



Edna Ryan Awards

2023

Vanessa Donald-Smith

For Making a Feminist Difference in Mentoring

Throughout her 30-year employment at DV West (formerly West Connect DV Services), Vanessa has supported thousands of women and children escaping and experiencing domestic and family violence.

Her contribution to this workplace can be described as being a consistently passionate and committed advocate for the rights and empowerment of women and children. She has a long-held positive community reputation for being a brave and fearless Domestic Violence specialist.

Vanessa is an expert in identifying women's strengths and protective factors in the face of the perpetrator's pattern of violence and coercive control, and has the skills to bring these to the fore.

Vanessa has literally been a lifesaver to many women who have been close to losing their lives. Her capacity to help women find their strengths even in their most difficult times is unwavering and legendary.