FOURTH ACTION PLAN

National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022

An initiative of the Commonwealth, state and territory governments

FOURTH ACTION PLAN 2019–2022

CONTENTS

DEDICATION

The Fourth Action Plan is dedicated to the countless women and children who are victims and survivors of violence, to those who are left to rebuild, and to those who have lost their lives. It is for the women whose stories continue to inspire our work and drive us to do more. We celebrate those people and organisations who work tirelessly with, and for, all women affected by violence and acknowledge their ongoing contributions to eradicating violence against women and their children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The National Plan is an initiative of the Commonwealth, state and territory governments. We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

SUPPORT

Help is available if you, or someone you know, is experiencing violence. In the case of an emergency call 000. For information, support and counselling contact 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit www.1800respect.org.au. This service is free, confidential and open 24 hours a day.

FOREWORD

THE NATIONAL PLAN

Ten years ago, the National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (2008–09) produced *Time for Action: the National Council's Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2009–2021.*[1] This provided the blueprint for the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*[2] (the National Plan), which was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and released in February 2011.

The 12-year National Plan aims to connect the important work being done by all Australian governments, community organisations and individuals to ensure that each year, fewer women experience violence and more women and their children live safely. The National Plan recognises that violence against women and their children is a complex problem that requires a long-term plan of action.

For this reason, the National Plan is being delivered through a series of four three-year action plans that will build on each other over time. This document sets out the Fourth Action Plan, the final action plan in the series.

The National Plan's vision is an Australia free from all forms of violence and abuse against women and their children.

This is every woman's and child's right, and everyone's responsibility. Violence against women and their children is a matter that requires commitment from everyone — all governments, Ministers, sectors, and members of our community. Since its release, all governments have increased efforts and investment to reduce violence against women and their children.

WORKING TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

People's knowledge and understanding of violence against women and gender equality has increased.[3] With the development of *Change the Story*[4], Australia became the first country in the world to implement a shared policy framework across national, state and territory governments dedicated to the primary prevention of violence against women and their children.

Despite this progress, many women still experience violence every day in Australia. Every two minutes, police are called to a domestic and family violence matter.[5] Every day, 12 women are hospitalised due to domestic and family violence.[6] Every nine days, a woman is killed by a current or former partner.[7] The overall economic cost of violence against women and their children in 2015–16 was $26 billion, with victims and survivors bearing approximately 50 per cent of that cost.[8]

The second generation impacts from violence against women and their children are estimated to cost the Australian economy $333 million each year.[9] Recent research shows that many Australians still hold attitudes and beliefs that tolerate or excuse violence. For example, some Australians believe women use claims of violence to gain tactical advantage in their relationships with men.[10]

Ending violence against women and their children starts with promoting gender equality and respect for all. Strong and growing international evidence confirms the severity of violence against women and the key role of addressing gender inequality to prevent and reduce this violence.[11]

All levels of government, business and the community must commit to long-term, continuous action and investment to stop violence before it starts, and support women and children when they need it. All Australians have a role to play in the places we live, work, learn, play and interact, including when online.

DELIVERING THE NATIONAL PLAN

The National Plan is being delivered through a series of four three-year action plans that have built on each other over time.

The *First Action Plan*: *Building a Strong Foundation 2010–2013*[12] laid a strong foundation for long-term change. This included the establishment of national-level infrastructure to inform future policy and service delivery and to engage the community in reducing violence against women and their children.

Under the *Second Action Plan*: *Moving Ahead 2013–2016*[13], jurisdictions committed to the national prevention campaign, Stop it at the Start, the development of a primary prevention framework to share understanding of preventing violence, an expanded research agenda and National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions.

The *Third Action Plan*: *Promising Results 2016–2019*[14] further strengthened the evidence base and national data collections, providing the basis for the trials of new and innovative approaches in early intervention, and crisis responses.

This document sets out the *Fourth Action Plan*: *Turning the Corner 2019–2022*, the final action plan in the series.

As the final action plan of the National Plan is released, now is the time to reflect, learn, and take further action.

This Fourth Action Plan sets out an ambitious but practical agenda to achieve change, by:

- improving existing initiatives
- addressing gaps in previous action plans
- providing a platform for future policy to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence.

ABOUT THE FOURTH ACTION PLAN

> ❝ This is an opportunity to reflect on how far we've come, and where we're going in our efforts to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in rates of violence against women. Although we know there is still a long way to go, it is also time to celebrate the passion and commitment of the sector working toward the National Plan goals. ❞

Ms Libby Lloyd AM, Chair of the former National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, speaking at the 10th Anniversary of the release of *Time for Action* (10 May 2019)[15]

The Fourth Action Plan continues to support the six overarching National Outcomes that all governments are working towards over the life of the National Plan (see bottom of pages 5–6).

It has been devised through extensive consultations with hundreds of people affected by violence, and the people working to stop it. These consultations culminated in the National Summit on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children, held in October 2018.

The Fourth Action Plan sets out eight principles to guide the way all industries, sectors and areas of government work together to address domestic, family and sexual violence. These principles inform 20 practical actions across five priority areas.

The priority areas represent the range of responses needed to tackle domestic, family and sexual violence: from primary prevention to improving service and support systems.

The Fourth Action Plan commits to leaving no one behind. It recognises the need to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and listen to the diverse lived experiences of people affected by violence across all of our responses.

Commonwealth, state and territory governments will develop a national implementation plan over 2019 that will outline how governments will deliver actions and measure their impact to address the national priority areas.

STATEMENT FROM DELEGATES AT THE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS SUMMIT ON REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN, 2018

COAG Summit delegates called on First Ministers for specific action in the following areas:

- We must invest in primary prevention and early intervention to stop violence at its source.
- We must make reducing violence everyone's business.
- We must listen to lived experience and respect cultural knowledge.
- We must acknowledge and better respond to the unique experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.
- We must respond better to sexual violence, as a form of domestic and family violence and as a separate crime.
- We must improve systems so women and children are safe.
- We must change the behaviour of people who choose to use violence.
- We must respect the needs of children and young people as individuals.
- We must learn from what's working, be flexible and tailor our approaches.

First Ministers agreed the COAG statement would inform the Fourth Action Plan. See the full statement at the COAG website.
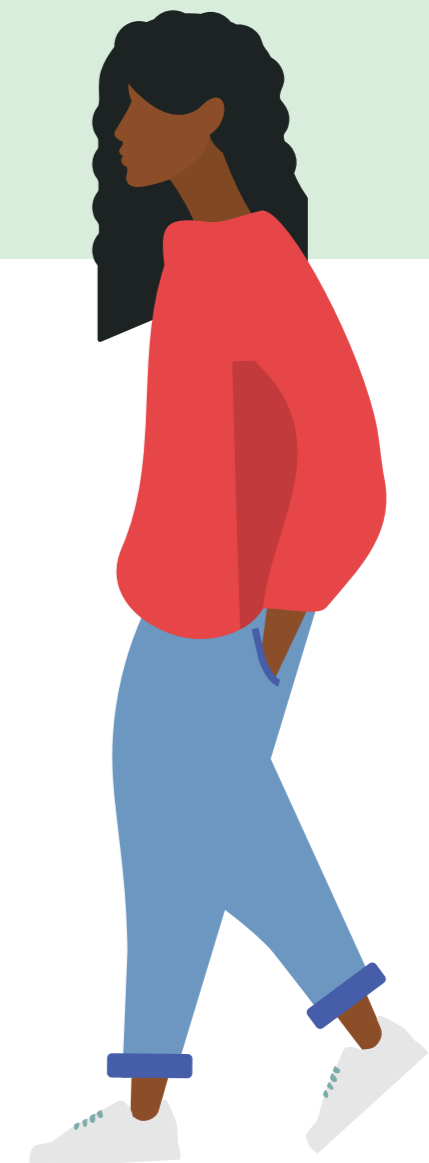
GUIDE TO THIS ACTION PLAN

This **action plan** is written for governments, policy makers, specialist organisations and members of the community sector. It provides people working in support services or individuals affected by domestic, family and sexual violence with an overview of the national policy response to reduce violence against women and their children.

Technical terms are explained in the **Glossary** at the end of the publication on page 55. If readers are interested in finding out more, the **References** on page 61 provide details of all cited publications and websites.

For more information, go to
www.plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au

FOURTH ACTION PLAN – AT A GLANCE

FOURTH ACTION PLAN PRINCIPLES

- Reducing violence against women and their children is everyone's business and we all have a role to play

- We must address gender inequality to stop violence – women will never be safe if they are not equal

- The voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must inform responses to the family and sexual violence experienced in their communities

- We must address the diversity and lived experiences of women and their children affected by violence

- Where children are involved, responses must be age appropriate, child-centred, and tailored to their specific needs and stages of development

- Actions must be evidence-based and help build an understanding of what works to respond effectively to, and prevent, violence against women and their children

- System and service responses must work to end the cycle of violence, keep people safe and prevent domestic, family and sexual violence

- A holistic approach to working with perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence is needed across all actions – informing prevention, deterrence, rehabilitation, and ensuring accountability

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

PRIMARY PREVENTION IS KEY

1. Advance gender equality and respect for women through effective primary prevention initiatives.

2. Improve coordination across primary prevention activities to maximise their impact on community attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence.

3. Implement targeted primary prevention activities designed by, and tailored for, the specific communities they are intended to support.

4. Address intergenerational trauma for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through primary prevention, including holistic healing strategies, and by strengthening connections to culture, language, knowledge and identity.

5. Promote healthy and safe relationships and build gender equitable values through initiatives for children and young people.

SUPPORT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

6. Value and engage the expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men, communities and organisations to lead in the creation and implementation of community-led solutions to build and manage change.

7. Build the workforce capability to ensure delivery of high quality, holistic, trauma-informed and culturally safe supports that respond to the complex needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.

8. Develop innovative and alternative models for victim and perpetrator support that contribute to safe healing and sustainable behaviour change.

9. Address both the immediate impacts and deep underlying drivers of family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through collective action with governments, service providers and communities.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

RESPECT, LISTEN AND RESPOND TO THE DIVERSE LIVED EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE OF WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE

10. Implement community-led and tailored initiatives to address the unique experiences and needs of communities affected by multiple forms of discrimination or inequality.

11. Deliver policies and services to address the disproportionate impact of violence on particular groups.

12. Better equip the service system and communities to address complex forms of violence and harmful cultural practices including early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, dowry abuse and human trafficking.

RESPOND TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

13. Prevent sexual violence and sexual harassment before it happens through national and targeted initiatives that promote informed consent, bodily autonomy and respectful relationships.

14. Deliver client-centred, trauma-informed, specialised and consistent support to victims and survivors of sexual violence.

15. Strengthen the capacity of all sectors to address sexual harassment to ensure women are safe at work, while studying, in public and online.

IMPROVE SUPPORT AND SERVICE SYSTEM RESPONSES

16. Enable workforces to provide trauma-informed support with a focus on safety and recovery to victims and survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence.

17. Collaborate across services, sectors and workforces to ensure responses to women affected by domestic, family and sexual violence are coordinated, meet women's needs, avoid women having to retell their story and promote their recovery.

18. Improve access to and embed trauma-informed support for perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence to prevent reoffending and promote rehabilitation and treatment.

19. Build the evidence base to inform responses to domestic, family and sexual violence by strengthening the focus on what works to reduce violence, improving data and supporting the Fourth Action Plan priorities.

20. Improve access to suitable and safe accommodation within their communities for women who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence.

NATIONAL PLAN OUTCOMES

- Communities are safe and free from violence
- Relationships are respectful
- Indigenous communities are strengthened
- Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence
- Justice responses are effective
- Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account

TURNING THE CORNER

> ❝ Family violence is still an epidemic and it will be for some time. It is a serious abuse of human rights in our advanced and privileged culture and must continue to be addressed as an absolute priority, by both our Federal and state governments, and by our current leaders, as they also recognise the impact family violence has on their workplace. ❞

Rosie Batty AO, family violence advocate, Australian of the Year 2015 (24 January 2016)[16]

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NATIONAL PLAN

Ending violence against women and their children is a complex, long term goal. It will take years of continuous effort to end violence. As we move into the Fourth Action Plan there are clear indicators that show that, as a nation, we are on the right path to achieve this goal.

The National Plan provides all levels of government — Commonwealth, state and territory, and local — with a comprehensive strategy to drive lasting change. Over the last 10 years, all areas of Australian society have shown commitment and leadership to tackle the complex issue of violence against women and their children.

This approach allows every sector, institution, organisation and community to help end violence against women and their children. Ending violence against women and their children is everyone's business — every day, more sports clubs, schools, faith communities, local councils, small businesses, media and corporations demonstrate this through positive and proactive action.

Since 2010, the National Plan has delivered many achievements:

- Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) was established as the independent national research organisation to produce and share evidence for policy makers and practitioners.
- Our Watch was established as the national centre of excellence for primary prevention to lead efforts to prevent violence and drive change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children.
- Organisations at the local and national levels are collaborating better to ensure women's needs and safety are prioritised and addressed by expert services.
- Respectful relationships projects have been delivered to young people through schools and education programs.

- Many men are taking a leadership role to promote gender equality, raise awareness, and contribute to positive changes in the attitudes and behaviours that lead to and condone violence against women and their children.
- COAG agreed to the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions, setting out the practice standards and performance indicators for perpetrator interventions to be used by all governments and community partners.
- Improved data and analysis have led to a better understanding of the experiences of hard-to-reach and marginalised women.

GENDER EQUALITY: THE KEY TO ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

Both men and women can be perpetrators of violence. Yet, overwhelmingly the people who carry out domestic, family and sexual violence are men, who commit violence against women.[17]

There is no single cause of violence against women and their children; however, gender inequality sets the stage for such violence to occur.

Evidence shows that the key beliefs and behaviours relating to gender that drive violence against women are:

- condoning of violence against women
- men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence
- stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity
- disrespect towards women, and male peer relations that emphasise aggression (see Figure 1 on next page).[18]

95% of all victims of violence (women or men) experience violence from a male perpetrator.

95%

Source: ABS, Personal Safety Survey.

Other factors, such as drug and alcohol use, mental health and poverty, may also interact with, or reinforce, gender inequality and contribute to increased frequency and severity of violence against women and their children.[19] However, these factors do not drive violence in and of themselves.

For example, we know the systematic discrimination and ongoing trauma experienced in many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities plays a big part in how communities experience violence[20] and people who have experienced violence as children may be more prone to experiencing or inflicting violence as adults.[21]

Gender inequality affects everyone in a negative way, including men. For example, men are less likely to seek professional help or talk about their problems with friends or family, and this can have devastating consequences.[22]

Gender equality works to benefit everyone by addressing these limitations and harmful stereotypes.

A PATH TO REDUCING VIOLENCE

Counting on change: A guide to prevention monitoring[23] provides guidance on tracking short, medium and long term progress towards the prevention of violence against women and their children at a national level (see Figure 2). It tells us that we need to effectively address and respond to the drivers that cause violence against women and their children to reduce, and ultimately end, this violence.

In the short term, we must put in place quality programs and infrastructure (such as an expert workforce and systems to ensure coordination) to increase gender equality, and promote equal and respectful relationships.

The path to change is not linear, and some things may appear to get worse before they get better. In the medium term we expect the demand for response services (such as counselling services and legal support) will increase, as barriers to accessing services are reduced, and people's understanding of violence against women improves.

In the long term, violence against women and their children is expected to decrease.

This will happen as:

- women have greater independence and decision-making power
- traditional gender roles are less rigidly enforced
- more people have the skills and desire to create positive, equal and respectful relationships.

FIGURE 1: GENDER DRIVERS AND REINFORCING FACTORS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

GENDER DRIVERS

Particular expressions of gender inequality consistently predict higher rates of violence against women:

1. Condoning of violence against women
2. Men's control of decision making and limits to women's independence in public and private life.
3. Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity
4. Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women

Reinforcing factors — within the context of gendered drivers — can increase frequency or severity of violence:

5. Condoning violence in general
6. Experience of, and exposure to, violence
7. Weakening of pro-social behaviour, especially harmful use of alcohol
8. Socio-economic inequality and discrimination
9. Backlash factors (increases in violence when male dominance, power or status is challenged)

HIGHER PROBABILITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Source: Our Watch, *Change the Story*

1 in 3
Experienced physical violence

1 in 5
Experienced sexual violence

1 in 6
Experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous cohabitating partner

Source: ABS, Personal Safety Survey.

FIGURE 2: EXPECTED PROCESS OF CHANGE IN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN OVER TIME

Lifetime prevalence of violence against women

12-month prevalence of violence against women

Demand for formal response services

Improvements in gender equality and reductions in the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women

Improvements in prevention infrastructure and programs

5

Lifetime prevalence will only start to decrease in the very long term.

4

12-month prevalence of violence against women will remain static in the short and medium term, but will begin to decrease with improvements in gender equality and reductions in the drivers of violence.

3

Counter-intuitively, demand for response services will increase in the short and medium term as prevention infrastructure improves, awareness increases, and women feel more supported to seek help.

2

Strengthened infrastructure and programming leads to measureable improvements against the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women.

1

Prevention infrastructure and programming are strengthened.

In time, prevention infrastructure and programs are strong and high quality. Levels of investment plateau, with a view to ensuring continuous learning and maintaining quality of infrastructure.

MEDIUM TERM
6–10 years

LONG TERM
10+ years

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

In recent years, the Australian community's knowledge, awareness and attitudes towards violence against women and their children have improved. These changes have been captured as part of the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS).[24] This is the world's longest-running survey of community attitudes towards violence against women.

The 2017 NCAS[25] found:

- Most Australians do not endorse violence against women.
- Most Australians support gender equality and are more likely to support gender equality in 2017 than they were in 2013 and 2009.
- Australians are more likely to understand that violence against women involves more than just physical violence in 2017 than they were in 2013 and 2009.
- Australians are less likely to hold attitudes that support violence against women in 2017 than they were in 2013 and 2009.
- If confronted by a male friend verbally abusing his female partner, most Australians say they would:
  - be bothered (98 per cent)
  - act (70 per cent)
  - feel they would have the support of all or most of their friends if they did act (69 per cent).

- Young people aged 16–24 years[26]:
  - have a good knowledge of key aspects of violence against women
  - support gender equality
  - reject attitudes supportive of violence against women
  - say they would act or would like to act if they witnessed abuse or disrespect of women.

While there has been significant progress, it is also important to acknowledge the need for further work.

This is demonstrated through the following NCAS[27] findings:

- There is a continuous decline in the number of Australians who understand that men are more likely than women to perpetrate domestic violence (down from 86 per cent in 1995 to 64 per cent in 2017).
- Two in five Australians believe that gender inequality is exaggerated or no longer a problem.
- One in five Australians believe domestic violence is a normal reaction to stress, and that sometimes a woman can make a man so angry he hits her without meaning to.
- Two in five Australians believe that women make up false reports of sexual assault in order to punish men.

These findings provide a focus for future action and investment.

AN INCREASE IN REPORTING

Over the last 10 years, the number of women seeking help through formal services, including contacting police, has increased significantly, even though there has been no increase in the overall rate of violence occurring.

This indicates that:

- The quality and availability of support services is increasing, as is women's trust in them.
- Community awareness of violence against women and their children is growing.
- The stigma associated with being a victim and seeking help is decreasing.

In 2017–18, 1800RESPECT, the national sexual assault and domestic and family violence counselling service, answered 98,466 first response telephone and online contacts. This was a 54 per cent increase from 2016–17.[28] Trauma specialist counsellors answered 27,968 contacts, a 102 per cent increase from 2016–17.[29]

1.5 million 👤

528,800 👤

1.5 million (1 in 6) women have experienced physical violence by a partner, compared to 528,800 (1 in 17) men.

Source: ABS, Personal Safety Survey.

In 2018–19, first response counsellors answered over 163,000 contacts, a growth of 66 per cent from the preceding year.[30]

The prevalence of violence against women in Australia remains largely unchanged. In 2005, approximately 1.5 per cent of women aged 18 years and over had experienced partner violence in the previous 12 months, while in 2016 the figure was 1.7 per cent.[31]

Encouragingly, the gap between prevalence rates and reporting rates is diminishing as more women than ever are feeling able to seek help and support.

VICTORIA'S ROYAL COMMISSION INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Royal Commission into Family Violence[32] was established in 2016 in the wake of a series of high-profile deaths related to family violence in Victoria.

The Royal Commission was tasked with identifying the most effective ways to:
- prevent family violence
- improve early intervention
- support victims
- hold perpetrators accountable
- develop and refine system responses
- better coordinate community and government responses
- evaluate and measure the success of strategies, frameworks, policies, programs and services.

The Royal Commission recommended strategies to transform Victoria's approach so as to:
- better reflect the experience of victims and survivors
- be responsive to their needs
- ultimately prevent this violence from occurring in the first place.

These strategies included a sustained focus on: effective ways to stop perpetrators, prevention of violence, early intervention, recovery and resilience.

The Royal Commission made a total of 227 recommendations in its March 2016 report,[33] and the Victorian Government publicly committed to implementing each of these. In fact, as of January 2019, 120 of the recommendations had been implemented.[34]

While based in Victoria, the Royal Commission has resulted in increased public awareness of domestic and family violence at the national level.

As a result, there has been a focus on ensuring that relevant strategies, programs, services and approaches:
- recognise the diversity of victims and survivors' experiences
- prioritise their needs.

STOP IT AT THE START CAMPAIGN

Stop it at the Start[35] is the national primary prevention campaign to reduce violence against women and their children. It encourages adults to reflect on their attitudes and have conversations about respectful relationships with young people.

Aimed at the adults who influence young people aged 10–17 years — such as parents, family members, teachers, coaches, community leaders and employers of young people — the campaign shines a light on the role each of us plays in influencing respectful behaviour.

The response to the campaign has far exceeded expectations:
- The television commercials were viewed over 45 million times online.
- The website received 1.3 million page views.
- There were over 68,000 downloads of key resources, such as a guide to help influencers start a conversation about respect.

Importantly, evaluation research shows the campaign is already starting to have an impact.

More people now understand the link between disrespect and violence against women. Further, 70 per cent of people recalled an element of the campaign, with 60 per cent of those taking action — such as starting a conversation about respect or changing behaviour towards others. This means that 42 per cent of all people in a position of influence took action as a result of the campaign.

FOURTH ACTION PLAN NATIONAL PRIORITIES

THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES INFORM ALL PRIORITY AREAS AND ACTIONS UNDER THE FOURTH ACTION PLAN

1. Reducing violence against women and their children is everyone's business and we all have a role to play.

2. We must address gender inequality to stop violence — women will never be safe if they are not equal.

3. The voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must inform responses to the family and sexual violence experienced in their communities.

4. We must address the diversity and lived experiences of women and their children affected by violence.

5. Where children are involved, responses must be age appropriate, child-centred, and tailored to their specific needs and stages of development.

6. Actions must be evidence-based and help build an understanding of what works to respond effectively to, and prevent, violence against women and their children.

7. System and service responses must work to end the cycle of violence, keep people safe and prevent domestic, family and sexual violence.

8. A holistic approach to working with perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence is needed across all actions — informing prevention, deterrence, rehabilitation, and ensuring accountability.
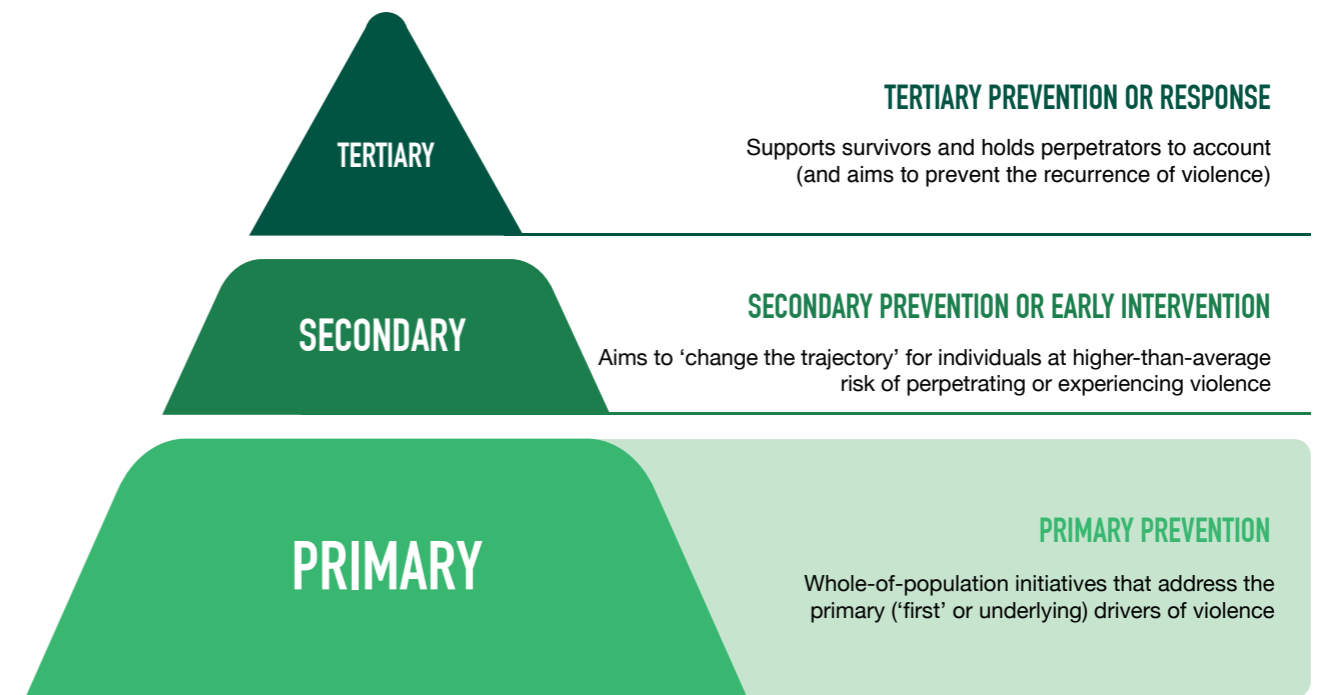
PRIMARY PREVENTION IS KEY

> " We have to create a society that is more equal in terms of gender equality, and one that better reflects our diversity and difference, and in doing that we will actually come to address some of the key drivers of violence against women and children in the first place. "

Natasha Stott Despoja, Our Watch, Board Chair (15 April 2019)[36]

Prevention is the most effective way to eliminate violence against women and their children, and that is why it is at the core of the Fourth Action Plan.[37] Primary prevention means stopping violence before it occurs. It means changing the behaviours and norms, in all areas of society, that excuse, justify or even promote violence against women and their children. Figure 3 outlines the distinction between primary prevention and other work to address violence against women and their children.

FIGURE 3: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRIMARY PREVENTION AND OTHER WORK TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

TERTIARY PREVENTION OR RESPONSE
Supports survivors and holds perpetrators to account (and aims to prevent the recurrence of violence)

SECONDARY PREVENTION OR EARLY INTERVENTION
Aims to 'change the trajectory' for individuals at higher-than-average risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence

PRIMARY PREVENTION
Whole-of-population initiatives that address the primary ('first' or underlying) drivers of violence

Source: Our Watch, *Change the Story*

Primary prevention is significant because out of the three levels of prevention, it has the potential to have the largest impact on reducing the prevalence of violence against women and their children.[38] Secondary (early intervention) and tertiary prevention — while essential — are unlikely to significantly reduce the rates of violence against women and their children on their own.[39]

Responsibility for the prevention of violence against women must move from being the focus of a small but dedicated specialist sector, to become a core priority for all industries and areas of government. From health and other service providers, to police and justice systems, to workplaces and communities — every Australian has a part to play.

ACTIONS

1. Advance gender equality and respect for women through effective primary prevention initiatives.

2. Improve coordination across primary prevention activities to maximise their impact on community attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence.

3. Implement targeted primary prevention activities designed by, and tailored for, the specific communities they are intended to support.

4. Address intergenerational trauma for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through primary prevention, including holistic healing strategies, and by strengthening connections to culture, language, knowledge and identity.

5. Promote healthy and safe relationships and build gender equitable values through initiatives for children and young people.

SUPPORT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN

" Women have been clear that they and their families must play a key role in decision-making. Indigenous peoples must be acknowledged as equal and indispensable partners in designing policy and legislative frameworks that enable diverse solutions, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to determine their own futures, on their own terms. "

June Oscar AO, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner (25 June 2019)[40]

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and communities continue to experience disproportionately high rates of violence.[41] Discrimination, racism and intergenerational trauma are some of the significant drivers that impact Indigenous women.

These drivers are exacerbated by factors including:

- alcohol and substance abuse
- mental health issues
- inadequate housing and overcrowding
- poverty
- unemployment
- lack of access to culturally competent services.[42]

We must be clear that family violence is not part of Australian culture, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Culture and family is a central and key protective factor that supports communities to be free of violence.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women must be supported to make choices that will protect and promote their own and their families' long-term physical, emotional and cultural safety if they are to break the cycle of trauma and violence.

The Fourth Action Plan recognises that preventing and responding to family violence starts with a recognition of individual, family and community strengths. It provides greater support for the work already being progressed within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities focussed on effective prevention. This is achieved by prioritising cultural healing, rebuilding proud traditions and support networks, and strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity.

The level and impact of family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is far more prevalent and severe compared to that in non-Indigenous communities (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4: COMPARISON OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS FAMILIES

RELATIVE TO NON-INDIGENOUS WOMEN, INDIGENOUS WOMEN ARE:

32
TIMES MORE LIKELY
to be hospitalised from family violence[43]

3.4
TIMES MORE LIKELY
to experience sexual assault[44]

11
TIMES MORE LIKELY
to die due to assault (approximately)[45]

During the COAG National Summit on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander delegates told us that this higher rate of violence stems from deep issues around dispossession, intergenerational trauma and gender inequality.[46] We also heard from many delegates about how the impact of past government practices and more recent experiences of incarceration, child removal and systemic racism prevent many Indigenous Australian victims from reporting violence and seeking help from police and other services.[47]

A range of complex and sensitive factors drive this.

They include:

- mistrust of mainstream legal and support services to understand and respect the needs, autonomy and wishes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- lack of understanding of legal rights and options and how to access supports at times of crisis
- fear and experience of having children removed by child protection services
- potential social isolation from family and community as a result of taking action
- exposure and interaction with the justice system that can further perpetuate harm
- emphasis on incarceration as a way of rehabilitating perpetrators in place of alternative models which may better support family reunification and community-led healing.[48]

Solutions to address violence must effectively engage and equip Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Service providers and governments must work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and with community-controlled organisations to develop solutions that are culturally appropriate and trauma-informed, and can lead to healing for families and communities.

This requires:

- investing in quality services and workforces
- fostering innovation in service design and delivery
- focussing on prevention, by drawing on community strength and resilience.

Governments must facilitate community-led and co-designed delivery of services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Increased capacity of resources and high standards of service are essential to ensure services are equipped to respond to the underlying complex issues such as trauma, disability and remoteness that can affect both victims and perpetrators.

Innovation must be promoted through:

- place-based approaches[49]
- alternative therapeutic models for victim support
- the rehabilitation of men who use violence.

Mainstream services must do more to adapt their models to meet the needs of individuals and communities. The strength and knowledge of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations should be leveraged by the sector to create new opportunities for leadership and collaboration in the development of culturally appropriate multidisciplinary responses.

However, this is only part of the solution. Genuine effort requires coordination across governments, service providers and communities to address the multiple and intersectional drivers of family violence. It is important to include men in these processes.

While responding to the immediate impacts of family violence is a significant priority, efforts must also prioritise improved outcomes in justice, health, housing, employment and education. Service providers and agencies outside of the family violence sector must also be equipped to take a greater role in driving this change so the broader service system can better respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

3 IN 5

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a male intimate partner.

Source: Our Watch, *Changing the Picture*

ACTIONS

6. Value and engage the expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men, communities and organisations to lead in the creation and implementation of community-led solutions to build and manage change.

7. Build the workforce capability to ensure delivery of high quality, holistic, trauma-informed and culturally safe supports that respond to the complex needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.

8. Develop innovative and alternative models for victim and perpetrator support that contribute to safe healing and sustainable behaviour change.

9. Address both the immediate impacts and deep underlying drivers of family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through collective action with governments, service providers and communities.

RESPECT, LISTEN AND RESPOND TO THE DIVERSE LIVED EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE OF WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE

'If she does happen to be living with a disability, this violence can take on additional forms and may include putting medicines out of reach deliberately, denying access to assistive equipment, refusing to assist with personal care and verbal abuse about the disability. Worse, the violence is often perpetrated over a much longer period of time, at relentless intensity and may involve several perpetrators. Where a home is adapted to her needs or she relies on that perpetrator for essential personal supports it is much, much harder to imagine how one could find any pathway to safety.'

Sue Salthouse, Disability Advocate and Our Watch Ambassador (2 December 2016)[50]
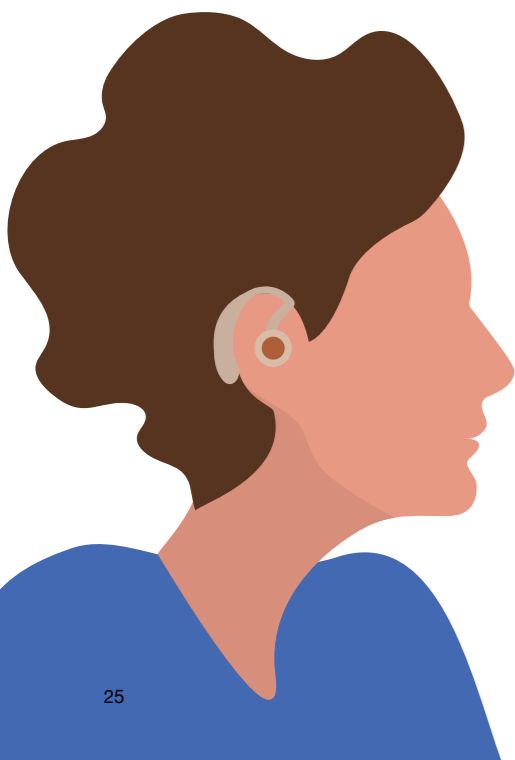
Intimate partner violence contributes an estimated 5.1% to the disease burden in Australian women aged 18–44 years, which is higher than any other risk factor in the study, including tobacco use, high cholesterol or use of illicit drugs

Source: ANROWS, *A preventable burden*

Domestic, family and sexual violence is experienced by women of all backgrounds. We must learn from the diverse lived experiences of victims and survivors to understand what works for them.

Quality service responses should:

- prioritise the needs and voices of victims and survivors
- show an understanding of different experiences of trauma
- take into account the needs and experiences of different cultures.

Ultimately, services and supports must not discriminate against any victims and survivors.

It is important to consider gender inequality together with other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage. No two women's experiences are the same. Race, sexuality, gender and disability, amongst other forms of identity, can impact the way a woman experiences violence (see Figure 5).

FIGURE 5: DRIVERS AND REINFORCING FACTORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE WITHIN DIVERSE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITIES
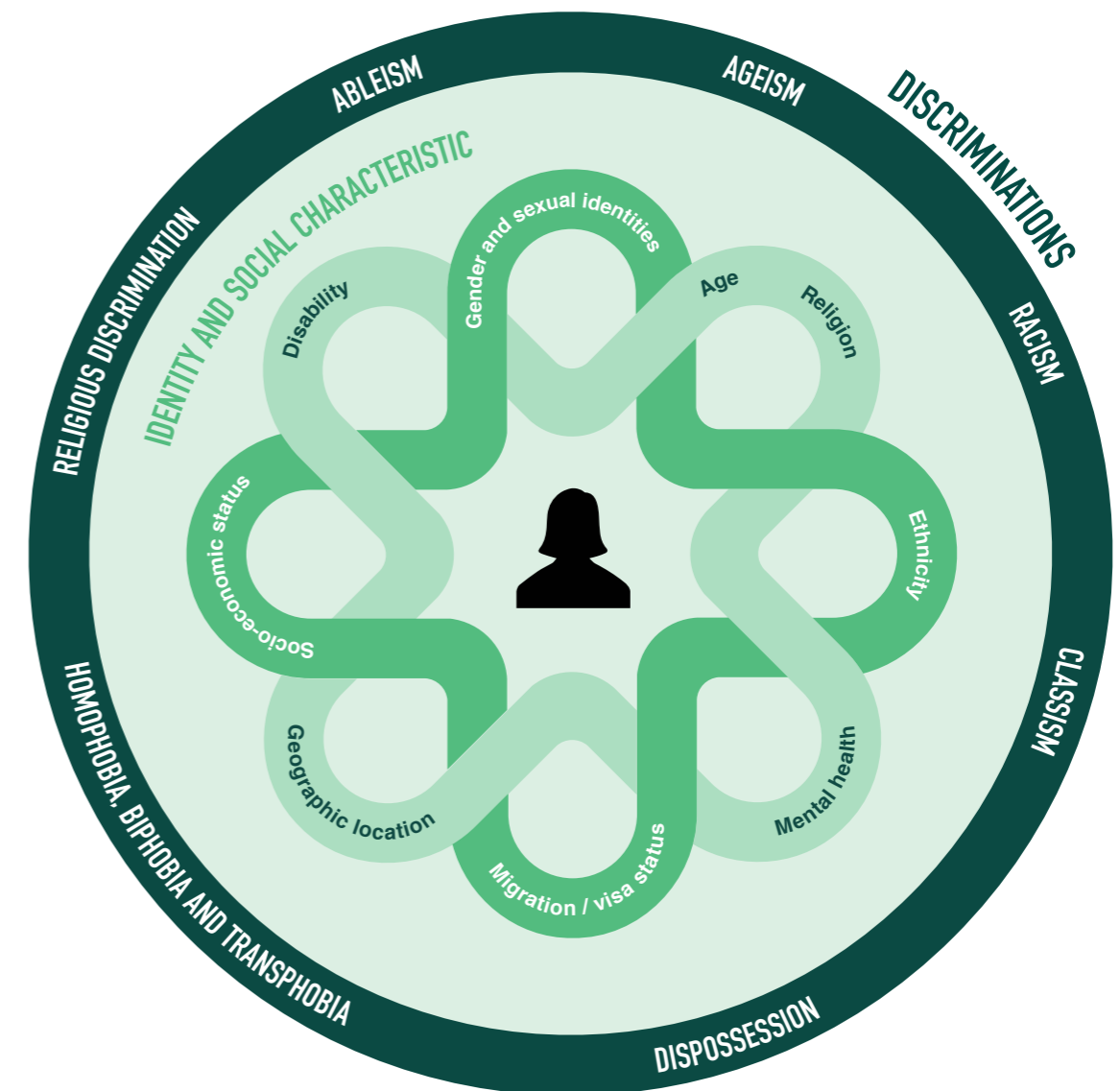
Source: Adapted from Victorian Government Diversity and Intersectionality Framework, 2019

Violence against women and their children can be exacerbated within certain settings and where gender inequality intersects with other forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

For example, rates of violence are higher for certain groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women[51], and in certain settings, such as prisons.[52] Violence is less visible and less understood for some groups in the community.[53] Some women, such as migrant and refugee women[54], older women, and women living in rural and regional areas[55], face additional barriers to accessing support. Women can also be at higher risk of experiencing violence at particular life stages, such as while pregnant[56] or while separating from a relationship, and young women experience higher rates of sexual assault.[57]

Women with disability experience significantly higher levels of all forms of violence.[58] Nine in 10 women with intellectual disability report experiencing sexual assault.[59] Violence against women with disability is also more diverse in nature. While women with disability face many of the same forms of domestic, family and sexual violence, women with disability also experience and are at more risk of particular forms of violence, such as forced sterilisation, seclusion and restrictive practices, and experience violence in a range of institutional and service settings such as in residential institutions and aged care facilities.[60]

Many women in prison have histories of victimisation, including childhood sexual abuse and intimate partner violence.[61] It is estimated that 87 per cent of incarcerated women are victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse in either childhood (63 per cent) or adulthood (78 per cent), with the majority victims of multiple forms of abuse.[62] The prison system can often exacerbate trauma for female criminal

offenders with such histories.[63] Female offenders who are victims and survivors of sexual violence are likely to be dealing with a complex range of issues related to their experience of victimisation and disadvantage.[64]

Children who experience, or witness, acts of abuse and violence in their homes are also victims in their own right. They may experience psychological, behavioural and health issues over the course of their lives as a result.[65] Their wellbeing, development, identity and connection to culture may also be impacted negatively.[66] Children who witness abuse before the age of 15 are also at an increased risk of experiencing intimate partner violence themselves.[67]

Historically, the voices of children have been ignored. This has put the health and wellbeing of child victims and survivors at further risk. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are disproportionately represented in child protection and out-of-home care systems.[68]

The National Plan supports the reforms under COAG's *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020*.[69] The National Plan acknowledges that children's experiences of domestic and family violence are different from the experiences of adults. As such, it is important that our responses to these experiences take into account the age of the victims and survivors and their different experiences.

EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE SEXUALITY AND GENDER

At least 11 per cent of Australians identify as having a diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.[70]

A significant proportion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer (LGBTIQ) people report experiencing various forms of violence and abuse in intimate partner and family relationships. The impacts of these are compounded by discrimination and stigma experienced in social and community settings and for young same-sex attracted and gender diverse people in school and in the family home.[71]

Research undertaken in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States over the last two decades has consistently identified a number of common abusive behaviours where an abusive partner will denigrate aspects of an LGBTIQ person's sexuality, gender identity or intersex status to create fear, confusion and/or isolation from potential sources of support.[72]

Threats or actual behaviours can focus on 'outing' or revealing a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, gender history, intersex or HIV status to family, social networks or workplaces, in order to control and restrict behaviour. These are some of the most commonly identified issues that LGBTIQ people name when identifying abusive tactics used against them.[73]

Transgender, gender diverse and people with intersex variations report that there may be subtle or more overt coercion by a partner to adhere to social norms around gender and/or physical appearance.

Rates of victimisation for intimate partner violence have been found to be similar or even higher among LGBTIQ people in comparison with rates for non-LGBTIQ individuals.[74]

Intimate partner violence and family violence remains largely invisible in LGBTIQ communities due to myths that LGBTIQ people do not, or cannot, experience abuse.[75] LGBTIQ people report reticence to seek support from external services or to talk to friends, peers or family members about the abusive behaviours they are experiencing for fear that their relationship will be judged more harshly or that they will not be believed or able to access services that meet their needs.[76] Stigma plays a key role in the perpetration of violence against these communities.[77]

Despite the prevalence, we know that people in LGBTIQ communities are far less likely than the general population to find support services that meet their specific needs.[78] Whilst many domestic and family violence and sexual assault services and professionals working in the area do attempt to be inclusive of LGBTIQ people, the fact remains that there are very few services for male victims and female perpetrators. Many services are unable to support the unique needs of LGBTIQ people impacted by intimate partner abuse or family violence and staff in services may not be well-equipped to support these clients.

EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

All Australian communities experience violence against women and their children, regardless of cultural background. Some groups can experience different and complex forms of violence.

These can include:

- newly-arrived migrants
- refugees and asylum seekers
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- international students
- people travelling on working holiday visas.

Research shows some migrant and refugee women may experience emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by their partner or extended family using immigration or visa status.[79] International students and those travelling on working holiday visas may be exposed to specific vulnerabilities that can contribute to abuse in intimate relationships.

These can include:

- exploitation of lack of accommodation and employment opportunities
- financial abuse
- lack of support from education institutions
- control over their mobility.

Some women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may experience complex forms of violence and harmful cultural practices including:

- early and forced marriage
- female genital mutilation/cutting
- dowry abuse.

These experiences can be influenced by many factors.

For example:

- Some cultural beliefs, traditions and attitudes that reinforce gender inequality can increase the risk of violence within different communities.
- Racism, bias and other forms of discrimination may impact people's experiences of violence, their help-seeking behaviour and their experience with service providers.
- Immigration and settlement in a new country can lead to the breakdown or weakening of cultural norms and practices that support respectful relationships or sanction against the use of violence.
- In some contexts, religious and/or cultural values that prioritise family unity and community can serve as barriers to divorce or reporting of violence, and make domestic, family and sexual violence a taboo subject.
- Limited English language skills, and limited contact with family, friends or communities in the country of origin can create situations of dependency. Social isolation may be used as a tool by perpetrators to enable situations for violence to occur. Isolation can also create barriers to accessing services and seeking support.
- Previous experiences of violence or trauma can be a risk factor for both perpetration and victimisation of violence, and some culturally and linguistically diverse communities are more likely to have experienced certain types of abuse or trauma.

All interventions must be appropriate, accessible and inclusive for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities across Australia.

This means:

- developing culturally sensitive content
- ensuring meaningful participation of target communities in intervention design, implementation and evaluation
- supporting and empowering communities in culturally appropriate ways to enable them to address the factors that can perpetuate violence in their communities.

ACTIONS

10. Implement community-led and tailored initiatives to address the unique experiences and needs of communities affected by multiple forms of discrimination or inequality.

11. Deliver policies and services to address the disproportionate impact of violence on particular groups.

12. Better equip the service system and communities to address complex forms of violence and harmful cultural practices including early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, dowry abuse and human trafficking.

RESPOND TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

'The recent high-profile stories of abuse have emphasised the importance of victims of sexual harassment and assault being able to come forward, tell their stories and be believed.'

Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner (5 March 2018)[80]

Sexual violence can be both a form of domestic and family violence and a standalone crime. Like domestic and family violence, sexual violence is gendered, which means that more women experience sexual assault and sexual harassment than men.[81]

Reported rates of sexual assault continue to rise. Between 2016 and 2017, the number of reported sexual assaults increased by 8 per cent across Australia.[82] Despite this, many experiences of sexual assault are not reported for a number of reasons. More than 70 per cent of sexual assault incidents are not reported to police, and only about one in 10 reported incidents results in a guilty finding in court.[83] Despite recent changes to legislation, there are still many barriers that make it difficult for women to report and access services.

Some of these barriers include women not being believed and, as a result, women not trusting the criminal justice system.

Some groups of women experience more barriers when reporting sexual assault and accessing services, including facing stigma and discrimination.

These women include:
- women with disability
- culturally and linguistically diverse women
- sex workers.

TOO MANY AUSTRALIANS (1 IN 5) ARE WILLING TO EXCUSE VIOLENCE AS PART OF A 'NORMAL' GENDER DYNAMIC IN A RELATIONSHIP.

Most Australians have accurate knowledge of violence against women and do not endorse this violence.

However, the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women survey found that:

2 in 5 Australians believe that women make up false reports of sexual assault in order to punish men.

1 in 3 Australians believe that a female victim who does not leave an abusive partner is partly responsible for the abuse continuing.

1 in 8 Australians believe that if a woman is raped while she is drunk or affected by drugs she is at least partly responsible.

All services must respond to women who report or share experiences of sexual violence, in a safe and supportive way.

Points of contact for victims and survivors include:
- hospitals
- legal services
- disability support services
- schools
- the police
- corrective services
- courts.

It is important that workers have the knowledge and skills to respond appropriately to victims and survivors to ensure they can access specialist services that are qualified to help.

This means that workers must:
- be trained in responding to trauma
- understand how to respond to victims and survivors in ways that take their diverse lived experience into account.

Above all, victims and survivors must be heard, believed and supported in their recovery.

'I did not report… I had no idea who to confide in and I was made to feel like it was all my fault, that I deserved it. '

Submission No. 210 to the Australian Human Rights Commission, University Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Project (2017) [84]

For the first time, the National Plan specifically addresses sexual violence through primary prevention and raising awareness and understanding of issues such as gender equality, consent and healthy sexual relationships, particularly for young people. It also aims to stop victim-blaming, particularly for people who are at greater risk of experiencing violence.

The Fourth Action Plan's focus on prevention, changing attitudes, and addressing sexual violence in its own right will contribute to reducing sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can offend, humiliate and intimidate victims.

It is characterised by perpetrators:
- making unwelcome sexual advances
- making requests for sexual favours
- engaging in other non-consensual conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment can occur in public spaces, in the workplace, online and at home, and the statistics paint a concerning picture. Around 85 per cent of Australian women have been sexually harassed at some point in their lives, and there has been a marked increase in the prevalence of workplace sexual harassment. [85]

TECHNOLOGY–FACILITATED ABUSE

As mobile and digital technology has grown and improved, there are new opportunities and greater risks for women and their children.

New technology allows for better access to information and links to service providers, such as those with online platforms. This enables women and their children who have experienced violence to report violence more quickly than previously. In addition, online movements of women sharing their experiences of sexual harassment and sexual violence can help women feel validated and less alone in their experiences, which can improve their confidence in reporting.

However, this new technology also increases women's experiences of different forms of domestic, family and sexual violence or backlash. Digital technology is linked to new and emerging forms of violence against women, such as online sexual harassment, stalking and non-consensual sharing of intimate images (image-based abuse). In one survey, 98 per cent of specialist staff said they had clients who had reported experiencing technology-facilitated stalking and abuse. [86]

ACTIONS

13. Prevent sexual violence and sexual harassment before it happens through national and targeted initiatives that promote informed consent, bodily autonomy and respectful relationships.

14. Deliver client-centred, trauma-informed, specialised and consistent support to victims and survivors of sexual violence.

15. Strengthen the capacity of all sectors to address sexual harassment to ensure women are safe at work, while studying, in public and online.

IMPROVE SUPPORT AND SERVICE SYSTEM RESPONSES

'We know that when people are aware that support is available and they feel confident that they will be listened to and believed, they are more likely to reach out for support. And this is so important for people who are experiencing the impacts of trauma.'

Chrystina Stanford, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre CEO, and member of the 1800RESPECT National Sector Advisory Group (10 April 2019)[87]

The ways that current service systems are set up to respond to domestic and family violence are complex and can be hard for people to navigate. People may seek support from many different places and at different times.

Service systems must work together to:
- reduce the impact of violence on women and their children
- prioritise their safety
- prevent perpetrators from using violence again.

All governments continue to work hard to improve service responses to ensure women and their children have access to help when they need it. This includes improving how violence is reported and identified, and reducing the stigma associated with seeking support.

All jurisdictions contribute to the Death Review Network, which helps jurisdictions and the sector to learn from the worst situations to build more effective service systems. Figure 6 on page 37 shows how victims and survivors interact with many services, beyond specialist services. This highlights the vital role that different sectors — including education, health, housing, police, justice and social services — play in identifying and supporting people.

Early intervention is key in recognising and responding to early warning signs in order to:
- stop the escalation of violence against women and children
- protect victims from immediate harm
- prevent violence from escalating further.

Safe, accessible and stable accommodation is crucial for the safety and recovery of women and their children impacted by violence. In 2017–18, 42 per cent of people seeking support from a specialist homelessness service reported experiencing domestic and family violence at some point during the reporting period.[88] Despite this, services are often limited (including crisis accommodation) and people are required to travel long distances to access the services they need.

There are additional challenges for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children living in remote communities. Services may rely on them leaving their community or extended family and existing support systems. Service responses need to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children to safely stay in their communities.

ACTIONS

16. Enable workforces to provide trauma-informed support with a focus on safety and recovery to victims and survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence.

17. Collaborate across services, sectors and workforces to ensure that responses to women affected by domestic, family and sexual violence are coordinated, meet women's needs, avoid women having to retell their story and promote their recovery.

18. Improve access to and embed trauma-informed support for perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence to prevent reoffending and promote rehabilitation and treatment.

19. Build the evidence base to inform responses to domestic, family and sexual violence by strengthening the focus on what works to reduce violence, improving data and supporting the Fourth Action Plan priorities.

20. Improve access to suitable and safe accommodation within their communities for women who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence.

FORMAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Formal support services need specialised skills and systems to meet the unique experiences and needs of all Australian women and their children experiencing violence, particularly those affected by multiple forms of discrimination or inequality.

INFORMAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS

Informal support mechanisms can play an equally important role in recognising, referring and supporting victims and survivors.

FIGURE 6: VICTIM AND SURVIVOR INTERACTIONS WITH DIFFERENT SUPPORT SERVICES

HAIRDRESSERS

SPECIALIST FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

COLLEAGUES

Within the population of women who have experienced violence, or are currently experiencing violence, the Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that one in six are currently in the workforce.[a]

HOSPITALS

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Women are more likely to talk to someone else about a violent incident than they are to tell police or contact a specialised agency. Most speak to a friend, a neighbour or an immediate family member.

GENERAL PRACTITIONER

A full-time GP is likely to be seeing one to two female patients each week who have experienced family violence.[b]

42%

HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

42 per cent of people seeking support from a specialist homelessness service reported experiencing domestic and family violence at some point during 2017–18.[c]

COFFEE SHOPS

GOVERNMENT SERVICES
LEGAL SERVICES
POLICE

BANKS

Family and domestic violence has significant implications for a victim's economic security and independence. This can also affect a victim's financial wellbeing and put them at financial risk.[d]

RAPE CRISIS SERVICES

SPORTS CLUBS
GYM

[a]Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2005 Personal Safety Survey (Canberra, ACT: ABS, 2006), https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4906.0Main+Features12005%20(Reissue)?OpenDocument. [b]Kelsey Hegarty and Robert Bush, "Prevalence and associations of partner abuse in women attending general practice: a cross-sectional survey," Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health 26, no. 5 (Oct 2002): 437–442.

[c]Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report 2017–2018 (Canberra, ACT: AIHW, 2019), https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/contents/client-groups-of-interest/clients-who-have-experienced-domestic-and-family-violence. [d]State of Victoria, Royal Commission into Family Violence: Summary and recommendations, (Melbourne: The Royal Commission, 2016), http://files.rcfv.com.au/Reports/Final/RCFV-All-Volumes.pdf.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Violence against women and their children is widely recognised as a fundamental violation of human rights.

Australia is taking a leading role on the international stage, to promote gender equality and eliminate violence against women and girls. The Fourth Action Plan shows how Australia has taken a leadership role in violence prevention, a key part of how Australia meets its international commitments.

As a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)[89], Australia commits to:

- exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women
- provide services to victims and survivors of abuse
- ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Australia reports periodically to CEDAW. This is an important process that holds Australia to account to ensure that our priorities at a national level align with our international commitments.

The Australian Government is a strong supporter of ending and preventing violence against women and their children internationally.

This is reflected in our engagement in the:

- Human Rights Council[90]
- United Nations Commission on the Status of Women[91]
- Women, Peace and Security Agenda.[92]

Australia is also a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child[93] and is committed to upholding the rights of the child. The interests of the child are always the primary considerations for any actions involving or affecting children.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[94], including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provides a new global consensus for action to promote gender equality and address violence against women. This includes a standalone goal on gender equality (Goal 5) and specific targets on ending violence against women. In addition, other goals related to poverty, education and health cannot be achieved without addressing violence against women. Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 development goals.

FIGURE 7: UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals include a standalone goal on gender equality (Goal 5) and specific targets on ending violence against women.

GOAL 5. GENDER EQUALITY

Goal 5 targets
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

Violence against women costs countries billions	Violence against women causes death, disability and poor health	Violence against women reduces girls' access to education	Women and girls face violence when accessing water and sanitation
1 NO POVERTY	**3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**	**4 QUALITY EDUCATION**	**6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION**
Violence against women limits women's access to decent work	Violence against women entrenches other inequalities	Violence against women limits women's mobility and safe use of public spaces	Violence against women is often perpetrated with impunity
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	**10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES**	**11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**	**16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS**

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without addressing violence against women and girls; and addressing violence against women and girls will contribute to achieving multiple development outcomes.

Source: The Equality Institute

GLOBAL MOVEMENTS

Recently, women across the globe have been publicly sharing their experiences of sexual violence through collective action and social media, generating a global conversation between victims and survivors across the world, highlighting their experiences of sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is vital that we ensure commitments to achieve gender equality are translated into real action and real change to end violence against women and their children in Australia.

STATE SECURITY AND PEACEFULNESS

The links between the security of women and security of states are being increasingly recognised. Addressing violence against women has broad consequences for state and regional security and vice versa.[95] It has been found that the overall level of violence against women and their children better predicts national and regional peacefulness, as opposed to other indicators such as levels of democracy and wealth.[96]

Women and girls often face devastating human rights violations, including high levels of sexual and gender based violence, in conflict-affected settings.[97] Women are also significantly under-represented and often overlooked in formal peace processes.[98] On the other hand, women can be powerful agents in preventing conflict and building peace.[99]

Efforts under the Fourth Action Plan can help contribute to broader state security and Australia's standing in the region. At the same time, Australia is committed, under the *National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security*[100], to contribute to realising the full and meaningful participation, as well as the protection of human rights, of all women and girls.

LINKS TO BROADER AUSTRALIAN POLICY REFORMS

The Commonwealth and state and territory governments are implementing many other significant initiatives that complement and support the National Plan. These initiatives contribute to ensuring women and their children are safe by supporting them in all aspects of their lives and throughout their lifetime.

JURISDICTION	HOUSING	WOMEN	INDIGENOUS	FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	CHILDREN AND YOUTH	ELDER ABUSE	DISABILITY
Commonwealth	National Housing and Homelessness Agreement	National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030 Women's Economic Security Package National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security	Closing the Gap Indigenous Advancement Strategy	National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022 *Migration Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Act 2018* *Modern Slavery Act 2018* National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015–2019 Family Advocacy and Support Service National Drug Strategy 2017–2026 National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces	National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 Working in partnership to respond to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, including: • National Principles for Child Safe Organisations • Commonwealth Child Safe Framework • National Strategy for the Prevention of Child Abuse National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People 2020–2030 Healthy, Safe and Thriving: National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health	National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019–2023 Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety	National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
New South Wales	NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018–2023	NSW Women's Strategy 2018–2022	OCHRE: NSW Government Plan for Aboriginal Affairs	NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016–2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018–2021	NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2016–2019	NSW Ageing Strategy 2016–2020 Preventing and responding to abuse of older people (Elder Abuse) NSW Interagency Policy	NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

	HOUSING	WOMEN	INDIGENOUS	FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	CHILDREN AND YOUTH	ELDER ABUSE	DISABILITY
JURISDICTION							
Victoria	Victoria's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan (2018) Homes for Victorians (2017)	Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy (2016) Gender Equality Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017–2019	Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023 *Korin Korin Balit-Djak:* Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017–2027 *Dhelk Dja:* Safe Our Way – Strong Culture, Strong People, Strong Families (2018) *Wungurilwil Gapgapduir* Aboriginal Children and Families Agreement Strategic Action Plan (2018)	Ending Family Violence – Victoria's Plan for Change (10 year plan) including the Family Violence Outcomes Framework, and associated Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017–2020 Free from Violence: Victoria's Strategy to Prevent Family Violence and All Forms of Violence Against Women (2017) First Action Plan of the strategy 2018–2021 Building from Strength: 10-year Industry Plan for Family Violence Prevention and Response Enhancing Safety: Family Violence Strategy for the Victorian Corrections system 2018–2020 and Action Plan (2018)	Roadmap for Reform: Children and families – progress and directions (2018) Youth policy: Building Stronger Youth Engagement in Victoria (2018)	Victorian Government's Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Initiative (2018)	Everybody Matters: Inclusion and Equity Statement Absolutely Everyone: State disability plan 2017–2020 Disability Abuse Prevention Strategy
Queensland	Queensland Housing Strategy 2017–2027	Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–2021 Queensland Violence Against Women Prevention Plan 2016–2022	Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families Changing Tracks: An action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families	Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026: Queensland's reform program to end domestic and family violence Queensland's Framework for Action — Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence Queensland's plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with a disability	Queensland Youth Strategy: Building young Queenslanders for a global future Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019–2023	Queensland: an age-friendly community — Strategic direction statement	All Abilities Queensland: opportunities for all 2017–2020

JURISDICTION	HOUSING	WOMEN	INDIGENOUS	FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	CHILDREN AND YOUTH	ELDER ABUSE	DISABILITY
ACT	ACT Housing Strategy Growing and Renewing Public Housing 2019–2024	Women's Plan 2016–2026 — First Action Plan 2017–2019	ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019–2028		Blueprint for Youth Justice in the ACT 2012–2022 A Step Up for Our Kids: Out of Home Care Strategy 2015–2020		Disability Justice Strategy
Tasmania	Affordable Housing Strategy 2015–2025 Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019–2023	Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018–2021 Financial Security for Women Action Plan 2018–2021 Women on Boards Strategy 2015–2020	Closing the Gap Policy Refresh Resetting the Relationship with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community Agenda	Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence 2019–2022 Safe at Home, Tasmania's integrated criminal justice response to family violence	Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy 2018–2021: Safe, Well and Positive Learners Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework Strong Families, Safe Kids: Redesign of Child Protection Services Tasmania Youth At Risk Strategy	Respect and Protect Older Tasmanians: Tasmania's Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy 2019–22 Strong, Liveable Communities: Tasmania's Active Ageing Plan 2017–2022	Accessible Island: Tasmania's Disability Framework for Action 2018–2021 Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2017–2020
Northern Territory	Northern Territory Homelessness Strategy 2018–2023 Northern Territory Housing Strategy (under development)	Northern Territory Gender Equality Framework (in development — consultations 2019)	Territory Families Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework Northern Territory Health Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework 2016–2026	Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028 — First Action Plan 2018–2021 Northern Territory Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework (in development — consultations 2019)	Youth Justice Framework 2015–2020 Territory Families Regional Youth Services Framework The Best Opportunities in Life: Northern Territory Child and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018–2028 Safe, Thriving and Connected: Generational Change for Children and Families	Strong Seniors: Seniors Participation Framework 2016–2019	Territory Equipment Program
South Australia	Housing and Homelessness Strategy (in development)	Committed to Safety — A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia Women's Employment and Leadership Strategy (in development – consultations began June 2019)	South Australian Government Aboriginal Affairs Action Plan 2019–2020	Committed to Safety — A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia	Child and Family Support System	Strategy to Safeguard the Rights of Older South Australians 2014–2021 Future Directions for Ageing Well (in development — consultations 2019)	*Disability Inclusion Act 2018* Disability Inclusion Plans (process being developed)
Western Australia	Affordable Housing Strategy 2010–2020 The 10 Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030 Affordable Housing Action Plan 2017/18–2019/20	10-year WA Women's Plan (in development)	Safer Families, Safer Communities: Kimberley Family Violence Regional Plan 2015–2020	Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022 10-year Strategy for Responding to Family and Domestic Violence (in development)	Action Plan for At Risk Youth Target 120 Early Years Initiative Premiers Priorities: A Bright Future	WA Strategy to respond to the Abuse of Older People (Elder Abuse) (in development)	10-year State Disability Plan (in development)

PERFORMANCE MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVIDENCE

TRACKING PROGRESS

At the start of the National Plan, governments agreed on six overarching National Outcomes to work towards. This also included how the success of each outcome would be measured over time, based on the best available data.

The outcomes are:

1 Communities are safe and free from violence, as measured by increased intolerance of violence against women and their children (using the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey [NCAS]).

2 Relationships are respectful, as measured by improved knowledge, skills and behaviour of respectful relationships by young people (using the NCAS).

3 Indigenous communities are strengthened, as measured by: the reduction in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who consider that family violence, assault and sexual assault are problems for their communities and neighbourhood; and increased proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are able to have their say within community on important issues including violence (using the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey [NATSISS]).[101]

4 Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence, as measured by increased access to, and responsiveness of, services for victims of domestic, family and sexual violence (using Personal Safety Survey [PSS] and administrative data).

5 Justice responses are effective, as measured by increased rates of women reporting domestic, family and sexual violence to police (using PSS and administrative data).

6 Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account, as measured by a decrease in repeated partner victimisation (using PSS and administrative data).

Since 2010, governments have continued to invest in the national evidence base and data sources to better understand and address violence against women and their children.

The focus is on improving data on all cohorts of women at risk of violence and on all forms of violence that women and their children could experience.

Examples of data sources that can enhance our understanding of violence include the:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) crime statistics
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) compendia on domestic, family and sexual violence, the most recent of which was released in 2019.[102]
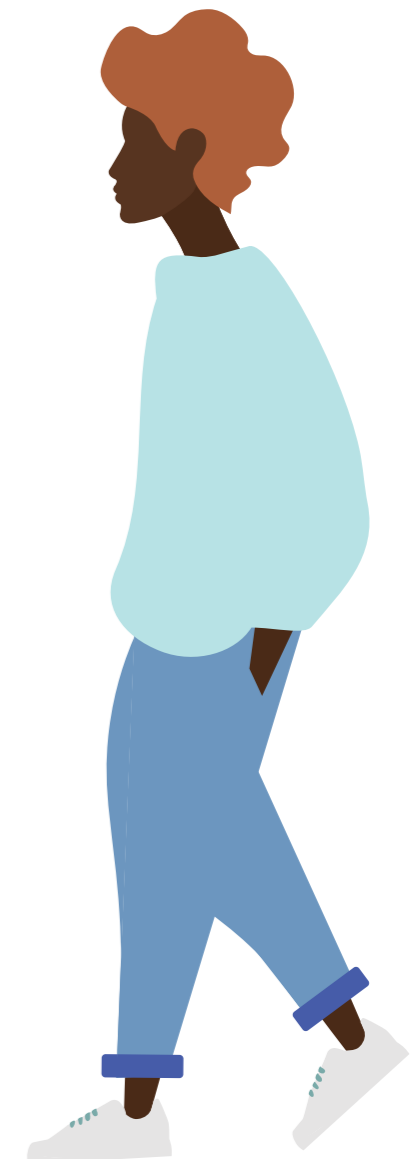
Under the Fourth Action Plan, governments will:

- work together to build on the current measures of success
- identify and define clear indicators, and relevant data sources, to measure success
- focus on 'mining' existing data and information on violence to provide a useful picture of progress
- work towards addressing key gaps in the data
- use data to continually improve strategies
- continue to invest in the PSS and the NCAS as critical measures of progress towards reducing violence against women and their children.

The ABS will conduct a further wave of the PSS in 2020. The PSS collects information on the nature and extent of violence experienced by men and women in Australia.

The NATSISS provides information on a range of demographic, social, environmental and economic indicators, including estimates of the prevalence of violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The last NATSISS was conducted in 2014–15. The National Aboriginal and Torres Islander Health Survey was conducted in 2018–19 and included an additional module on violence, aligned with the NATSISS.

ANROWS will conduct another wave of the NCAS in 2021. The NCAS is a general population telephone survey of Australians aged 16 years and over, on their attitudes towards, and awareness of, violence against women.

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Governments will develop and agree on an enhanced performance monitoring and reporting framework to support the implementation of the Fourth Action Plan, including revised measures of success (with both short and medium-term measures).

Governments will report on their key achievements and progress under the Fourth Action Plan through national progress reports. These reports will be made available to the community and will be placed on the plan4womenssafety website. Reporting will enable all governments to monitor national progress against the long-term objectives of the National Plan, including any changes needed to improve the outcomes of the National Plan.

EVALUATIONS

The Fourth Action Plan and overall National Plan will be evaluated to assess progress against objectives and inform the Australian Government's future approach to reducing violence against women and their children. An evaluation plan will be developed in consultation with states and territories in the first year of the Fourth Action Plan. The overall evaluation will be informed by separate evaluations of key individual initiatives funded across jurisdictions under the Fourth Action Plan.

BUILDING OUR EVIDENCE BASE

Although the National Plan is supported by growing evidence, the evidence is far from complete. The Fourth Action Plan will expand the evidence, with dedicated research and data projects to support the five national priority areas of the Fourth Action Plan (see pages 5–6). These projects are in addition to the broader ANROWS research program.

The Fourth Action Plan will increase the focus on 'what works'.

GOVERNANCE

Reducing violence against women and their children is the responsibility of all governments, the community sector, industry and members of the broader community. Governments are jointly responsible for overseeing the Fourth Action Plan.

The Fourth Action Plan has cooperative and collaborative governance arrangements that work to achieve the aims of the National Plan.

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS

Building on its endorsement of the National Plan in February 2011 and its commitment to strengthen efforts to eliminate violence against women and their children, COAG will continue to take collective action to reduce violence through the Fourth Action Plan.

WOMEN'S SAFETY MINISTERS

Women's Safety Ministers from Commonwealth, state and territory governments are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Fourth Action Plan, with support from Ministers in other portfolios.
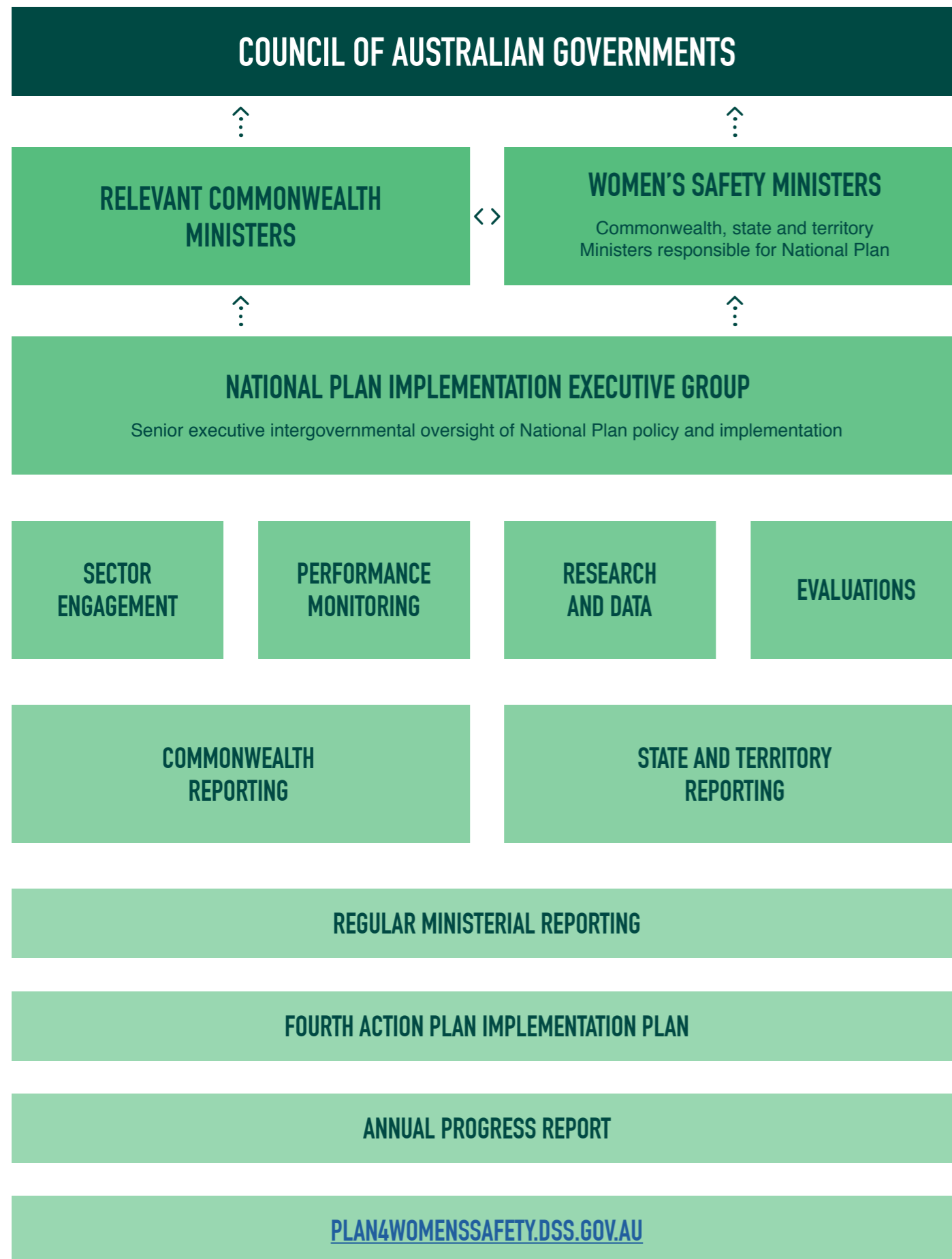
NATIONAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION EXECUTIVE GROUP

The National Plan Implementation Executive Group (ImpEG) consists of senior officials from Commonwealth, state and territory governments. ImpEG is responsible for monitoring and reporting progress to Women's Safety Ministers on the implementation of the Fourth Action Plan.

ImpEG will also continue to support Women's Safety Ministers by:

- supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Fourth Action Plan, including coordinating efforts across jurisdictions
- contributing to reporting and evaluation of the National Plan
- driving community engagement
- sharing experiences and best practice between jurisdictions.

FIGURE 8: NATIONAL PLAN GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTS

RELEVANT COMMONWEALTH MINISTERS

WOMEN'S SAFETY MINISTERS
Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers responsible for National Plan

NATIONAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION EXECUTIVE GROUP
Senior executive intergovernmental oversight of National Plan policy and implementation

SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

RESEARCH AND DATA

EVALUATIONS

COMMONWEALTH REPORTING

STATE AND TERRITORY REPORTING

REGULAR MINISTERIAL REPORTING

FOURTH ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

PLAN4WOMENSSAFETY.DSS.GOV.AU

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Governments will continue to consult key organisations and people on implementing the Fourth Action Plan, including through existing advisory and consultative forums. This consultation includes interactions between the National Plan and state and territory plans to reduce violence against women and their children.

A new national communications strategy will:

- drive community engagement with the Fourth Action Plan
- build awareness in the community about violence against women and their children and understanding 'what works'
- support the diverse information and accessibility needs of women and their communities.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1800RESPECT

The national sexual assault and domestic and family violence counselling service, www.1800respect.org.au. It provides confidential information, counselling and support services. The service is open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

ABLEISM

A term used to capture the way that the construction of social systems with able-bodied people as the norm results in the systemic, structural, intersecting and individual forms of discrimination against and exclusion of people with disabilities.[103]

ANROWS

Refers to Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, a not-for-profit independent national research organisation. ANROWS was established by the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments to produce, disseminate and assist in applying evidence for policy and practice addressing violence against women and their children.

BISEXUAL

A person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to people of both sexes.[104]

CO-DESIGN

Refers to a collaborative process for designing, implementing and evaluating community programs and services. The end-users and people who are impacted by the program or service are engaged in the process from the beginning. In the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, it means involving communities in ways that are respectful and empowering.

DEATH REVIEW NETWORK

Refers to the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Network, which was established in 2011. It represents a unique collaboration between death review mechanisms for domestic and family violence across Australia. Network members have specialist expertise in domestic and family violence related issues. They also have access to extensive information pertaining to domestic and family violence deaths.

DIVERSE SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Refers to different patterns of emotional and sexual attraction relating to an individual's personal and social identity — for example, homosexuality, bisexuality and heterosexuality.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Refers to acts of violence that occur between two people who are, or were, in an intimate relationship. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse.[105]

While there is no single definition, the central element of domestic violence is behaviour motivated by gendered drivers of violence that can involve controlling a partner through fear, coercion and intimidation — for example by using behaviour that 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.

DOWRY ABUSE

Dowry is a practice in some cultures referring to money, property or gifts that are often, but not always, transferred by a woman's family to her husband upon marriage. Dowry abuse is where there is a presence of coercion, violence or harassment associated with the giving or receiving of dowry at any time before, during or after marriage. Dowry-related abuse commonly involves claims that dowry was not paid and coercive demands for further money or gifts from a woman and her family.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Refers to identification and support for individuals and families experiencing family violence with the aim of stopping early signs of violence escalating, preventing a recurrence of violence or reducing longer-term harm.[106]

EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE

Early marriage, also known as child marriage, is any marriage that involves one or both parties who are under the age of 18 years. Forced marriages are marriages where one or both parties have not given their full and free consent to the union and where methods of force, coercion, and threats are often used to ensure the marriage takes place. A 'child marriage' is considered a form of forced marriage either because of the methods used to force one or both parties to participate in the union, or due to the fact that one or both parties are under the age of 18 years and therefore unable to provide informed consent.

ELDER ABUSE

The World Health Organization describes elder abuse as 'a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person'. Elder abuse can take various forms such as financial, physical, psychological and sexual. It can also be the result of intentional or unintentional neglect.[107]

FAMILY

The use of the term 'family' acknowledges the variety of relationships and structures that can make up family units and kinship networks. It can include current or former partners, children (including adolescent or adult children), siblings, parents, grandparents, extended family and kinship networks and carers.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Refers to violence between family members, as well as between intimate partners. It involves the same sorts of behaviours as described for domestic violence, but includes the broader range of marital and kinship relationships in which violence may occur. For this reason, it is the most widely used term to identify the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as it captures the broader issue of violence within extended families, kinship networks and community relationships, as well as intergenerational issues.[108]

Family violence is also a relevant term when referring to complex forms of violence where family and in-laws, as well as other family members of the abusive spouse, can both arrange for violent acts to be committed against the victim or are themselves abusive toward the victim.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/CUTTING

Refers to a cultural practice that occurs in many countries and cultures around the world where the external female genitalia are either partially or totally removed for non-medical reasons.

FINANCIAL ABUSE

Refers to when another person manipulates decisions or controls access to money or property without consent.[109] Financial abuse can include someone taking control of household finances, limiting access to funds or forcing someone to spend money or sell property.

FORCED STERILISATION

Refers to the process of removing or compromising an individual's reproductive organs without their free and full consent.

GAY

Refers to a person whose primary emotional and sexual attraction is toward people of the same sex. The term is most commonly applied to men, although some women use this term.[110]

GENDER EQUALITY

Involves equality of opportunity and equality of results. It includes both the redistribution of resources and responsibilities between men and women and the transformation of the underlying causes and structures of gender inequality to achieve substantive equality.

GENDER IDENTITY

Refers to a person's deeply felt sense of being male, female, both, in between, or something other. Everyone has a gender identity.[111]

GENDER INEQUALITY

Refers to the unequal distribution of power, resources, opportunity, and value afforded to men and women in a society due to prevailing gendered norms and structures.[112]

HOMOPHOBIA

Refers to the fear and hatred of lesbians and gay men and of their sexual desires and practices that often leads to discriminatory behaviour or abuse.[113]

HOLISTIC HEALING

Holistic healing considers the whole person — body, mind, spirit and emotions — in the quest for optimal health and wellness.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Refers to the practice where individuals are physically moved from one location to another both within and across borders using methods that are coercive, forceful and/or deceptive.[114]

INTERSEX

Refers to people born with physical sex characteristics that do not fit medical and social norms for female or male bodies.[115]

LESBIAN

Refers to a woman whose primary emotional and sexual attraction is towards other women.[116]

LGBTIQ

An acronym used to refer to members from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer communities.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SOCIAL SURVEY (NATSISS)

Refers to the national survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2014 of 11,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples looking at demographic, social, environmental and economic characteristics.

NATIONAL OUTCOME STANDARDS FOR PERPETRATOR INTERVENTIONS

Refers to the national document including standards that both guide and provide a measure of the actions of government, community partners and systems, and the outcomes they achieve when intervening with male perpetrators of domestic, family and sexual violence against women and their children.

NON-BINARY

A term that can vary depending on individuals, but generally refers to people who do not identify exclusively as being male or female.

OUR WATCH

Refers to the organisation established under the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*, to influence and drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children.

PERPETRATOR

Refers to a person who commits an illegal, criminal or harmful act, including domestic, family or sexual violence.

PERSONAL SAFETY SURVEY (PSS)

Refers to the survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics collecting information from men and women aged 18 years and over about the nature and extent of violence experienced since the age of 15.
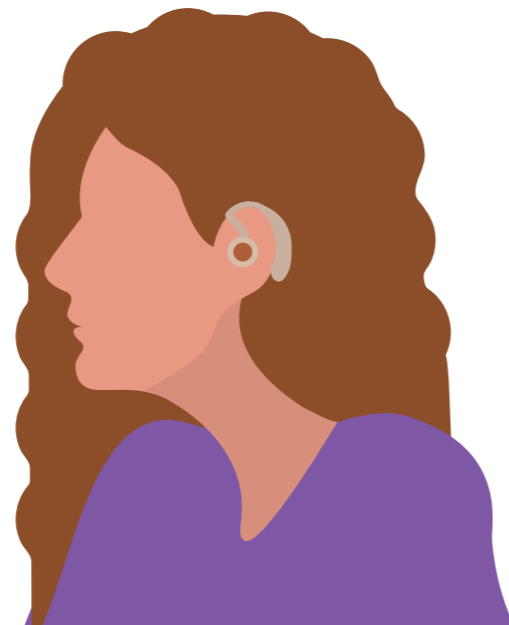
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Refers to one form of domestic violence. It can include punching, hitting, slapping, whipping, hitting with objects, kicking, stomping, shoving, throwing, burning, stabbing, choking, and damaging property.

Physical violence can be fatal due to physical injury intentionally caused by the perpetrator, or unintended consequences of physical abuse inflicted by the perpetrator.

PRIMARY PREVENTION

Refers to actions designed to stop violence before it starts by addressing deep-seated drivers of violence. Primary prevention requires changing the social conditions, such as gender inequality, that excuse, justify or even promote violence against women and their children.

Prevention activities may aim to change individual behaviour, but such change cannot be sustained at a population level in isolation from a broader change in the underlying drivers of such violence across communities, organisations and society as a whole.

A primary prevention approach works across the whole population to address the attitudes, practices and power differentials that drive violence against women and their children.[117]

PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE

Refers to actions that are used to threaten, intimidate, harass, belittle and humiliate someone else. It can include threats of violence or death toward a woman or to her children, family, friends, work colleagues or pets.

It can also include isolating women from family and friends, yelling, damaging property, driving at excessive speed, making unfounded accusations of infidelity, interrogating someone and making threats of self-harm or suicide if the woman attempts to leave.

QUEER

An umbrella term to include a range of alternative sexual and gender identities including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender or gender questioning.[118]

RESPONSE

Refers to efforts and interventions used to address existing violence — for example, services such as crisis counselling or police protection. Also known as *'Tertiary prevention'*, these efforts aim to prevent violence occurring again, by supporting survivors and holding perpetrators of violence to account.[119]

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES

Refers to any practice or intervention that has the effect of restricting the rights or freedom of movement of a person with disability, with the primary purpose of protecting the person or others from harm.[120]

SECLUSION

Defined as isolating a person in a confined space where they are alone and unable to freely leave.[121]

SECONDARY PREVENTION

See *Early intervention.*

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is defined in the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the person harassed in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Refers to the component of identity that includes a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person.

A person may be attracted to men, women, both, neither, or to people who are genderqueer, androgynous, or have other gender identities.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Refers to sexual actions without consent. This can include coercion, physical force, rape, sexual assault with implements, being forced to watch or engage in pornography, enforced prostitution, or being made to have sex with other people.

TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED ABUSE

Encompasses a wide range of behaviours using communications technology to control, abuse, harass, punish and humiliate. This can include distributing intimate images without consent via digital platforms, restricting access to finances or methods of communication, accessing or modifying private information or correspondence, and alienating the victim from support networks through the use of technology. The non-consensual sharing of intimate images (colloquially referred to as 'revenge porn') is a specific form of technology-facilitated abuse that has become particularly prevalent. It can also include monitoring actions, movements and communications through placing applications on phones and computers.[122]

TERTIARY PREVENTION

See *Response.*

TRANSGENDER

An umbrella term and, for some people, an identity term used to describe all kinds of people who sit outside the gender binary or whose gender identity is different from the sex assigned to them at birth. Transgender people may or may not feel the need to access hormone therapy and/or surgery.

TRAUMA-INFORMED

Trauma-informed care and practice recognises the prevalence of trauma and its impacts on emotional, psychological and social wellbeing of people and communities.

VICTIM BLAMING

Refers to comments and suggestions that directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, put blame on the person experiencing violence for the abuse they have or continue to experience.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Any act of sexual and gender based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of harm of coercion, in public and private life. This definition encompasses all forms of violence that women experience (including physical, sexual, emotional, cultural/spiritual, financial, and others) that are sexual and gender based.

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