



## **PARTNERING WITH CALD MEN TOOLBOX - TOOLS TO BUILD AFRICAN-AUSTRALIAN MEN AS LEADERS IN THE PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### **EXTRACTS**

#### **National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children (2010-2022)** Council of Australian Governments

The *National Plan* has been built from an evidence base of new research and extensive consultation with experts and the community. The *National Plan* targets two main types of violence: domestic and family violence and sexual assault. These crimes are gendered crimes – that is they have an unequal impact on women.

One in three Australian women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. Almost one in five have experienced sexual violence. It is time for that to change.

The values and principles that guide the *National Plan* are:

- Domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault crosses all ages, races and cultures, socioeconomic and demographic barriers, although some women are at higher risk.
- Everyone regardless of their age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, race, culture, disability, religious belief, faith, linguistic background or location, has a right to be safe and live in an environment that is free from violence.
- Domestic violence, family violence and sexual assault are unacceptable and against the law.
- Governments and other organisations will provide holistic services and supports that prioritise the needs of victims and survivors of violence.
- Sustainable change must be built on community participation by men and women taking responsibility for the problems and solutions.
- Everyone has a right to access and to participate in justice processes that enable them to achieve fair and just outcomes.
- Governments acknowledge the legacy of past failures and the need for new collaborative approaches to preventing violence against Indigenous women.

- Responses to children exposed to violence prioritise the safety and long term well-being of children.
- Reducing all violence in our community is a priority. All forms of violence against women are unacceptable, in any community and in any culture. It is everyone's responsibility to reject and prevent violence.

Whilst there are many forms of violent behaviour perpetrated against women, domestic violence and sexual assault are the most pervasive forms of violence experienced by women in Australia, and require an immediate and focused response.

Nearly all Australians (98 per cent) recognise that violence against women and their children is a crime. The prevalence of violence, however, continues to be unacceptably high. One in three Australian women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15, and almost one in five have experienced sexual violence, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In 2005, over 350,000 women experienced physical violence and over 125,000 women experienced sexual violence.

Indigenous women and girls are 35 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence related assaults than other Australian women and girls.

No form of violence in our community is acceptable. While a small proportion of men are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, the majority of people who experience this kind of violence are women in a home, at the hands of men they know.

Men are more likely to be the victims of violence from strangers and in public, so different strategies are required to address these different types of violence.

A study commissioned by the Commonwealth in 2009 also shows the enormous economic cost of violence. Domestic violence and sexual assault perpetrated against women costs the nation \$13.6 billion each year. By 2021, the figure is likely to rise to \$15.6 billion if extra steps are not taken.

The emotional and personal costs of violence against women cannot be measured: the effects reach all levels of society.

Violence not only affects the victim themselves, but the children who are exposed to it, their extended families, their friends, their work colleagues and ultimately the broader community. Too many young people in Australia have witnessed acts of physical domestic violence against a parent.

Domestic and family violence and sexual assault occurs across the Australian community. It is acknowledged that some groups of women experiencing violence will have limited access to services or have specific needs that generalised strategies do not account for. Additionally, the women in these groups are often at increased risk of violence. The *National Plan* recognises the diversity of the needs of women with disabilities, young women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Indigenous women, same-sex attracted women and older women, and provides scope to tailor responses based on individual needs.

### **Definitions**

Violence against women can be described in many different ways, and laws in each state and territory have their own definitions.

***‘The term violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.’*** United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

Domestic violence refers to acts of violence that occur between people who have, or have had, an intimate relationship. While there is no single definition, the central element of domestic violence is an ongoing pattern of behaviour aimed at controlling a partner through fear, for example by using behaviour which is violent and threatening. In most cases, the violent behaviour is part of a range of tactics to exercise power and control over women and their children, and can be both criminal and non-criminal.

Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse. Physical violence can include slaps, shoves, hits, punches, pushes, being thrown down stairs or across the room, kicking, twisting of arms, choking, and being burnt or stabbed. Sexual assault or sexual violence can include rape, sexual assault with implements, being forced to watch or engage in pornography, enforced prostitution, and being made to have sex with friends of the perpetrator.

Psychological and emotional abuse can include a range of controlling behaviours such as control of finances, isolation from family and friends, continual humiliation, threats against children or being threatened with injury or death.

Family violence is a broader term that refers to violence between family members, as well as violence between intimate partners. It involves the same sorts of behaviours as described for domestic violence. As with domestic violence, the *National Plan* recognises that although only some aspects of family violence are criminal offences, any behaviour that causes the victim to live in fear is unacceptable. The term, ‘family violence’ is the most widely used term to identify the experiences of Indigenous people, because it includes the broad range of marital and kinship relationships in which violence may occur.

### ***National Outcome 1 – Communities are safe and free from violence***

Positive and respectful community attitudes are critical to Australian women and their children living free from violence in safe communities. Research shows that social norms,

attitudes and beliefs contribute to all forms of violence against women, whether it is emotional, psychological, economic, physical or sexual violence. These beliefs can result in violence being justified, excused or hidden from view.

Evidence shows that key predictors of violence against women relate to how individuals, communities and society as a whole view the roles of men and women. Some of the strongest predictors for holding violence-supportive attitudes at the individual level are low levels of support for gender equality and following traditional gender stereotypes.

### **Measure of success**

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Data: National Community Attitudes Survey to be undertaken every four years across the life of the *National Plan*.

### **Strategy 1.1: Promoting community involvement**

Violence against women is a community problem that requires a community-wide response. Leaders in local governments, community organisations, workplaces and sporting clubs can promote equal and respectful relationships between women and men. It is important that this starts from the ground up. Successful anti-violence strategies require a community-wide vision, with strong and committed local and organisational leadership.

This strategy focuses on encouraging people throughout Australia – from individuals and families, to community, health and education organisations, to businesses and governments – to embrace their responsibility as a community member and take a role in preventing and reducing violence against women. The strategy includes supporting men to take a leading role in discouraging violent behaviour and challenging discrimination and gender stereotyping.

### **Strategy 1.2: Focus on primary prevention**

Primary prevention involves taking action to prevent the problem of violence before it occurs. It means working to change the underlying causes of the problem, in the different environments where people live and work. Strategies such as social marketing, school-based programs or work to promote positive and equitable workplace cultures are all examples of primary prevention.

Primary prevention strategies have successfully reduced other complex social or health problems such as drink-driving and smoking. But we know that they are only effective when implemented through a coordinated approach at all levels. The social practices and cultural values of broader society shape how violence can occur at an individual level.

This strategy focuses on developing primary prevention frameworks that will assist in forming, implementing and assessing primary prevention at a national level through different groups and at different levels of society. It will look at building positive attitudes and beliefs, social norms and ways for organisations to confront controlling, macho, aggressive and ultimately violent behaviour.

### **Strategy 1.3: Advancing gender equality**

The unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men and adherence to rigid or narrow gender roles and stereotypes reflects gendered patterns in the prevalence and perpetration of violence.

The acting out of jealousy and controlling behaviour is an especially important predictor of violence. If the woman's partner is engaged in controlling behaviour, she is six times more likely to experience physical violence.

It has also been noted that psychological abuse, particularly dominance, is a strong predictor of repeat violence.

At every level of society, gender inequalities have a profound influence on violence against women and their children. Building greater equality and respect between men and women can reduce the development of attitudes that support or justify violence.

### ***National Outcome 2 – Relationships are respectful***

Changing and shaping attitudes and behaviours of young people is critical to preventing domestic violence and sexual assault in the future. While prevention at the community level is essential, governments will also support individuals to develop healthy respectful relationships.

Education can help in encouraging young people to develop more equal and positive relationships. Seeing adults exhibiting respectful behaviours – between partners, friends, parents and their children – is also important for young people. Positive parenting practices and violence-free home environments are crucial to the development of healthy social behaviour skills and healthy relationships.

### **Measure of success**

The success of Outcome 2 will be measured by *improved knowledge of, and the skills and behaviour for, respectful relationships by young people.*

Data: Evaluation of the respectful relationships education projects and Commonwealth social marketing campaign.

### **Strategy 2.1: Build on young people's capacity to develop respectful relationships**

Education plays a key role in equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to develop and maintain non-violent, respectful and equitable relationships. School and community cultures need to support and foster structural and individual change. School-based

approaches that help young people identify inappropriate sexual or violent behaviour, and shape their expectations and capacity to build and sustain respectful relationships, are promising examples of primary prevention that appear to be working internationally.

**Strategy 2.2: Support adults to model respectful relationships**

Children learn their attitudes and behaviour from those around them. Positive adult role models can encourage young children to develop positive respectful relationships.

**Strategy 2.3: Promote positive male attitudes and behaviours**

The majority of men are non-violent, but they need to be supported to speak out against violence against women. While men and community leaders have spoken out against violence against women and organisations such as the White Ribbon Foundation of Australia have made progress in this area, more can be done.

***National Outcome 6 – Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account***

Preventing and reducing violence against women requires strong laws that are effectively administered and hold perpetrators to account. This outcome promotes a zero tolerance approach to violence, supported by stronger policing leading to arrest, consistent sentencing of perpetrators, and serious consequences for perpetrators if they breach orders.

‘Perpetrator interventions’ include a broad range of responses for perpetrators, including legal responses and rehabilitation programs. The primary objective of perpetrator interventions is to ensure the safety of women and their children.

This outcome is supported by research that shows the likelihood of recidivism may be reduced by addressing the underlying causes of offending behaviour. Focusing just on punishing perpetrators will not bring about behaviour change. Perpetrators need assistance to end their violence.

All governments recognise the evidence base for perpetrator interventions requires strengthening. This requires a staged, systematic approach. Lessons can be shared between those who work with perpetrators of domestic violence and those who work with perpetrators of sexual violence.

Governments are currently working to expand the range of perpetrator interventions in their jurisdictions. Perpetrator interventions are now recognised as an essential part of an effective plan to reduce violence against women and their children. Research into effective perpetrator interventions is crucial and will guide work in future action plans.

**Measure of success**

The success of Outcome 6 will be measured by *a decrease in repeated partner victimisation*. Data: Personal Safety Survey to be conducted every four years across the life of the *National Plan*.

**Strategy 6.1: Hold perpetrators accountable**

The most effective way to deliver an immediate reduction in violence and enhance community safety in the long term is to hold perpetrators to account now.

### **Strategy 6.2: Reduce the risk of recidivism**

Violent behaviour needs to be addressed before there is an opportunity for violence to occur again. Community safety can also be enhanced by reducing the risk that perpetrators will re-offend. This strategy seeks to improve responses to perpetrators to help reduce rates of re-offending.

### **Strategy 6.3: Intervene early to prevent violence**

Some men are more likely than others to act violently towards women due to health, behavioural or other complex risk factors. They should be supported as children and young teenagers to develop appropriate behaviours and protected from the damaging effects of exposure to violence.

## **Relevant State-based initiatives**

### **Victoria**

The latest stage of Victorian Government reform in the area of family violence and sexual assault (as the two most common forms of violence against women) focuses on cultural and attitudinal change to prevent such abuses from happening in the first place. Victoria's plan to prevent violence against women is based on comprehensive research showing the key contributing factors to violence against women lie in unequal power relations between men and women and adherence to rigid gender stereotypes.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's gender based violence demonstration pilot has informed the development of violence prevention curriculum guidance and materials, including advice for schools and community agencies to provide a whole-school systemic approach to the prevention of violence and promotion of respectful relationships.

### **Evidence base**

Australian Research Council Linkage Grant – five year research project to review the family violence reform program in Victoria (the SAFER Research program) in partnership with University of Melbourne and Monash University.

Individual program evaluations including: the family violence safety notices; specialist family violence courts; men's case management, expanded men's after hours referral service and regional men's behaviour change intake; Gain Respect Increase Personal Power (GRIPP) pilot program targeting young adolescent males aged 13-17; and the SARS.

Trialling the Respectful Relationships in Schools demonstration project by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in partnership with CASA House, distributing *Building Respectful and Safe Schools: A resource for school communities* to be implemented by all government schools. This includes new curriculum guidance and professional learning on respectful relationships education, as part of a whole school approach.

Working with sporting codes to develop and implement respectful relationships education for players, such as those developed by the Australian Football League.

Engaging and supporting local communities by appointing local champions and prevention ambassadors; including implementing White Ribbon Day activities.

## **South Australia (SA)**

### **Structural Arrangements**

#### *Women's Safety Strategy 2005 -2010*

The Women's Safety Strategy (WSS) was launched on International Women's Day, 8 March 2005 and outlines the South Australian Government's vision to address the issue of violence against women, including both rape and sexual assault and family and domestic violence. The WSS has a broad focus, from early intervention work focused on preventing violence, through to community education to raise awareness about the level and complexity of women's safety. The Minister for the Status of Women is the lead Minister and Office for Women is the lead agency with responsibility for coordination and monitoring of the WSS. The WSS is led by an across Government Group chaired by the Minister for the Status of Women as lead Minister. This group brings a strategic perspective to the way in which Government is delivering women's safety services in South Australia and has lead responsibility for the reform agenda.

Four working groups have been convened as part of the WSS focusing on:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities
- The impact of domestic violence on women's employment

The implementation of the Family Safety Framework.

#### *Policy and legislative frameworks*

*Criminal Law Consolidation (Rape and Sexual Offences) Amendment Bill 2008 (SA)*

*Statutes Amendment (Evidence and Procedure) Bill 2007 (SA)*

*Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009 (SA)* (currently being implemented)

South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP) which outlines a number of targets aimed at reducing violence against women which is currently being updated.

### **Recent reforms**

#### *Prevention*

An anti-violence community awareness campaign; the four year campaign (<http://www.dontcrosstheline.com.au/>) seeks to change community attitudes, increase awareness for workers who respond to perpetrators and victims, encourage a culture of perpetrator accountability and highlight the important work being undertaken by the South Australian Government.

SASP Women in Leadership targets; Target 5.1 Women on boards: At 1 June 2010, women held 45 per cent (45.16 per cent) of positions on SA Government boards and committees. This represents an increase of 11.48 percentage points from 33 per cent (33.68 per cent) at 1 April 2004 following the release of South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP). Target 5.2 Women as Chairs: At 1 June 2010, women held 35 per cent (34.59 per cent) of chair

positions on government boards and committees. This represents an increase of 10.76 percentage points from 24 per cent (23.83 per cent) at 1 April 2004 following the release of the SASP. Target 6.23 Women as Executives: South Australia's Strategic Plan also has a target of having 50 per cent of executive positions in the public service filled by women by 2014 (Target 6.23). This has increased from 29.4 per cent to 36.4 per cent since the target was set in 2003.

Women's Health Action Plan Initiative 1: Application of gender analysis to health policy, service and program planning and evaluation by central health units, health regions and health services in South Australia.

State Aboriginal Women's Gathering SAWG aims to ensure that Aboriginal women's voices are heard and that Aboriginal women are included in decision making across government and promotes Aboriginal women's leadership roles within the SA community.

The Focus Schools Program builds on the success of the share Project (2003-2005) which aims to improve the sexual health, safety and wellbeing of young South Australians. A significant component of the program focuses on respectful relationships.

#### *Provision*

The development of the Family Safety Framework (FSF): The FSF is a strategic and proactive new way of addressing domestic violence in South Australia. It is to ensure that services to the families most at risk of violence are provided in a more structured and systematic way, through agencies sharing information about high risk families and taking responsibility for supporting these families to navigate the system of services to help them. The FSF currently operates in six locations in SA – 4 metropolitan (Elizabeth, Holden Hill, Port Adelaide and Noarlunga) and 2 regional (Port Augusta and Port Pirie).

Women's Health Action Plan Initiative 4: Provision of health services that provide appropriate responses to women who have experienced violence, including sexual violence and the recognition of the impact of violence on women's mental health.

Sustainable Economic Futures: The aim of the research project was to: identify and document barriers and supports for women living in situations of domestic violence whilst working or seeking employment.

#### *Protection*

The development of a new domestic violence response strategy by South Australia Police. The strategy is an overarching corporate framework which provides the foundation and sets a clear direction for SAPOL's response to domestic and Indigenous family violence. SAPOL also developed a domestic violence policing response and investigation approach, the Domestic Violence Policing Model which aims to improve safety for victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

Reform of rape and sexual assault and domestic violence legislation; the aim is to strengthen the SA laws to provide greater protection to victims and hold perpetrators of violence more accountable. The reforms will also improve the response of the criminal justice system to rape, sexual assault and domestic violence.

*Protection: Implementation of the Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009 (SA).*

### **References to be added to Endnotes**

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