

Forum outcomes paper

Primary prevention in Tasmania

A summary of a [National Primary Prevention Hub](#) event hosted by Our Watch in partnership with the Department of Communities Tasmania.

Executive summary

This paper reports on a hybrid event and consultation hosted by Our Watch – in partnership with the Department of Communities Tasmania – on 30 November 2021, as part of [the National Primary Prevention Hub](#). The feedback collected at the event will inform the development of Tasmania’s third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan. The event consisted of:

1. a series of presentations by Our Watch situating primary prevention in the Tasmanian context
2. case studies from a range of organisations implementing prevention of violence against women initiatives in Tasmania including [Citizen Tasmania](#), [Sexual Assault Support Service \(SASS\)](#), [Big hART](#), [South-East Tasmania Aboriginal Corporation \(SETAC\)](#), and [Hobart Women’s Shelter](#)
3. discussion on the challenges and opportunities in Tasmania for primary prevention, with a focus on workplaces, education and community settings.

This paper summarises the case studies and key themes that were discussed at the forum and in the post-event survey to promote information and knowledge sharing across the Tasmanian sector. There are links to related evidence, research and primary prevention approaches throughout the report to support information sharing and knowledge-budling.



Key points

The key points that stakeholders raised and discussed at the event include the following.

Primary prevention in Tasmania

- Effectively engaging individuals and communities in preventing violence requires an understanding of their unique circumstances, experiences, and strengths. Meeting communities ‘where they are at’ improves levels of engagement and facilitates the development of more targeted and sustainable initiatives.
- Prioritising communities that are marginalised due to intersecting structural inequalities and discrimination in the planning, implementation and evaluation of prevention initiatives is central to raising awareness, mobilising communities, and promoting awareness of family violence as a criminal offence.
- Organisations are adopting strengths and rights-based frameworks to engage and educate the community about family and sexual violence. A strengths-based approach recognises the importance of language, and centres people’s right to safety, intimacy and connection rather than emphasising risk, weakness or abstinence.
- Recruiting public figures as role models and ambassadors is a highly effective way to raise awareness about violence against women and promote engagement, particularly when it comes to engaging men and boys.
- Organisations are enlisting, educating and upskilling everyday Tasmanians to be leaders in the prevention of violence within their families, peer groups and local communities.

Opportunities for progress towards primary prevention in Tasmania

- Prevention of violence against women initiatives and programs in Tasmania should continue to be informed by best-practice and evidence and be mutually reinforcing and widespread across different settings and communities to educate Tasmanians on their role in preventing violence against women.
- Organisational change is important for preventing violence against women and can have broader community impacts (see [the Prevention Handbook: Organisational development](#)). Tasmanian organisations are doing this by prioritising, implementing and embedding gender equality and prevention of violence against women policies and processes, see for example [Workplace Equality and Respect Standards](#).
- Embedding intersectionality in primary prevention is crucial to address the diverse needs and experiences of violence of women, girls and LGBTIQ+ communities in Tasmania (see [the Prevention Handbook: How different forms of inequality contribute to violence against women](#)). There is an opportunity for further context-specific research in Tasmania about groups and individuals who experience intersecting forms of discrimination, inequality and violence.
- Men and boys have and critical role in addressing and transforming the gendered drivers of violence against women, as outlined in [Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women](#). Engaging men and boys from all parts of Tasmanian society will enable change and contribute to creating a more gender equal Tasmania.
- Long-term funding and enabling policy is key to the success of primary prevention. Leadership from all levels of local, state and federal government play a role in delivering and sustaining the transformative change needed to prevent violence against women.

Primary prevention and the Tasmanian context

Introduction

This paper reports on a hybrid (in-person and online) event and consultation hosted by Our Watch as part of the [National Primary Prevention Hub](#), in partnership with the Tasmanian Government, Department of Communities Tasmania on 30 November 2021. Feedback from the event will inform the development of Tasmania’s third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan.

The event was an opportunity for stakeholders to come together to hear about the evidence underpinning primary prevention approaches in Australia, examples of effective practice and opportunities for action in Tasmania. A discussion forum and post-event survey provided an opportunity for participants to engage interactively including sharing opportunities and identifying areas of need to progress prevention in Tasmania and inform the Tasmanian Government’s third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan.

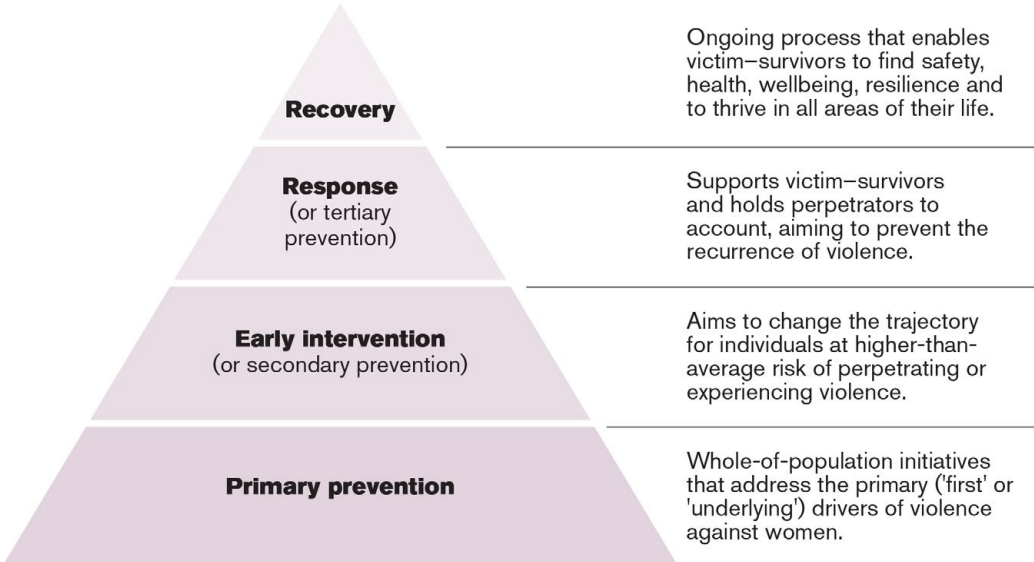
This paper:

- outlines introductory information on prevention of violence against women, providing the context that informed discussion at the events
- sets out the case studies discussed at the events
- reports on opportunities identified by stakeholders during discussions and via questions in the online survey collected by Our Watch, through the National Primary Prevention Hub.

Preventing violence against women

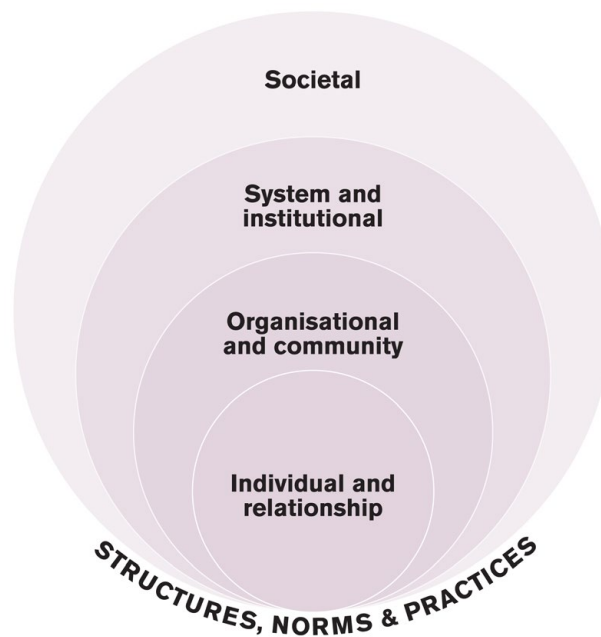
Primary prevention of violence against women is work that aims to stop violence against women from occurring in the first place. It works to change the gendered drivers of this violence, and the underlying social condition of gender inequality in which it arises (see [the Prevention Handbook: The link between gender inequality and violence against women](#)). While response and early intervention approaches work with individuals who are already experiencing or perpetrating violence (or at risk of doing so), primary prevention is a whole-of-population approach that aims to deliver a future where all women and their children live free from violence.

Figure 1: The relationship between primary prevention and other work to address violence against women



Primary prevention encompasses a diverse range of work at all levels of society, including with individuals, communities, organisations and institutions. This is referred to as the socio-ecological model in [Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia](#). This framework demonstrates the dynamic and interrelated factors that work across all levels of our society that are associated with higher levels of violence against women. The socio-ecological model encompasses the gendered social norms, practices and structures (both formal and informal) that sustain the environment of gender inequality in which violence against women occurs.

Figure 2: A socio-ecological model for preventing violence against women



Change the story outlines the particular expressions or manifestations of gender inequality that are most consistently associated with higher levels of violence against women. The gendered drivers of violence against women outlined in the framework are:

- Condoning of violence against women.
- Men’s control of decision-making and limits to women’s independence in public and private life.
- Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity.
- Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

The gendered drivers exist in social contexts that are characterised by intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination, power and privilege including racism; colonialism; classism; heteronormativity; cisnormativity; homo-, bi- and transphobia; ableism and ageism. These intersecting forms of oppression and privilege also effect the prevalence and dynamics of violence against women.

To prevent violence against women, a multifaceted approach is required to address the gendered drivers across the socioecological model to reach everyone, challenging the gendered drivers where people work, live, learn and play. As part of this approach, primary prevention needs to be undertaken across various interrelated settings including education, sports, the arts, media, and public spaces.

As detailed in [Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to Change the story](#) there are a number of different techniques that can be used to prevent violence against women, such as direct participation, community mobilisation and strengthening organisational development, communication and social marketing, policy and legislative change, and civil society advocacy. For primary prevention to be successful, it requires a dedicated infrastructure that includes mechanisms for coordination, an expert workforce, policy and legislative reform, and shared monitoring and evaluation frameworks. It is a holistic endeavour, that requires coordinated, mutually reinforcing strategies at all levels of society.

The Tasmanian context

Promoting effective primary prevention work in Tasmania means understanding the gendered drivers of violence against women within the social contexts in which it occurs. This includes how they are reinforced in context-specific ways, which exacerbate violence against women and girls in Tasmania, as well as the state's unique strengths and opportunities to end this violence.

Compared to other states and territories, key population data indicates that Tasmania has:

- a high population living in remote areas
- the highest population of people living with a disability¹
- the highest population of people over the age of 50²
- a low level of internet accessing in dwellings compared to the national average³
- a higher rate of illegal substance abuse compared to the national average.⁴

While these factors do not drive violence against women, they reinforce the severity, prevalence and dynamics of men's violence against women and girls in Tasmania.

In 2015, the Tasmanian Government launched [Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020 \[PDF download\]](#). Part of this plan involved becoming a member of Our Watch in 2015 and committing to be part of the shared approach to primary prevention that is articulated in Change the story. In 2019, the Tasmanian Government released [Safe Homes, Families and Communities : Tasmania's Action Plan for Family and Sexual Violence 2019-2022 \[PDF download\]](#). This was the Government's second family violence action plan and included an expanded focus to recognise the related but unique issue of sexual violence.

As part of the second plan, the Tasmanian Government formed a partnership with Our Watch to support, amplify and streamline primary prevention work being done in the community, in a bid to eliminate violence against women. This included having a dedicated Our Watch Senior Advisor to support primary prevention policy and practice across the state. As part of this nation-first partnership, gaps and opportunities were identified in existing work to build capacity to expand prevention in a variety of settings across Tasmania, including local and state government, workplaces, education providers, and sporting organisations.

Following work undertaken to promote gender equality in workplaces under the Tasmanian Government's first family violence action plan, Tasmanian Government agencies are implementing Our Watch's [Workplace Equality and Respect Standards](#), and are currently developing action plans around how to best advance gender equality within their workplaces. Our Watch is also working in partnership with the Local Government Association of Tasmania and councils to develop a clearer understanding of local government's important role in promoting gender equality and preventing violence within their communities and as workplaces. Complementing this work in the policy space, a community of practice was established to facilitate knowledge sharing and develop a state-wide framework for Tasmanian local governments to engage in primary prevention, including supporting a motion for the Local Government Association of Tasmania Conference in 2022. This work will be accompanied by a professional development program to build skills and confidence in promoting equality and challenging disrespect.

Smaller states like Tasmania face challenges that prevent the development of a distinct primary prevention workforce. To address these challenges, alongside their early intervention and response work, several organisations are developing and delivering prevention of violence against women programs. The following case studies outline some of those activities.

Primary prevention activity in Tasmania

The [National Primary Prevention Hub](#) forum brought together a range of organisations and key stakeholders to discuss and reflect on what's working in the violence prevention space in Tasmania, what challenges and barriers exist, and how to ensure this work is being implemented strategically across the state. This included presentations from the following organisations on their primary prevention work:

1. [Citizen Tasmania](#): One a Week film and None a Week campaign
2. [Sexual Assault Support Service \(SASS\)](#): Consent is a Conversation and Safe, Smart Kids programs
3. [Big hART](#): Project O
4. [South-East Tasmania Aboriginal Corporation \(SETAC\)](#): Rullanah Palawa (Strong Men, Strong Future) and Bark Hut projects
5. [Hobart Women's Shelter](#): Mentors in Violence Prevention program.

The following section summarises the key information and themes from each presentation and demonstrates how the organisations are contributing to the prevention of violence against women in Tasmania.

Meeting people and communities ‘where they are at’

Effectively engaging individuals and communities in preventing violence requires an understanding of their unique circumstances, experiences, and strengths. For the Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS), this means recognising that young people are seeking information about intimate relationships – including sex – thus creating a space for open, honest and sex-positive dialogue in their ‘Consent is a Conversation’ high school program. Similarly, as part of Big hART’s Project O co-design model, they encourage participants to organise primary prevention events in spaces that are safe and comfortable for the group or community they are working with. Meeting communities ‘where they are at’ in this way improves levels of engagement and facilitates the development of more targeted and sustainable initiatives.

Case study: SETAC – the Bark Hut Project and Rullanih Palawa (Strong Men, Strong Futures)

Meeting people and communities where they are at has proven effective in South-East Tasmania Aboriginal Corporation’s (SETAC) work with Aboriginal communities. Strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ connection to culture through traditional practices is a key element of SETAC’s primary prevention work. Through the Bark Hut project, SETAC will help at-risk families build a strong foundation together by connecting through cultural practices, while also connecting these families to specialist violence against women services.

Similarly, as part of their Rullanih Palawa (Strong Men, Strong Futures) project, SETAC facilitators take groups of Aboriginal men out on country for a four-day workshop. The facilitators, who are Aboriginal men, utilise cultural bonding practices and yarning circles to promote personal storytelling among participants. The process of sharing their experiences as both victims and perpetrators of violence allows the group to develop an understanding of what violence looks like in their communities, the impact it can have on people of all genders, and how best to address this violence. Doing so has promoted empathy and connection among participating men and instil a greater commitment to positive bystander behaviours and community action to end violence against women.

‘It’s about being able to have Aboriginal people draw back on their culture to strengthen themselves, and strengthen their roots.’

– Jamie Curry, acting CEO of SETAC.

Putting marginalised voices at the forefront of planning, implementation and evaluation

Victim–survivors play a central role in raising awareness of violence against women in Australia, developing community-based initiatives and promoting key legislative change. Alongside continued support for these advocates, promoting similar opportunities for people from marginalised backgrounds who have unique insights into how violence manifests in their communities and are best positioned to help prevent it, enables prevention. These opportunities need to go beyond consultation, to include meaningful input and engagement in the planning, implementation and evaluation of prevention projects.

Case study: Big hART – Project O

Project O is an arts-based education program run by Big hART in Tasmania’s north-west, which aims to empower young women to be changemakers in their communities. Through weekly arts-based workshops in rural high schools, young women learn the skills to plan, execute and speak at community events, and express themselves through a variety of artistic mediums. This program addresses some of the key drivers of violence in rural and remote communities by amplifying the voices of young women and developing key skills. Project O’s key aim is to shift the narrative these young women have about themselves by instilling a sense of confidence, agency and resilience, while also creating viable employment pathways. Through this work, opportunities for meaningful co-design processes have also emerged.

At a Big hART event with Project O participants from three different high schools held in 2021, victim–survivor advocate Rosie Batty facilitated a discussion about the challenges and prejudices these young women face, and helped to reframe them as opportunities for powerful change. Following this, a group of young women approached the Project O team to pitch a mental health event in their community to address the lack of access to timely psychological care. Through a series of workshops, the Project O team assisted the young women in co-designing an event at the local skatepark. This was a space the young women identified as a place of no judgement and strong community. The event brought together service providers and over 150 community members to converse and connect.

Key outcomes included increased community awareness, the development of a localised opinions and experiences survey, and an action plan to roll out mental health first aid training across the community. As demonstrated by Project O’s work, young Tasmanians in rural and high-needs communities have the capability, skills and drive to create positive social change, particularly with respect to gender equality and empowerment. The 2022 Young Australian of the Year, Kaytlyn Johnson, a Project O alumnae, was recognised for her role in advocating for young Indigenous women, and cited Project O as a foundational experience in her journey.

‘This is but one snapshot example of the quickfire spread of ideas and initiatives that can be activated by investing in the co-design and leadership development of young people around issues that connect to their lived experience.’

– Holly Rankin Smith, Associate State Manager (TAS) at Big hART.

Empowering young people to be changemakers

A key focus of primary prevention work in Tasmania is to educate young people and provide them with the capacity, tools and platforms to be agents of change in their communities. This approach leverages the unique opportunities young people have to effect positive change in their peers', parents' and grandparents' attitudes, and is particularly useful when seeking to engage otherwise hard-to-reach groups such as rural and Aboriginal communities.

Case study: Citizen Tasmania – None a Week Campaign

Citizen Tasmania's None a Week campaign aims to mobilise young people of migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds to create generational change in their communities' attitudes toward violence against women. This is important given a national *Migrant and Refugee Women in Australia: The Safety and Security Study* found that 92% of migrant and refugee women experience controlling behaviour, and 42% experience physical and sexual violence in Australia. Further, women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds who experience violence can face barriers to accessing support and legal recourse.

The campaign focuses on educating, empowering and connecting young Tasmanians of migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds to lead change on preventing violence against women in their communities, using their own languages and cultural tools. The campaign of None A Week, accompanied by the film One A Week, sits within a broader arts-based program delivered by Citizen Tasmania.

While the None A Week campaign takes a whole-of-community approach, Citizen Tasmania acknowledges that older generations can find change challenging. A key focus of the organisation's primary prevention work is to support younger generations to address and overcome this resistance. Using the arts as a vehicle for social change, the campaign helps young people to raise awareness about different challenges in their communities, including violence against women. The campaign aims to equip young people with the confidence and the legal and social skills to be agents of change within their families, peer groups and wider communities.

'None a Week's primary prevention model is about educating young people, and supporting them to get involved in shifting the statistic from one a week, to none a week.'

– Grace Williams, Founder and Director of Citizen Tasmania.

i This statistic refers to one woman being killed a week by her current or former partner nationally. See Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety. (2018). [Violence against women: Accurate use of key statistics](#) (ANROWS Insights 05/2018).

Employing strengths-based frameworks

Organisations in Tasmania are adopting strengths- and rights-based frameworks to engage and educate the community about family and sexual violence. A strengths-based approach recognises the importance of language, and focuses on people's right to safety, intimacy and connection rather than emphasising risk, weakness or abstinence. This has proven particularly effective in the context of respectful relationships and consent education in schools.

Case Study: SASS – Consent is a Conversation and Safe, Smart Kids

The primary role of the Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS) is to provide trauma-informed counselling to people who have been affected by sexual harm in Tasmania. SASS works to prevent this harm by running education and training programs in schools, workplaces and community spaces. The programs employ a rights-based approach, which emphasises the right to great relationships, safe intimacy and connection for all people.

The Safe, Smart Kids workshop is run in primary schools as early as Grade 3. While it does not address sex and intimacy directly, it lays important foundations for future sex education by educating children about gender roles, consent and what safety does and does not feel like. Throughout these conversations, SASS facilitators use positive reinforcement to emphasise their participants' right to safety and bodily autonomy.

The Consent is a Conversation workshop is run with high school students and builds on this by facilitating discussions about sex, intimacy and relationships. The program is underpinned by a pragmatic understanding of young Tasmanians' lives and the age in which they start entering romantic relationships and/or become sexually active. SASS facilitators create space for open and honest communication about intimacy, relationships and the notion of consenting. Crucially, by framing consenting as a verb, rather than a noun, they seek to emphasise that consent is not an object that can be 'given' or 'received': consenting is a practice that a person is either doing or not doing at any given moment.

'We really let them know what their human sexual rights are, that they have that right to great relationships, and the way to great relationships is through safe intimacy and connection, if they ever choose to do that.'

– Laura Davis, Primary Prevention Educator at SASS.

Creating leaders in the community

Recruiting public figures as role models and ambassadors is an effective way to raise awareness about violence against women and promote engagement in primary prevention work, particularly when it comes to engaging men and boys. However, organisations are also enlisting, educating and upskilling everyday Tasmanians of all genders, circumstances and social backgrounds to be leaders in the prevention of violence within their families, peer groups and local communities. A key element of this work are initiatives that address how to recognise the signs of violence or violence supportive attitudes, and safely and effectively challenge these attitudes and behaviours.

Case study: Hobart Women's Shelter – Mentors in Violence Prevention

Alongside their crucial work in crisis accommodation, Hobart Women's Shelter have facilitated the implementation of the Mentors in Violence Prevention program in communities across Tasmania. To support this, representatives from the Boston University Mentors in Violence Prevention program visited Tasmania to deliver a three-day train-the-trainer workshop with 30 local community members. Operating under the auspices of the Hobart Women's Shelter, these licensed facilitators have run workshops with 392 participants in workplaces and community spaces in almost every local council area in the State.

Mentors in Violence Prevention is a bystander intervention program that educates participants about the links between gender inequalities and violence against women, teaches participants how to recognise the signs of violence, and equips them with the tools to safely and effectively challenge these behaviours. Throughout the workshop, facilitators challenge deeply embedded biases associated with gender and violence, promoting open dialogue and personal storytelling within the group. The program uses a four-tier bystander behaviour model:

- **defusing** a situation through more subtle forms of body language (e.g. eye rolling at an offensive joke)
- **checking in** with the person who is experiencing the negative behaviour
- **calling out** the person engaging in the behaviour; and if necessary
- **reporting** the behaviour to the appropriate authorities (e.g. police, security or management at a workplace).

'It may be a very small action, but it can have significant impacts on the victim of that bullying, harassment or violence. Small actions can have big benefits.'

– Helen Hudson, Head of Policy at Hobart Women's Shelter.

Key themes from discussion on primary prevention in Tasmania

To help inform the Tasmanian Government's third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan, a discussion paper was sent out to participants prior to the event, discussions were held during the event, and post-event feedback and comments were collected via an online survey sent by Our Watch through the National Primary Prevention Hub. Participants were asked to consider the following questions across the different settings of workplaces, community and education:

1. What primary prevention activities are working in your setting? Why and in what ways are they working?
2. What are the biggest challenges or barriers to promoting cultural change and gender equality in your setting?
3. What are practical ways we can engage men in the cultural change needed for gender equality? Please include any examples from existing programs and/or proposed ideas for engaging men and/or boys.
4. Which setting/s should Tasmania focus on for driving prevention and cultural change under the next action plan and why?
5. What are the most useful enablers to support cultural change in your setting? (e.g., videos, posters, social media campaigns, events, advocates)

Making change stick: mutually reinforcing and wide-reaching approaches across different settings

- Across many settings and communities in Tasmania there are opportunities to improve the subtle ways gender inequality is perpetuated and drives violence against women. For example, in the workplace setting, a leadership team may acknowledge that gender inequality is an issue but not reflect how gender inequalities manifest within their own organisation. Similarly, school staff may inadvertently perpetuate gender stereotypes in their interactions with students.
- Primary prevention programs in education settings are critical, supported by state-wide standards of respectful relationships content and curriculum that should:
 - be rights-based and trauma-informed
 - foster open and honest communication about ethical decision making, intimacy and how to navigate consent
 - take a whole-of-school approach ([see Our Watch's education website](#))
 - be underpinned by a comprehensive professional development program for teachers, to ensure they are modelling gender equitable attitudes and behaviours.ⁱⁱ
- Programs should meet communities 'where they are at' and be tailored to specific settings and groups and be delivered by facilitators of all genders and social backgrounds.

ii For more information and guidance, see [Evidence Paper: Respectful relationships education in schools](#) and [Respectful relationships education as part of a national approach to preventing gender-based violence – a brief for policy makers](#).

- Widespread implementation of programs such as Sexual Trauma First Aid and bystander initiatives such as Mentors in Violence Prevention in workplaces and community settings will equip more Tasmanians with the tools to identify and effectively respond to violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours. These programs should involve victim-survivors in the design, implementation and evaluation phases and be delivered in partnership with established, local organisations, as they are best positioned to anticipate and fulfil the needs of their communities.

Embedding gender equality and prevention of violence against women in policy and procedures

- Embedding gender equality into organisational policy and procedures can support the broader uptake of primary prevention in all areas of society.ⁱⁱⁱ This may include:
 - removing language that reinforces the gendered drivers of violence against women from key policy and procedure documents, such as avoiding gender-exclusive terms such as ‘chairman’
 - identifying organisational activities that may implicitly or explicitly promote gender segregation and preference men and boys, such as events or networking opportunities that focus on stereotypically male dominated activities and/or held at times that are difficult for people with caring responsibilities to participate in
 - embedding gender equality and diversity into performance review, promotion and recruitment processes in systematic ways to ensure commitments to inclusive leadership
 - developing clear and comprehensive anti-discrimination and anti-violence policies and practices.
- There are opportunities for organisations across different settings to create inclusive workplaces by establishing and/or embedding cultures, policies and processes that drive gender equality. There can be resistance to changing policies and practices that aim to address the gendered drivers of violence against women and support people with diverse sexualities and gender identities. Considerations of how to address and overcome this resistance can be incorporated in the implementation of gender equality and prevention of violence against women policies and processes (see [the Prevention Handbook: Plan and prepare for negative reactions](#)).

Embedding intersectionality

- The gendered drivers of violence against women intersect with other forms of discrimination, marginalisation, privilege, and power. For example, the drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women arise and need to be understood in the context of the intersections of racism, gender inequalities and the ongoing impacts of colonisation, as outlined in [Changing the picture](#).

iii For more information on organisational development to prevent violence against women, see, for example, [National primary prevention report 2: Exploring collaboration, networks and techniques for effective practice](#).

- Organisations are moving towards an intersectional approach to primary prevention in Tasmania. There are opportunities to further support embedding an evidence-based intersectional understanding and approach, by building greater understanding and knowledge of violence experienced by the individuals and communities that have multiple and intersecting structural inequalities and discrimination (see the Prevention Handbook: How different forms of inequality contribute to violence against women). This includes:
 - the dynamics of violence experienced by LGBTQIA+ people in Tasmania and develop strategies to address it –this can be supported by national frameworks such as [Pride in prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities](#)
 - experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, as women in these communities can face additional barriers in accessing support services
 - Aboriginal women who experience increased severity and frequency of violence because of the intersection of racism, gender inequality, and intergenerational trauma due to the ongoing impacts of colonisation (see [Changing the picture](#)).

Engaging men and boys

- Engaging men and boys is critical in the long-term societal transformation required to prevent violence against women. Like all targeted prevention programs, engaging men and boys should be tailored to the community and setting they are being delivered in while grounded in evidence, such as [Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women](#). Men and boys should be involved in both the design and delivery of prevention programs. This must be in partnership with prevention organisations and/or other women’s organisations to maintain accountability to women.
- Developing and implementing programs that engage men and boys can emphasise how gender inequality negatively impacts everyone. It is vital that prevention initiatives involve activities with men and women and people of diverse backgrounds to promote empathy and understanding through, for example, activities that facilitate personal storytelling about the gendered drivers of violence.
- There can be a lack of understanding and general discomfort among many Tasmanian men and boys in recognising and addressing the gendered drivers of violence against women. This produces resistance at community, organisational and government levels and can inhibit engagement in, and effectiveness of, primary prevention initiatives. As part of the widespread implementation of primary prevention programs across education, workplace and government institutional settings that are prioritised in Tasmania, there must be an active and strategic approach to engage men and boys, representative of the different forms of discrimination, inequality, power and privilege men and boys experience.
- All programs should be strengths-based, effectively communicate the gendered drivers of violence against women, and avoid using deficit language or generalisations that may inadvertently shame or exclude men. Recruiting high-profile men as ambassadors for gender equality and violence prevention may also improve uptake in these programs. This can include men who are active in their communities, such as teachers, coaches and local community leaders, as well as politicians and professional sportspeople.

Structural change and long-term resourcing prevention of violence against women

- The social transformation needed to prevent men’s violence against women requires systematic and coordinated investment and effort from all levels of government, non-government organisations, the private sector, civil society and communities. The work that organisations are doing at the community-level must be accompanied and supported by meaningful structural and institutional change and frameworks.
- Alongside community-level education and cultural change, preventing violence against women requires:
 - strategic, long-term investment in primary prevention from all levels of government, that allows for effective evaluation to measure impact and contribute to a robust evidence base
 - the continued development of family violence policy and legislation that is equitable and accessible to people of all social backgrounds
 - a continued commitment to embedding gender equality and diversity into government policies and procedures as a systematic mechanism for achieving more inclusive and sustained political leadership.
- Local councils have an important role to play in the prevention of violence against women and creating structures to drive change. Resistance to embedding gender equality in local council health and wellbeing agendas can lead to attempts to shift responsibility to state government for community-level prevention initiatives. Working with councils to overcome resistance and support gender equality initiatives is an important element of achieving the prevention of violence against women in the state.
- Participants expressed that more funding is required for primary prevention in Tasmania to ensure the longevity of programming and ensure capacity for organisations to implement effective and longer-term prevention initiatives and evaluation processes.
- Change is required across levels of society including within parliaments across Australia. Recent reviews including [Set the Standard: Report on the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces](#) and the [Review of harassment in SA parliamentary workplace](#) outline the gendered barriers to participating in the political system, and the cultural change required to advancing equality and address the drivers of violence against women across Australian parliaments.

‘We’re at a really pivotal moment, both nationally and as a state. Next year, we’ll have a new national plan to address violence against women, and of course there will be a new Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan for Tasmania. We have a tremendous opportunity right now to think about what we’ve learned in our practice, what we’ve learned in our own experiences, and really contribute that into an integrated national approach, and an integrated strategy for Tasmanians.’

– Kelsey Paske, Our Watch Senior Advisor Tasmania.

Endnotes

- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2016). [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: First Results](#).
- 2 Council of the Ageing (COTA) Tasmania. (2018). [Embracing the Future: Tasmania's Ageing Profile Part I](#).
- 3 Australian Bureau of Statics. (2017). [2016 Censes QuickStats, Tasmania](#).
- 4 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2020). [National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2019—Tasmania](#) [fact sheet].