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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NEW MODELLING: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE TSUNAMI TO HIT
NSW**

COVID-19 has set in motion an economic tsunami that will exacerbate mental health distress, domestic violence, homelessness and child neglect across NSW.

Domestic Violence NSW, alongside NCOSS, Homelessness NSW, Youth Action, FAMS, Community Housing Industry Association NSW, and Shelter NSW, has contributed to a new report from Equity Economics, *A wave of disadvantage across NSW: Impact of the COVID-19 recession*.

The expert report was commissioned by NSW peak social services bodies, and examines five areas impacted by disadvantage: housing, domestic violence, child protection, mental health, and education.

The report models the impact of rising unemployment by June 2021 when JobKeeper has ceased and if JobSeeker returns to its previous rate. It looks at how this will affect progress with key targets set out in the NSW Premier's Priorities.

Findings include:

- The number of 20-24 year old's in NSW experiencing high or very high **mental distress will increase by up to 16.8 per cent.**

- Higher unemployment alone will lead to rates of **domestic violence increasing by up to 5.5 per cent in some regions of NSW, with COVID-19 lockdowns already having caused alarming spikes in reports to police.**
- More than **9,000 more people in NSW will be homeless** – a rise of 24.0 per cent in the homeless population. **Some regions will see a 40.5 per cent increase in homelessness.**
- The number of **NSW families experiencing housing stress will increase by more than 88,000** or 24.3 per cent.
- There will be **27,447 more children at risk of neglect across NSW**, a 24.5 per cent rise due to increased unemployment
- **NAPLAN scores in Year 9 maths will fall by 23.5 points** (3.5 per cent) in 2021 compared to 2019, with some areas improving and other areas, including those with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students falling more than 6 per cent.

The report also examines how the community sector in NSW is responding to the increase in demand for services, finding the need for critical intervention increasing significantly.

Interim CEO of Domestic Violence NSW, Delia Donovan said: “The report clearly highlights the drastic implications of a COVID-19 on families all across NSW. Addressing rising rates of domestic violence through investing into early intervention and adequate resourcing is fundamental.

“The impact and consequences cannot be ignored - lives will be lost unless urgent action is taken. We need to act now.”

To access the report, click [here](#).

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Domestic Violence NSW is the peak body for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW. DVNSW provides a representative and advocacy function for specialist services and the women, families and communities they support. Their mission is to eliminate domestic and family violence through leadership in policy, advocacy, partnerships and the promotion of best practice.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence help can be found via:

- **1800RESPECT** or 1800 737 732 which offers a national counselling helpline, information and support
- **NSW Domestic Violence Line** 1800 65 64 63 which offers a state-wide counselling helpline, information and support

Men's Referral Service 1300 766 491 for men, or friends and family of men using violence

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