliver a service providing domestic violence counselling, court support, home safety upgrades for people experiencing domestic and family violence and specialised counselling for children impacted by domestic violence.

According to Queensland Police Service's annual crime statistics, breaches of domestic violence protection orders rose by 41.8 per cent in the Logan policing region in 2015/2016, followed by an increase in protection order applications and breaches of protection orders.

YFS Chief executive officer Cath Bartolo said the organisation was committed to providing effective responses to domestic violence.

"Across all YFS services people present with complex

needs, many of which are a result of domestic violence," Ms Bartolo said. "This new service is tailored to women's needs, it strengthens our ability to give women and children not only the support they need, but to keep them safe," she said.

Beaucare general manager Louise Dwyer said the priority was to protect women and children who are most at risk of harm.

"This partnership (with YFS) increases our capacity to help people experiencing domestic and family violence, it enables us to truly make a difference in the community," she said. "Through this service, women can access options to increase their safety that they may not be aware of."

Ms Dwyer said the women's counsellor could refer women to a refuge or assist with a domestic violence order application.

On March 1, the Palaszczuk government launched an online form to guide people through the

process of applying for a protection order. Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Yvette D'Ath said the online form would provide a step-by-step guide through the application process.

"It takes a lot of courage to apply for a protection order and this online form is designed to make the process easier for those victims and will help guide them through in an intuitive and personal way," Ms D'Ath said.

Ms D'Ath said the tool would also provide definitions for complicated legal terms, details on where to get legal help and access support services, and help explain the court process.