

# Respect & Equality for All:

A strategy to prevent violence against women in Goulburn and North East Victoria

2018–2021

Respect and Equality for All regional strategy is a starting point to build a social movement to see social transformation in our region of Goulburn and North East Victoria.

This strategy provides an evidence-based, best practice framework to guide the collective actions that will transform our community and achieve a desired future where all people are treated equally with respect and dignity and live in a safe and equal society.

The purpose of this strategy is to strengthen the capacity and ability of organisations, businesses, clubs, groups and networks to collectively work to eradicate violence against women in Goulburn and North East Victoria.

A regional strategy ensures that actions within a region are not isolated, avoids duplication, and efforts contribute to a collective vision. It provides an overarching framework to connect locally based initiatives across the region to reflect a collective impact model.

## Strategies & Suggested Actions

The prevention of violence against women is fundamentally about addressing the gendered drivers of violence and promoting and normalising gender equality in public and private life.

### Address the essential actions

As outlined in Change the Story (2015), these actions include: challenge condoning of violence against women; promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships; challenge gender stereotypes and roles; and strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships.

### Implement a whole of community response

It is the responsibility of all of us to build a culture of respect and equality for all individuals, by acting at multiple levels and changing the structures, norms and practices that reinforce gender inequity (Our Watch, ANROWS, and VicHealth, 2015).

### Use proven and promising techniques

There are five prevention techniques identified in Change the Story Handbook (2017) that have demonstrated effectiveness or promise. These are: direct participation programs; community mobilisation and strengthening; organisational development; communications and social marketing; civil society advocacy.

## Settings for Action

Seven settings have been initially identified in the strategy as opportunities for focus and collective action. These include: local government; education and training; sporting and recreation; health sector; early childhood; media, arts and culture; and workplaces.

## Governance, Implementation, & Evaluation

To be further developed and finalised in consultation with partners.

# Principles of this Strategy

At the heart of this regional strategy are the following 10 principles that will guide collective work:

### Gender Equity

'If we are serious about ending violence against women, then we must begin by addressing gender inequality. After all, bad outcomes for women, begin with bad attitudes towards women' (Victorian Gender Equality Strategy, 2016, pii).

'...challenging problematic and harmful ideas about masculinity is an important component of prevention work' (Change the Story Handbook, 2017, p66).

### Human Rights

A human rights framework supports the right of all individuals to live free from violence and discrimination regardless of their sex, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, age, ability or religion.

### Sustainable & Long Term

We recognise that to transform the deeply entrenched structures, norms, practices and attitudes that perpetuate violence against women, long-term and sustainable work is essential.

### Primary Prevention Approach

Violence against women is not inevitable; it is preventable. The strategy, primarily, will encourage primary prevention actions that address the underlying drivers of violence.

### Build on Existing Efforts

Whole of community efforts and actions are most effective when they build from what already exists, honouring current efforts and engaging established organisations. Whole of community includes diverse organisations and institutions as well as individual women and men, girls and boys. Strategic alliances ensure no-one is left behind.

### Intersectionality

Intersecting systems of privilege and oppression (such as sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, ageism or transphobia) increase the risk, severity and impacts of violence against particular women.

### Gender-transformative Practice

A gender-transformative approach seeks to actively examine, challenge and transform attitudes, roles, structures, norms and practices that reinforce gender inequality, and to strengthen those that support gender equality.

### Evidence-based Practice

Evidence-based practice is informed by rigorous evidence, research and theory. This strategy will contribute to the primary prevention evidence through effective monitoring and evaluation efforts.

### Accountability

The strategy is accountable to and informed by women's live experience of violence, sexism and gender inequality. We take a 'do no harm' approach. We are accountable to one another and the communities and individuals with whom we work.

### Develop & Maintain Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is a critical component that aims to be intersectional and transformative and is the process of consistently reflecting on our own identity and experiences of power and privilege, as well as our approach to the work (Change the Story Handbook, 2017).



To get involved in the consultation process, contact Women's Health Goulburn North East on (03) 5722 3009 or [whealth@whealth.com.au](mailto:whealth@whealth.com.au)