

Preventing violence against women - Action sheet

Individual strategies to understand violence against women

What is Violence against Women?

- In 2015, 79 women were murdered in Australia from men's violence.
 - In Australia one in three woman has experienced physical violence, since the age of 15.
 - In Australia, one in five woman has experienced sexual violence.
- UN definition; "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."
- VAW* is not an act of anger.
 - VAW is a specific choice to exert **power and control** over another person/s.
 - Is based on unequal power that can be maintained economically, physically, emotionally and psychologically and has its basis in **fear**.
 - Involves a range of tactics by the offender to prevent and suppress resistance by victims and prevent intervention by others.

Supporting Women

- Universal approach – presenting everyone with an information pack that includes family violence information such as the resource cards. The least invasive way of presenting this is to go through the whole pack and point out all the information.
- Directly approaching a woman about intimate partner violence is not easy. Having a practiced approach can sometimes make this initial approach easier.

- 1. ASK:** *Do you feel safe at home?*
- 2. NAME IT:** *What you've just described to me is violence and it's a crime.*
- 3. RESPOND:** *Give contact details of the local domestic violence service, sexual assault service and police.*
- 4. FOLLOW UP:** *Last time you spoke about your safety, I'd like to know how you are now.*

What organisations can do

Learn more about VAW and ensure all staff have knowledge and understanding. Make the following training available to all staff:

- [Family Violence Awareness](#)
- [Bystander Training](#)

Support all employees who are or have been victims of violence. Implement [anti-discrimination and workplace practice policies](#) that allow victims paid leave whilst experiencing family or domestic violence.

Ensure local, state and national referral services contact details are available to workers and your clientele – Make publically available at your organisation.

Contact WHGNE who can support and offer strategies and resources, enabling organisations to address VAW.

*VAW – Violence Against Women

** In Australia, violence against women is called many different things, including domestic violence, family violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

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Community strategies to prevent violence against women

What is the prevention of VAW?

Violence against women is serious and prevalent. It is driven by gender inequality.

Gender inequality is a situation in which women and men do not have equal power, resources or opportunities, and that their voices, ideas and work are not valued equally by society.

Gender inequality produces a number of specific gendered drivers of violence against women.

The strongest of these are:

- Condoning of men's violence against women
- Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public life and relationships
- Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity – the idea that women and men and girls and boys should act in certain ways or fulfill certain roles.
- Disrespect towards women, and male peer relations that emphasise aggression.

Actions you can take to promote equity and respect

Violence against women is preventable. Such a significant social problem needs a large scale response, and we must all work together to achieve the cultural change required.

To prevent violence against women we need to promote gender equality in public and private life, particularly through the following actions:

- Challenge condoning of violence against women.
- Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships.
- Challenge gender stereotypes and roles.
- Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships between and among women and men, girls and boys.

*Let's talk about
respect and equity!*



What organisations can do

- Actively promote and implement policies around equality opportunity, diversity, sexual harassment and sex discrimination at work.
- Conduct a gender audit to bring to light the ways in which your organisational policies and practices might be inadvertently having a negative impact on women, men and gender equality.
- Look at your expectations of women and men at work. Do you treat men and women differently in the workplace?
- Promote flexible work practices at all levels of your organisation.
- Create a culture where employees feel confident to take bystander action e.g. Challenge sexist and disrespectful jokes and comments.
- Take reports of discrimination, harassment or violence seriously and actively encourage your staff to bring these issues to your attention.
- Ask yourself – If we don't have a 50/50 split in our organisation, why not? Apply this view across career lifecycles, from recruitment and talent development to committees and panels.