Men in focus

Practice guide

Addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women

Contents

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of Country

Our Watch acknowledges and pays our respects to the traditional owners of the land on which our office is located, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. As a national organisation we also acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of country across Australia and pay our respects to them, their cultures and their Elders past and present.

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Our Watch

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Executive summary

Preventing men's violence against women

Men's violence against women occurs across all levels of society, in all communities and across cultures. While not all men perpetrate violence against women, all men can – and ideally should – be part of ending men's violence against women. Women have been leading initiatives to address gender inequality and prevent men's violence against women for a long time, and there is certainly room for more men to join these efforts. While there are things we can all do individually to address gender inequality, long-term collective action is required to challenge and transform the norms, structures and practices that reinforce gender inequality and lead to men's violence against women occurring at the extraordinarily high rates it currently does.

You may have ideas about what needs to be done to challenge and transform gender inequality and be seeking information on best practice approaches to help guide your work. This guide will assist you by offering strategies to help inform initiatives that address masculinities and engage men and boys in the prevention of men's violence against women.

Background

This practice guide builds on the primary prevention frameworks established by Our Watch, including *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia*, *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children* and *Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women*. In particular, the guiding principles outlined in *Men in focus* have here been translated into recommendations for practitioners, educators and other advocates planning new primary prevention initiatives. Additionally, if you are already doing prevention work, you can use the principles to critically appraise your current approach.

The guiding principles are introduced through a range of practitioner reflections, case studies and examples of promising practice from the front lines of prevention initiatives. Particular challenges and key enabling factors associated with the work are explored. Through sharing these insights, we can learn from one another and build on the emerging evidence base of what works (and what doesn't).

What's in the guide?

The **Introduction** of this guide outlines the current context of gender inequality and the gendered nature of violence and the gendered drivers of that violence. While these details may be familiar to some readers, they are framed here to provide examples of how this information can be presented with a focus on addressing masculinities. Practice approaches are presented that aim to strengthen motivation, build rapport and activate men to challenge and transform the social norms, structures and practices that underpin gender inequality and drive men's violence against women. Backlash and resistance are inevitable responses to this work and suggestions are provided throughout the guide to assist you to plan for them and address them confidently.

Following the Introduction, this guide is broken into four key sections:

- **Section 1: The guiding principles in practice** introduces the guiding principles, with examples of how these have effectively been interwoven into existing initiatives.
- **Section 2: Addressing gender inequality and the gendered drivers of violence** explores some of the core concepts and issues related to gender inequality and men's violence against women that prevention practitioners address in their work. Examples of activities that address these topics are provided, along with further resources for anyone wanting more background information.
- **Section 3: Designing initiatives and connecting with your audience** outline the core skills required to adequately prepare yourself to do this work, to maintain your practice and to develop and deliver prevention initiatives. Links are provided to examples of prevention initiatives and resources relevant to specific settings.
- Lastly, key issues for further consideration are provided.

Intersectional approaches across all levels of society

We know that prevention efforts must be reinforced at multiple levels of society over prolonged periods of time for substantial, long-term change to occur. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Masculinities are diverse in that different men have different relationships to power and privilege depending on other aspects of their identity and social location. Some men hold significant power and privilege, while others experience inequality and discrimination such as racism, classism, homophobia and ableism. This means some men will have concurrent experiences of both privilege and oppression. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, LGBTIQ people, people with a disability and people living in rural and remote locations experience particular and additional discrimination and marginalisation.

Men can have their own experiences of violence and traumatisation. Therefore, prevention initiatives working with men must adopt targeted, diverse and intersectional approaches that reflect the diversity of the men and the communities that we do this work with. Culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches to primary prevention are critically important in effectively, meaningfully and respectfully engaging with men from diverse backgrounds, with diverse life experiences.

Practitioners and contributors to prevention work are encouraged to develop and expand diverse and creative approaches to addressing masculinities and engaging men in primary prevention efforts. The more that these efforts are undertaken and evaluated, the more potential there is to expand the emerging evidence base of what works. It is equally important to share what doesn't work as well as the challenges practitioners encounter along the way. All of this knowledge will help to refine our approaches and strengthen our work in this important and timely field of practice.

As the reader of this guide, we honour your own lived experience and the unique knowledge that you bring from the various communities within which you live, work and socialise. We invite you to combine your knowledge of how to constructively engage with various communities with the evidence-based principles and practice wisdom presented in this guide, tailoring an effective and unique approach that is most likely to be effective with your audiences.

Effective practice checklist

The table below acts as an overview of the key components of effective primary prevention initiatives, and a summary of the different aspects of primary prevention work that are explored in this guide. You can use it as a checklist to reflect on which aspects of the work you have already addressed and whether there are any areas requiring more attention.

Stage of work	Elements of practice	A plan is in place for addressing this and incorporating it into our work

Preparing myself to do prevention work	• Fostering self-awareness
	
	• Planning for critically reflective practice/ supervision
	
	• Planning for practitioner care and collective care
	
	• Training and professional development
	
	• Knowing my stuff
	
	  – Socially dominant forms of masculinity and the gender binary
	
	  – The problem of men's violence against women and its many different manifestations and impacts
	
	  – The gendered drivers of men's violence against women, the essential actions to address them, and the reinforcing factors that can increase the frequency or severity of this violence
	
	  – Primary prevention skills
	
	  – The guiding principles
	
	    › intersectional approaches
	
	    › gender transformative approaches
	
	    › maintaining accountability to women
	
	    › strengths-based approaches
	
	    › solutions across all levels of society
	
	  – Familiarity with Our Watch frameworks – *Change the story, Changing the picture*, the *Prevention Handbook* website and *Men in focus*
	
	• Planning for dealing with backlash and resistance	

Stage of work	Elements of practice	A plan is in place for addressing this and incorporating it into our work
Steps to maintaining practice	• Professional development • Supervision and debriefing • Practitioner care • Collective care	

Developing an initiative	• Consulting, collaborating and co-designing
	  – Incorporating the guiding principles
	  – Getting to know your audience/organisation/ community group
	    › determining preparedness for change
	    › attending to OH&S and legal requirements
	  – Dealing with backlash and resistance
	    › a plan for addressing potential risks
	  – Partnering with other organisations
	  – Maintaining accountability
	  – Defining aims and objectives
	    › solutions across all levels of society
	  – Determining the proven and promising techniques your initiative will use
	  – Developing settings-specific, inclusive, relevant and accessible messaging and language
	    › intersectional
	    › gender transformative
	    › accountable
	    › strengths-based
	  – Developing evaluation and learning plan
	    › data sovereignty
	    › ethics
	  – Planning sustainability of initiative
	    › plans for following up
	    › plans for long-term approaches	

Stage of work	Elements of practice	A plan is in place for addressing this and incorporating it into our work

Delivering the initiative	• Processes in place to respond to disclosures
	
	• Providing relevant referral options for participants in your initiative
	
	• Working with strengths-based approaches
	   – building rapport, motivation, working with emotions, building empathy
	
	• Working with trauma-informed approaches
	
	• Working with intersectional and gender transformative approaches
	   – incorporating different and accessible methods of communication
	
	• Providing ideas for clear actions that can be taken to address gender inequality and the gendered drivers of violence	

Evaluating, learning and disseminating knowledge	• A plan to follow for evaluation and learning • A plan for recording the outcomes of your work • A plan for reporting on the work undertaken • A plan for disseminating the knowledge acquired through your processes • A plan for feeding learnings back into the prevention planning cycle	

Introduction

The problem of men's violence against women has been well-documented and the women's movement, governments, police and justice systems, communities, organisations and individuals have been responding to this problem for decades.[1] *Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women* (*Men in focus*) highlights the need for further development and expansion of activities that effectively engage men and boys in the primary prevention of men's violence against women. It stresses the importance of both a conceptual focus on men and masculinities, to build a deeper understanding of the links to violence against women, and a practical focus on engaging men and boys in prevention efforts.

This guide builds on the findings of *Men in focus* and offers practical advice, information and tips on how to bring the evidence to life in practice. It invites you to consider the different ways that masculinities are expressed and contribute to the multiple forms of violence experienced by women, their children, some men and non-binary people. There is not one way of being a man or expressing masculinity and this guide acknowledges that. It recognises that there can be hierarchies among men and some expressions of masculinity are *socially dominant* over other expressions of masculinity. Basic tools for developing and undertaking initiatives that address the links between men, masculinities and violence against women are provided. As the reader, you are encouraged to reflect on how you could incorporate these ideas and deliver the work in diverse settings.

This guide was developed through extensive consultation with an advisory group made up of practitioners, and through peer review by academics from relevant fields. Representatives of both groups came from a diverse array of professional, community, academic and institutional settings. In this way, the guide aims to be relatable to practitioners working in a variety of contexts, with diverse population groups at different levels of society.

The guiding principles from *Men in focus* are outlined in Part 1 of this guide. These principles reflect the key elements to consider when approaching this work to ensure it is evidence-based, intersectional, accountable and will lead to transformative change and learning as you work with men and masculinities in prevention. This guide also provides examples of how the principles are applied to practice. In addition, it offers examples of key topics to address when working with men, including a range of suggested activities and associated resources for further exploration. If you are unfamiliar with any aspect of the principles, refer to the *Men in focus* evidence review and summary document for a deeper exploration of these principles and where they come from.

Language used in this guide

Different terms are used throughout this guide to describe men's violence against women, including 'men's violence against women', 'gender-based violence' and 'family and domestic violence'. While these terms are not always interchangeable, there is crossover and they are used at different times to describe different aspects of the problem this guide seeks to address.

Binary and heteronormative language is often used in this guide. This does not mean that ending men's violence against women and ending violence against people of all genders and sexualities are mutually exclusive initiatives. The drivers of violence for LGBTIQ people are likely to be similar to those experienced by heterosexual and cisgender women, in that they include rigid gender norms, and different in that LGBTIQ people experience very specific negative impacts as a result of cisnormativity and heteronormativity.[2] Therefore, there is much crossover and room for solidarity in the work of primary prevention of men's violence against women and prevention of violence against LGBTIQ people. At the same time, there is some divergence that warrants specialised approaches led by organisations and communities more experienced in working in each respective context. While this guide focuses on addressing men's violence against women, frequent reference is made to broadening prevention approaches to challenge and transform other forms of discrimination and oppression in addition to gender inequality.

This guide refers to 'socially dominant forms of masculinity', 'masculine stereotypes' and 'gender stereotypes' and doesn't use the term 'toxic masculinity'. This decision is based on the findings in both *Men in focus* and VicHealth's *Framing masculinity: Message guide* and highlights a balanced approach between naming the problem and building rapport with men so that they are motivated and engaged in doing this work. Some discourses suggest that we move away from a binary notion of gender and invite men to loosen their attachments to notions of masculinity altogether.[3] These approaches needn't be thought of as mutually exclusive. Beginning with a focus on freedom from unhealthy masculine stereotypes can support a process of disruption that eventually moves away from binary notions of gender in the longer term.

Reference 1: Socially dominant forms of masculinity

> Dominant 'forms and patterns' of masculinity are the particular attitudes, norms, stereotypes, roles and practices that men are expected to support, conform to, or participate in. They operate at and across structural, systemic, organisational, community, interpersonal and individual levels of society. These socially dominant forms of masculinity are not always harmful (or toxic) in themselves, and/or a problem in all contexts. However, they can help to maintain gender inequality and create or give legitimacy to the power and privilege that men as a group hold over women as a group, and that men hold in their personal relationships with women. At their most harmful, these dominant forms of masculinity help drive men's violence against women.[4]

Personalised pronouns such as 'we', 'us' and 'our' are used in this guide to explicitly personalise the work and to place the author and the contributing voices into the narrative. We too are part of the doing of this work. 'They/we' is sometimes used to acknowledge the readership of this guide and the considerations we must make regarding our complicity in the structures, norms and practices of patriarchy. This guide will address the self-awareness and critical reflection required of practitioners in this work, especially men, white people, heterosexual people, able-bodied people, etc., to challenge and transform the structures, norms and practices of inequality and discrimination in our society.

Further resources 1: Language used in prevention work

- Safe and Equal – Key terms in the prevention of violence against women
- Gender Equity Victoria – Glossary of key terms
- VicHealth – *Framing gender equality: Message guide*
- Michael Salter – The problem with a fight against toxic masculinity

How to use this guide

This guide offers practical tips and insights to support practitioners to reflect, to refine their knowledge and to guide their prevention practice. This guide can be followed chronologically, or you can navigate directly to specific sections that are of interest to you. These may correspond with areas of practice you find challenging or complex, or that you wish to develop further. You can use the guide to build an initiative from the ground up, or as a tool to assist with critical reflection on an existing initiative that you wish to develop or appraise.

All links to information published by people and organisations other than Our Watch were correct as of February 2022. Please do a thorough check to ensure the suitability of the information in external links before you use it in your work.

Practical examples

Readers of this guide are invited to think about how they can combine the information provided here with their own insights and expertise to create initiatives unique to their particular settings. To support this, it contains:

- links to work being undertaken across a variety of settings to help guide the development and implementation of similar primary prevention initiatives
- detail on areas fundamental to prevention work that are less well documented elsewhere.

Creative and locally relevant adaptations and approaches suitable to specific settings are encouraged.

Break-out boxes

Break-out boxes throughout the guide present insights and reflections, case studies and practice examples. They explore tensions and offer suggestions. These are informed by the experiences and contributions of those working in the field to end men's violence against women. These break-out boxes represent the diverse knowledge that is used in this complex and nuanced field of work.

The different coloured break-out boxes used throughout the guide correspond to different themes:

Practitioner reflection: Vignettes, reflections and advice	**Suggested activities:** Ideas for activities to facilitate change work	**Further resources:** Links to resources, readings and examples of other work
Case studies: Descriptions of existing programs	**References:** Direct quotes or explanations from practitioners, academics, theorists, groups or programs	**Participant feedback:** Quotes from participants in existing prevention programs

Prevention practitioners rely on a combination of theory, evidence derived from the trial and error of practitioners who have documented their work, the practitioner's own practice-based insights and their lived experiences. Intersectional approaches must be incorporated in order to account for different approaches to knowledge formation and different ways of collectively identifying and naming problems and agreeing on their solutions.

Building on evidence

In addition to *Men in focus*, this guide builds on the Our Watch frameworks *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*[5] (*Change the story*); *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: How to Change the story*[6] (the Handbook); and *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children*[7] (*Changing the picture*). A level of prior knowledge of these frameworks is assumed and concepts from these and other relevant documents will be referred to at times. If you wish to engage with the conceptual material in more depth, you are encouraged to refer to these other documents, and links are provided where relevant.

Further resources 2: Evidence-informed approaches

Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) – What is an evidence-informed approach to practice and why is it important?

Who this guide is for

This guide is for practitioners, educators and other contributors to the work of addressing masculinities and engaging men and boys in the prevention of men's violence against women. It is not exclusively for working with men or boys or in 'men-only' spaces. Those undertaking prevention initiatives will often work with mixed gender audiences. This guide suggests ways of challenging and transforming the problematic impact on people of patriarchal and capitalist structures and processes. It explores what we can all do together to shift the harmful impacts that gender, and particularly socially dominant forms of masculinity, can have on our systems, institutions, communities, organisations and relationships. It offers strengths-based approaches promoting positive aspects of male identity and male peer relations that can help to shift systems, institutions and social norms.

As the reader of this guide, you are evidently passionate and motivated to advocate for change in your community. You might want to initiate institutional and policy change within your workplace. You might want to run community development projects with your local sporting club or place of worship. More broadly, you might want to advocate for structural, political and social reforms. You may be experienced in doing this or other social change work, or you may be an emerging practitioner in this field. You might want to do something to address the problem of gender inequality and men's violence against women, but not know where to begin.

This guide presents theory, ideas and suggestions to guide practitioners at all levels of experience. You can spend more or less time in different areas of the guide, depending on your particular interests, level of expertise and confidence.

In this work, the personal is very much political. Your gender and sexual and cultural identity will inform your own lived experiences and bring strengths and insights to the way you do this work. Your identity and life experiences will also bring some constraints, assumptions and biases that will need to be acknowledged and attended to. Who you are will impact on how you do the work and how audiences receive you. Some relevant reflections are provided below and explored further in Part 1 of this guide under 'Reflect on your own conscious and unconscious biases' and in Part 3 under 'Preparing yourself to do this work'.

Practitioner reflection 1: Considerations for practitioners who are men

> It has been observed that many men doing prevention work are straight, white, able-bodied and middle-class. Gay, immigrant, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, disabled, culturally marginalised and working-class men are less represented in the workforce. It is therefore important for men doing this work to consciously remain accountable to specific cultural, religious, Indigenous, working class and immigrant groups, intersectional feminists and decolonisers.
>
> Activist scholar (he/him)

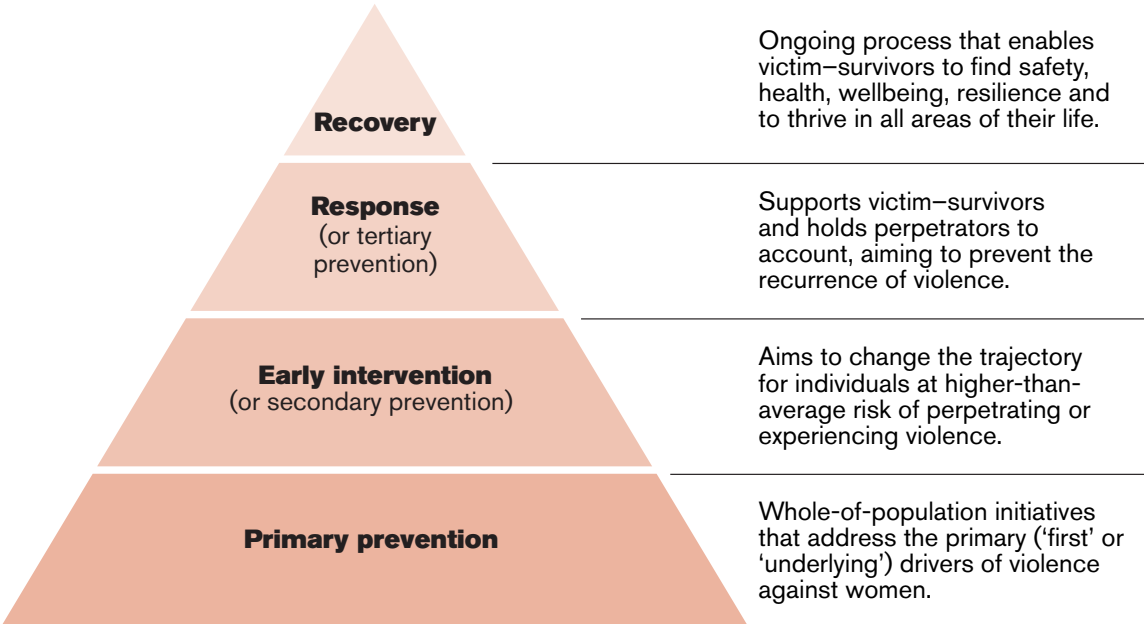**Practitioner reflection 2: Why I do this work**

I do this work because we must. This isn't just about the horrific reality of women being murdered, [though] we know that sure is motivation enough. But this is also about how many boys grow up to believe that violence is manly and required, that women need to protect themselves from or be protected by men. That being a man can mean being unable to control your emotions or behaviours. That at times, some men will be dangerous to others through no fault of their own and that's just how it is. That a man is not accountable to others, a lone wolf, someone who isn't 'naturally' gentle. None of this is ok and it's our problem, every single one of us. We have to step up and un-gender ourselves every day and be fearless in our work together to end the current world we are offering all the little humans … and ourselves.

Prevention manager (she/her)

What is primary prevention?

Primary prevention of violence against women refers to work that aims to stop violence against women before it starts. This involves challenging and transforming the structures, systems and social norms that uphold and entrench gender inequality, which creates the context within which men's violence against women occurs. It is distinct from secondary or tertiary interventions that work with groups of people identified as being at greater risk of committing or experiencing violence, or who have already perpetrated or experienced violence. Primary prevention of men's violence against women is referred to in different ways throughout this document as either 'prevention work', 'primary prevention' or 'the work'. Figure 1 on the following page delineates some of the differences between primary, secondary and tertiary prevention and responses.

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

Recovery	Ongoing process that enables victim–survivors to find safety, health, wellbeing, resilience and to thrive in all areas of their life.
Response (or tertiary prevention)	Supports victim–survivors and holds perpetrators to account, aiming to prevent the recurrence of violence.
Early intervention (or secondary prevention)	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 against women.

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*.

For more information, see Our Watch's *Prevention Handbook* website – <u>Understand the primary prevention approach</u>.

When working with men, it is important to delineate between *primary prevention initiatives* and other work such as men's health and wellbeing initiatives that address issues relating to gender construction but not gender inequality and men's violence against women. Whether or not an initiative can be classed as primary prevention depends on the extent to which it follows the <u>guiding principles</u> set out in this guide, and incorporates the essential actions to addressing the <u>gendered drivers of violence</u>. For example, an important question to ask would be: does the initiative take an intersectional approach to addressing complex, intersecting forms of discrimination, inequality, privilege and power?

Gender inequality and the drivers of men's violence against women

Gender inequality

Gender inequality refers to the unequal value afforded to men and women and the unequal distribution of power, resources and opportunity between them and the hierarchy this creates. Gender inequality has historical roots in laws, policies and social norms constraining the rights and opportunities of women. While some of these structures and norms have changed, others continue in formal and informal ways. These include social norms such as the belief that women are best suited to care for children; practices such as differences in childrearing practices for boys and girls; and structures such as pay differences between men and women.[8]

Gender inequality is also underpinned by cisnormativity and heteronormativity – social perspectives and practices that promote heterosexuality as the 'normal' and preferred sexual orientation and cisgender as the normal and preferred gender identity. These create binary and hierarchical ideas and practices of gender and sexuality and suggest there is something wrong with LGBTIQ bodies, identities and relationships.[9] In this way, gender inequality negatively affects women and LGBTIQ communities.

Further, gender inequality can never be disentangled from other social injustices, such as racism, ableism and classism, as well as bi-, trans-, and homophobia. Gender inequality always intersects with these other forms of structural and systemic discrimination and oppression, meaning gender might not necessarily be the most significant site of oppression, and women will have very different experiences of gender inequality depending on their race, class, disability, migration status, sexuality, faith and age. It also means that different men will have different experiences of male privilege, related to social injustices they may experience.

Reference 2: Examples of how gender inequality is experienced

- The distribution of gendered roles in domestic relationships, child-rearing and other unpaid domestic labour, and also in professional settings. The low social value assigned to this work.
- Women's lack of representation and control of decision-making processes in political and public institutions and corporate organisations
- Patriarchal structures of health and social services and women's lack of control over decisions affecting their own bodies
- The gender pay gap, women's poverty and homelessness
- Gender-based violence
- Sexism and gender stereotypes (which affect people of all genders in different ways).

Further resources highlighting gender inequality in Australia

- ANROWS – National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) 2017. While Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality are improving, there are some concerning trends. Additionally, this research emphasises the links between structural inequality and inequitable attitudes.
- Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) – Australia's Gender Pay Gap Statistics 2021 and Data Explorer and Gender equality in Australia – A Guide to Gender Equality in 2020
- Equality Rights Alliance – Gender equality In Australia
- Primer – It's not just equal pay. Here's what else we need
- VicHealth – Gender equality health and wellbeing
- Australian Human Rights Commission – Face the facts: Gender equality 2018

Gendered drivers of men's violence against women and essential actions to address them

While there is no single cause of men's violence against women, international evidence, as outlined in *Change the story*, demonstrates that higher levels of violence against women are consistently associated with lower levels of gender equality in both public life and personal relationships. Gender inequality is the social context in which violence against women arises. The social context for violence against women is also characterised by many other intersecting forms of inequality and oppression. *Change the story* outlines four key expressions of gender inequality that have been found to predict and/or drive this violence. These drivers are:

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 stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity.
4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.[10]

Four reinforcing factors are also outlined in *Change the story* that are not predictors of violence in themselves, but can interact with the four gendered drivers to increase the prevalence and the severity of men's violence against women. It is important that this nuance is addressed in awareness-raising initiatives, in order to dispel myths or misconceptions about what drives men's violence against women. The four reinforcing factors are:

1. Condoning of violence in general.
2. Experience of, and exposure to, violence.
3. Factors that weaken prosocial behaviour.
4. Backlash and resistance to prevention and gender equality efforts.

Figure 2: The gendered drivers and factors that reinforce violence against women

SOCIAL CONTEXT

Gender inequality and other forms of **oppression**

Driver 1.
Condoning of violence against women

Driver 2.
Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life

Driver 3.
Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity

Driver 4.
Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control

REINFORCING
Factor 1.
Condoning of violence in general

REINFORCING
Factor 2.
Experience of, and exposure to, violence

REINFORCING
Factor 3.
Factors that weaken prosocial behaviour

REINFORCING
Factor 4.
Resistance and backlash to prevention and gender equality efforts

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*.

Refer to alternative text for Figure 2 on page 140.

Men in focus builds on the findings of *Change the story* to highlight the connections between men's rigid adherence to *socially* dominant forms of masculinity and men's violence against women. Studies highlight that a significant proportion of men and boys adhere to more traditional attitudes regarding masculinity and have gender inequitable and sexist attitudes.[11] These attitudes increase the likelihood that men will perpetrate or excuse violence against women, and will also be less likely to intervene when other men are displaying sexist or violent behaviour.

This highlights the need for prevention efforts that involve men and boys to focus on challenging and shifting dominant norms and ideas of masculinity and the associated attitudes. Figure 3 shows the essential actions that address the gendered drivers of violence against women, and the social context in which this violence occurs. This guide provides information on how prevention initiatives can and should address the gendered drivers while incorporating the guiding principles to address masculinities and work with men.

Figure 3: Eight essential actions to address the gendered drivers of violence and change the social context in which it occurs

ACTION 1. ESSENTIAL
Challenge the condoning of violence against women

ACTION 2. ESSENTIAL
Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships

ACTION 3. ESSENTIAL
Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes

ACTION 4. ESSENTIAL
Support men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships

ACTION 5. ESSENTIAL
Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life

ACTION 6. ESSENTIAL
Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice

ACTION 7. ESSENTIAL
Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change

ACTION 8. ESSENTIAL
Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys, in public and private spheres

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*.

Refer to alternative text for Figure 3 on page 141.

Further resources 3: Gendered drivers of violence

- Safe and Equal – tip sheets on unpacking the gendered drivers of violence against women
- Our Watch has videos related to the gendered drivers
- Our Watch – *Changing the picture* frames the gendered drivers through the lens of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Why men and masculinities?

Men

Violence is gendered. 95% of violence experienced by people of any gender is perpetrated by men.[12] While not all men perpetrate violence, the attitudes, actions and inactions of some men are a significant part of the problem. Men participate in and benefit from patriarchal structures, norms and practices that drive gender inequality and men's violence against women. Men remain complicit in the problem when they/we do nothing to challenge and transform gender inequality and sexism and continue to benefit from it.

Men, of course, cannot be generalised into one category, as all men do not have equal access to power. Race, class, education, sexuality, disability, migration status and other sites of both advantage and oppression affect a man's access to power.[13] Refer to the exploration in Part 1 of intersectional approaches to this work.

Gender and masculinities

There are many ways of 'being a man', which is why we use 'masculinities' as a plural. The attributes that men express, behaviours they enact and roles that they perform in families and in society vary across race, culture, age, class and time. One man may express his masculinity in different ways depending on the context he is in – for example, at the pub with friends, at work, at family gatherings, etc. While there isn't one way of being a man, there are more powerful and dominant forms of masculinity that many men feel pressure to conform to and uphold.[14] Many 'masculine' attributes are held in opposition to 'feminine' or 'womanly' traits and behaviours. 'Masculine' traits are elevated and perceived to be greater, more powerful and more important than 'feminine' traits and behaviours – for example, rational versus emotional, strong versus gentle, dominant versus submissive, virile versus demure. This exemplifies the hierarchical nature of gender.

Suggested activity 1: Subjectivity of masculinity

Ask a man/men a series of reflective questions: *When do you most feel like a man? What is the context and the setting? Do you always feel like that? Do you move in and out of that feeling?*

The more awareness a man has, the more he can ask himself: *Why do I feel the need to affirm the sense of being a man? What does that mean?*

In certain areas of society, women are treated as inferior because 'feminine' traits are valued less than 'masculine' traits. Likewise, men who express more 'feminine' traits can be put down or praised, depending on the context. For example, a man performing domestic chores or childcare tasks can be belittled, or they can be celebrated in a way that a woman doing the same tasks is unlikely to be – as when a father is asked by a stranger if they are 'giving mum a break' when out with their child, or told what a great dad or partner he is, or 'How lucky she is to have a guy like you'.

Two terms important in gender equality work are briefly introduced below – the gender binary and hegemonic masculinity.

Reference 3: Hegemonic masculinity and subordinated masculinities

'Hegemonic masculinity' describes a dominant form of masculinity – one which establishes and maintains men's power within the gender hierarchy in any given society or time. This power is maintained both through overt force and top-down methods, as well as through more subtle means such as ideologies, social norms and values.[15] The current dominant and most 'acceptable' attributes associated with being a man in Australia include being white, cisgendered, heterosexual, able-bodied, educated and financially successful. Some of the most 'acceptable' behaviours for men include being dominant and in control, being strong, acting tough, being stoic, and being hypersexual.[16] There is pressure on men to support and conform to dominant ideas and stereotypes of masculinity, even though the majority of men are unable to live up to these standards some or all of the time.

Aboriginal men, gay men, men of colour and men with disability are examples of *'subordinated' masculinity — one that suffers political, economic and social discrimination within the media, the law and other institutions. Heterosexual men may also be subordinated and 'expelled from the circle of legitimacy', either because they display 'feminine' characteristics or actively shun the current hegemonic patterns.*[17]

Further reading

Robert Innes and Kim Anderson – Indigenous men and masculinities: Legacies, identities and regeneration

Reference 4: The gender binary

Essentialist and binary notions of gender state that people can only be one of two genders and that their gender is dependent on the sex organs they were born with. Gender, though, is not preordained by biology – it is a social construct that is not universally accepted or recognised throughout the world, or throughout human history. What it means to be a 'man' or a 'woman', and what are deemed acceptable and unacceptable behaviours and attributes, are perpetuated by systems, structures and social norms. Masculinity is one construction of gender that explains a set of behaviours, attributes and roles that boys and men are taught to display and aspire to. Masculinity does not exist without femininity in this system of gender relations.[18]

Discussions around gender can sometimes exclude or erase the experiences of genderqueer/non-binary or transgender people. Challenging conventional gender distinctions is an essential part of the movement towards gender equality. It is important for us all to remain open to continually improving our understanding of gender as a social category and respectful in any conversations we have about gender identity.[19]

[T]he existence of LGB people raises the possibility that men and women may or may not behave in stereotypically masculine and feminine ways, and can be attracted to people of more than one sex or gender. Here, like trans and gender diverse people, LGB people challenge the assumptions that underpin a binary, heterogendered model of the relationship between sex, gender and sexuality. In doing so, they threaten to expose the patriarchal and heterosexist underpinnings of family violence that link violence against women and their children, and violence against LGBTI people.[20]

Further reading and resources

- Alok Vaid-Menon – discussing their book and what moving beyond the gender binary means and their Instagram account for frequently updated explanations of relevant concepts
- John Stoltenberg (author of *Refusing to Be a Man*) – Why human oppression happens
- Starlady – The Real Queen of the Desert (TedX Talk)
- Throughout human history, hundreds of different cultures have recognised more than two genders. Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) – An interactive gender diverse map of the world

Practitioner reflection 3: The restrictive limits of the gender binary

As a cis-gendered, heterosexual man who has always been 'a bit different', I've found the prevailing and dominant forms of masculinity that surround me in Australia to be extremely limiting and at times even violently reinforced – don't cry, don't hug, don't show any affection or warmth to other men (unless you're drunk), don't show vulnerability, don't even show love for your mum too publicly! That's why I deeply appreciate the positive and radical influence that LGBTIQ people have on challenging and transforming the gender binary and the rigid gender roles that go along with that. Their struggle liberates me and gives me more room to breathe and to be who I want to be, free from the expectations of rigid gender roles. That's why I always want to be a better ally, to return the favour and reinforce all of their hard work and keep the work going.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Further reading on related subject matter

- Dean Spade – Writes about how creating more room for gender and sexually variant people (in our work and in our movements) shakes the foundations of patriarchy and makes more room for all of us, in *Normal life: Administrative violence, critical trans politics and the limits of law*
- ALIGN – *Gender, power and progress: How norms change*
- Karla Elliott – *Young men navigating contemporary masculinities*

The 'Man Box' is a concept commonly used in work with men and boys. Some background information on the man box is provided below.

Reference 5: The Man Box

The concept of the 'Man Box' was originally developed by Paul Kivel in the early 1980s and was further elaborated on by Tony Porter from the 1990s onwards, both of them activists working to end men's use of violence in the USA.[21] Promundo led research into the Man Box in the UK, US and Mexico in 2017 and more recently, in 2018, collaborated with the Jesuit Social Services here in Australia to release findings from *The Man Box* research in 2018 and *Unpacking the Man Box* in 2020, surveying 1,000 young Australian men aged 18 to 30.[22]

The Man Box refers to a set of beliefs that places pressure on men to be and to act in a certain way. Research found attitudes within the Man Box to be organised under seven pillars – self-sufficiency, acting tough, physical attractiveness, rigid gender roles, heterosexuality and homophobia, hypersexuality, and aggression and control.[23]

The 2020 *Man Box* report found that young Australian men's belief in rigid masculine stereotypes has a stronger impact on whether they will use violence, sexually harass women, or experience mental ill-health themselves than other factors including their education levels, where they live or their cultural heritage.[24]

While the Man Box can be an effective way to engage men and build rapport, practitioners should be careful not to take a 'men will benefit' approach that describes how sexism harms them and speaks to their self-interest.[25] Even if it is somewhat true that sexism harms men, there are also many benefits afforded to men who stay in the Man Box, and therefore an approach that uses self-interest as a motivator is likely to fail when men realise the privileges they must relinquish in order to strive for gender equality.[26]

For more information:

- Equimundo Manhood 2.0 – curriculum for promoting a gender-equitable future of manhood. This includes ideas for how to run activities on gender, the Man Box, emotions, relationships, sex and health
- Jesuit Social Services – The Man Box

Case study 1: The Men's Project: Using attitudinal data to inform prevention practice

Jesuit Social Services established The Men's Project, drawing on our commitment to support boys and men to live respectful, accountable and fulfilling lives free from violence and other harmful behaviours. In collaboration with Promundo Global, we embarked on Man Box research to understand the associations between rigid adherence to stereotypical masculine norms and a range of behaviours including the use of violence.

Our research found that too many young Australian men are constrained by stereotypical ideas about what it means to be a 'real man'. These ideas included: men should not ask for help for their personal problems; guys should act tough even when they feel nervous or scared; men should be the primary provider for the household; gay guys are not 'real men'; a 'real man' should have as many sexual partners as he can; and men should use violence to get respect if necessary.

Drawing on the Man Box research, our Modelling Respect and Equality Program builds the capacity of people who work with men and boys every day – teachers, social workers, faith leaders and early childhood educators – to decrease rigid adherence to these attitudes. This process starts with self-reflection – what do these influencers think about the Man Box attitudes? This reflection is used to tailor program content.

Schools undertake an Adolescent Man Box survey to gain understanding of the level of students' perception of social pressures and their personal endorsement of masculine norms. The four pillars of masculinity (the Adolescent Man Box rules) are age appropriate and reflect the following values: constant efforts to be manly; emotional restriction; heterosexism; and social teasing. In addition to understanding attitudes related to masculinity, the survey asks questions about school performance, mental health, the use of violence, risk-taking behaviours and beliefs regarding appropriate behaviour in relationships. Partners on this work to date include Edmund Rice Education Australia and the Islamic Council of Victoria. Intersectional approaches are incorporated into this program through our collaborations, through co-design processes and by aggregating data based on demographics including Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identification, sexuality and religious affiliation.

Findings from the survey inform curriculum development tailored to the unique needs of each school community. Context-specific data facilitates an intersectional approach to curriculum development and differs from standardised curriculum that assumes what students think. Anonymised and aggregated results from the survey are used to engage students, raising awareness regarding the beliefs of their peers. For instance, the perception of social pressures to conform to the adolescent Man Box attitudes are almost always greater than personal endorsements of these attitudes. All surveys undertaken serve as an important baseline with the potential to track attitudes and behaviours over time as part of evaluation.

Prevention manager (he/him)

Addressing masculinities and engaging men

Contributors to gender equality and primary prevention work often say, 'How do we get more men involved in this work? We can't do it without them.' This guide provides some approaches to increasing engagement of men and boys in prevention efforts. From presenting the magnitude of the problem of men's violence against women, its causes and impacts, and the steps that can be taken to prevent it, men are asked whether they care enough to engage critically with this issue.[27] While men alive today did not create patriarchal structures that entrench gender inequality, they/we are complicit in maintaining these structures.[28] This guide gives examples of strengths-based approaches within frameworks for effective engagement. It suggests ways to build empathy and motivation, to invite men and boys to take action in prevention efforts.

Practitioner reflection 4: #YesAllMen

While not all men perpetrate violence, all men do play a role in upholding the systems and structures of patriarchy and the social norms that help create the context in which gender-based violence occurs. Therefore #allmen have a role to play in changing our society to make it safer and more equal for people of all genders.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Below are some comments made by men who participated in a primary prevention initiative. These comments demonstrate the power of this work, and the challenging, yet positive impact it can have on men's ability to be gender equality advocates.

Participant feedback 1: In response to the question 'Was there something in this program that prompted you to think differently?'

[Participant feedback]: I've been trying to prioritise learning about issues by listening to the experiences from the women in my life without expecting them to educate me. I have also been trying to consume women's media more. I saw a post a couple of weeks ago, someone was talking about Ruth Bader Ginsburg and how she shouldn't be thought of as a role model for young girls but how we should be normalising women being a role model for anyone, regardless of gender, which I think is really important.

[Participant feedback]: The key takeaways from the workshops are actually so many that it is really hard to point at just a few of them. I think at the personal level, what I want to carry with me is this idea that my different, my alternative way of masculinity is very precious and role modelling is extremely important not only for me but for the people around me. Another takeaway is all the theoretical and practical knowledge about how to intervene when I witness any form of discrimination based on gender. Also, as men it is particularly important to stop our attitude of silence and inaction when we're witnessing gender-based discrimination and violence around us.

[Participant feedback]: My favourite workshop topic was the active bystander workshop. I think that was really important in giving tools and strategies on how to approach someone who is coming from a position that isn't promoting gender equality and gender diversity. I think that was really important because not only does it empower us to stand up for what's right within the community but it also I think from that snowballs and that allows me to set a standard for my peers so then they can set a standard within their circles which I think is really interesting. I think another really great aspect of it was that it was established that there are factors that make standing up difficult in some circumstances but there are also a lot of factors that help you, that mobilise you to take a stand, and I think assessing those factors can really help with confidence in how you can address when you know that something isn't right and that you need to stand up.

The Mobiliser Program – Monash University

Women and girls can also be complicit in upholding patriarchal structures.[29] Many social norms and structures are so taken for granted that we don't see them and thus don't question them. Some elements of hegemonic masculinity are not only valued by boys and men but also women and girls. This means that opposition against gender reform can not only come from men but also women who are, for example, invested in traditional femininity and traditional female roles and who are also invested in men being masculine in recognisable and normative ways. This is sometimes referred to as internalised patriarchy. There is much work out there addressing these issues for women that this guide will not seek to replicate.

Men's violence against other men

Violence against anyone is unacceptable. While this guide doesn't explicitly address initiatives preventing men's violence against other men, there are significant crossovers and parallels in this work. Violence that men experience is also gendered as it is largely

perpetrated by men and normalised and sanctioned by patriarchal structures, systems and norms. While the commonality in both domains is men as predominant perpetrators, the context in which violence unfolds is largely different. Men are more likely to experience violence perpetrated by other men who are unknown to them, and in public spaces, while women are much more likely to experience violence perpetrated by a man known to them in private contexts.[30] Violence against men is often normalised or legitimised in society, for example through 'institutional rituals in university fraternities, the military, sporting clubs and workplaces that promote male-to-male violence'.[31] Men's violence occurs on the sporting field, as fighting and violence between young men in groups, child abuse, assault, homicide, suicide and violence between men in war. Men who experience inequality and discrimination experience violence from other men that stems from racism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism.

Therefore, the different contexts in which men's violence against women and other men occur call for specific and different strategies. Common factors in preventing this violence involve addressing what drives men's violence against women – hegemonic masculinity, gender inequality and other forms of hierarchy and inequality. Violence against children is another form of violence with some crossover, but with other unique characteristics and considerations.

Men's violence against other men and women's violence against other women can happen in same-sex attracted relationships. While there is limited data and research into these experiences of intimate partner violence, gendered dynamics of hierarchy and power and control have been found to drive this violence in similar ways to heterosexual relationships, with some key differences.[32] LGBTIQ organisations and researchers are building the evidence in this area and there are numerous opportunities for further work and collaboration. Some further information on this work is below.

Reference 6: Gender discourses

… the dominance of heteronormative (and cisnormative) models of family violence make it harder or LGBTQ people to recognise and label intimate partner violence as such, creating silence around this violence.[33]

The power and control wheel adapted by Thorne Harbour Health [PDF download] to reflect tactics used by gay men who attended an LGBTI men's behaviour change program.

Working with resistance

Efforts to engage men and boys are likely to be met with resistance and backlash. This should be expected and can even be a sign that you are on the right track. Backlash and resistance can be a normal response to challenging systems and beliefs that are entrenched and have been collectively reinforced for generations. Preparing for and working with resistance is explored in Part 3 under 'Dealing with backlash and resistance'.

Some people think, and some institutions operate, in ways that assume men aren't ready for this work, or that men will be alienated by it. As a consequence, they often avoid engaging men. Some practitioners speak of feeling pressured by their organisations to tone down the messaging of their initiatives, so as not to alienate men. Despite this, many practitioners have found that a significant number of men want to be engaged in this work, but don't know

where to begin. They require guidance and support to deepen their understanding of the problem and build their knowledge of how best to address it.

If prevention initiatives are undertaken in strategic, mindful and engaging ways that align with the guiding principles, then men and boys can take opportunities to challenge and transform the structures, norms and practices that uphold gender inequality.

Practitioner reflection 5: Response to the 'what about men?' and 'NotAllMen' refrain

I'm a cisgendered, heterosexual man who has always been a bit different from the masculine Aussie stereotype. Because of my difference I was bullied throughout high school and beyond and have experienced countless forms of violence, including verbal and psychological abuse, death threats, being gang-bashed, king-hit and even having one of my arms broken by a guy at school who hit me with a hockey stick. In fact, 100 per cent of the violence I have experienced has been perpetrated by individual men or groups of men. Thus, I know first-hand the problems with masculinity in Australia, the gendered nature of the violence it fosters and the impacts this has on people's lives.

These experiences are part of what led me to doing the work I do. In my 20-plus years of seeking out different ways of addressing the problems with masculinity as I see them, I have come across barely any men doing this work, and even fewer leading it. I've found the vast majority of men remain wilfully complicit in patriarchy and therefore [with] the violence its associated structures inflict through war, environmental degradation, social injustice and gender-based violence. Many men think that as long as they don't perpetrate violence themselves (or they have what they perceive to be reasonable excuses for using violence), then that is enough.

In contrast, the numerous meaningful, passionate and committed approaches to anti-violence work I have discovered all come from within feminist organisations and are led by women. I have learnt so much from these women and the women that came before them. In this way, I see women's movements offering hope and practical strategies for what needs to be done to end all forms of violence against all people everywhere.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

What about women's violence against men?

Women's perpetration of violence is extremely rare by comparison to men's use of violence. It is often different in its nature, its motivation, its intent and its impact.[34] For example, the role that masculine entitlement plays in men's use of violence against women must be sufficiently addressed.[35] Gender-based violence is often misattributed as being a one-off incident of physical violence while other forms of ongoing emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, social, technological and spiritual abuse are overlooked or obscured, and their impacts on women and their children not adequately understood. Women are frequently misidentified as the 'primary aggressor' when police attend family violence incidents. This is particularly the case for Aboriginal women, and, in Queensland, close to half of all cases of women murdered by their male partners have been identified as the perpetrator of violence previously in their relationship.[36]

Nevertheless, women's use of violence can be partially understood as a form of power and control reflecting women's socialisation into adopting hegemonic forms of masculinity in a patriarchal society.[37] Programs do exist for women who use force. It helps to know this because a common form of backlash and resistance occurs when people claim that men are unfairly targeted, or ask why there aren't programs to address women's use of violence. Further details are presented below to help you prepare for this common form of backlash.

Further resources 4: Women who use force

- *Guardian* – [Most women who commit family violence turn to verbal abuse, report finds](#)
- A University of Melbourne research piece on [women who use force](#)
- Baptcare and Berry Street's [+SHIFT program](#)

Reference 7: bell hooks quote

> Men must become 'comrades in struggle' with women for gender equality and a world without violence.[38]

Important considerations for working with men

When working with men, there are some key things to always keep in mind to help ensure safety and accountability to women.

Dealing with risk

You won't always know if men in your audience or in your team have been or are perpetrators of gender-based violence. Men who use power and control in their relationships and are abusive towards women may express a backlash response when involved in these discussions. This might not be made publicly – they may go home and take out their anger on family members or partners. While this isn't a reason not to do this work, it does highlight the importance of undertaking prevention initiatives in trauma-informed and collaborative ways.

If you haven't already, do training in engaging with men who use violence and/or make sure that someone on your team has this practical experience. Plan for what you will do if it becomes apparent that a man connected to your initiative has used or is using violence. Have processes in place regarding how you support that man as well as staff and colleagues involved in the work.

This is where counselling options – the Men's Referral Service for men perpetrating violence, and EAP and/or professional, clinical supervision for staff – are crucial. If you have concerns about a man's behaviour and the risk his family may be in, secondary consultation with a professional family violence service would be a meaningful place to start. Ensure that you and your team are trained in [handling disclosures](#) and that you have a process established for dealing with disclosures.

Collusion

Collusion occurs when facilitators of men's violence prevention initiatives side with or ally themselves with perspectives that minimise, blame, justify or excuse men's use of violence and its associated impacts. It might involve downplaying the gendered nature of violence, or framing violence as a problem that women and men create together. In many cases collusion might not be conscious or deliberate. It might look like men's experiences and men's perspectives on gender inequality and gender-based violence being prioritised without adequately acknowledging women's experiences of them. It might involve not addressing male privilege and men's complicity in gender-based violence and gender inequality.

It is common for those undertaking prevention work, especially for men, to be invited by men in their audience to collude with them. Men's violence against women has been a taboo topic until recently and it continues to not be widely spoken about. Therefore, men doing prevention work might feel inclined to minimise the problem or avoid difficult topics in order to feel liked and accepted by their audience and to not be seen as controversial or to not alienate or shame their audience. Collusion might be an unconscious act to try and build rapport and to avoid resistance and backlash.

The risk of collusion is that it perpetuates the status quo, it condones violence and it doesn't lead to fundamental shifts in attitudes and structures. You need to be proactive in addressing the risks and challenges of collusion and co-option in prevention work. This relates strongly to the principle of maintaining accountability to women in prevention work and requires self-awareness, supervision, debriefing, gender transformative approaches and a range of group facilitation and interpersonal skills.

Reference 8: Getting the balance right between rapport-building and addressing the problem

Using men's health and wellbeing as an initial recruitment strategy can be useful to generate early engagement. Prevention practitioners should be mindful not to maintain a 'men will benefit approach' to the work, though. This creates the risk of reinforcing and maintaining gender inequality by keeping the focus on men.[39]

Individualising, therapising

It's helpful to remember that this work is ultimately about changing structures, systems and social and cultural norms. Addressing individual beliefs and attitudes is an important part of this that should be kept in perspective. Use discussions of an individual nature strategically to help your audience connect to the broader social issues without getting sidetracked by them.

Individuals will have their own life experiences and this work will be triggering for some people. A certain skill set is required to hold spaces that are safe yet challenging while attending to people's individual situations. Clear boundaries should be set at the group agreement stage about how much personal detail participants should or shouldn't share.

Nevertheless, practitioners should ensure they can identify when individuals are feeling triggered and feel confident about how to deal effectively with disclosures. As discussed previously in this guide, remember to take intersectional approaches that account for differences among men in terms of their own experiences and relationships to power.

Part 1: The guiding principles in practice

The guiding principles outlined in *Men in focus* give you the foundations for addressing masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of men's violence against women. The key guiding principles, as outlined in this section, are:

- Intersectional approaches
- Gender transformative approaches
- Maintaining accountability to women
- Strengths-based approaches
- Solutions across all levels of society.

They focus on how to do this safely, effectively and authentically. Examples of the principles in practice are included throughout this guide. If you're not familiar with the background to the guiding principles, we suggest you refer to the *Men in focus* evidence review and summary document.

Research and anecdotal reflection with practitioners highlight the challenges of applying all of the guiding principles to primary prevention initiatives.[40] Many initiatives may be strong in two or three of the principles, but lacking in the rest. You will find that the principles often overlap and reinforce each other.

This section reflects on each of these principles to help you to consider the strengths of your initiatives, and areas for development.
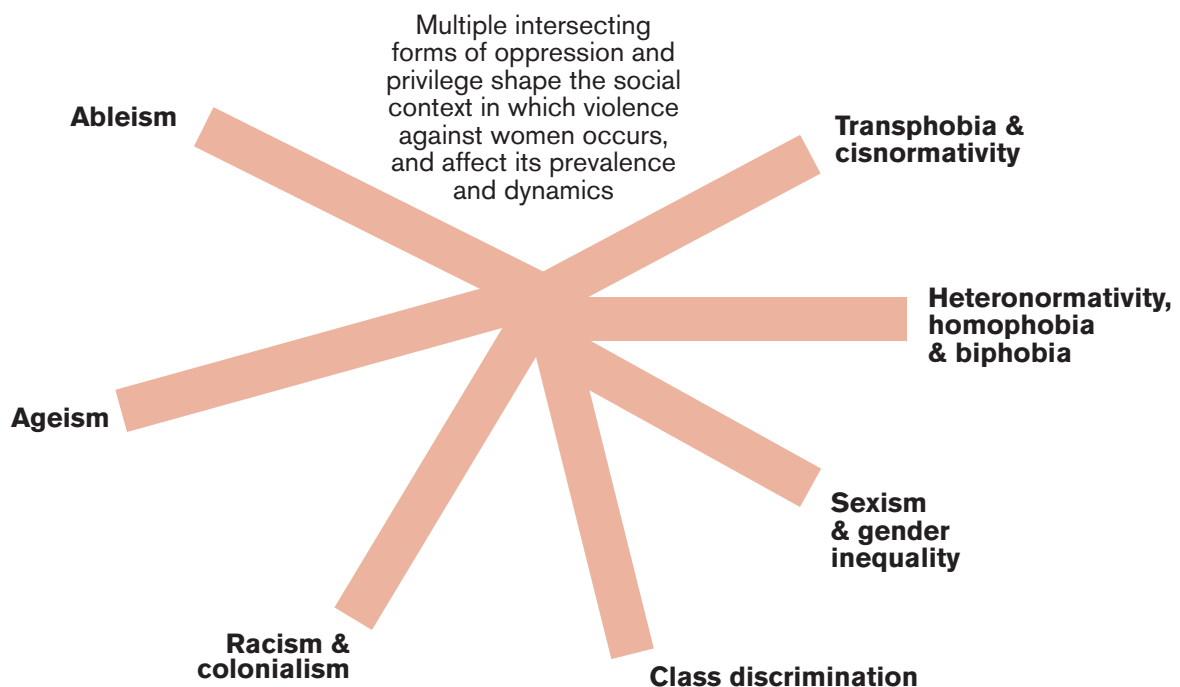
Intersectional approaches

In order effectively address masculinities and engage with men, it is essential to understand intersectional approaches and how to incorporate them into prevention work.

Reference 9: Audre Lorde quote

> There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.[41]

Gender is not the only determinant of hierarchy and power relations. Gender intersects with other forms of identity such as race, sexuality, socio-economic class, physical ability, neurodiversity, faith, geographic location and age. As such, different men and women have different relationships to different kinds of power in diverse and complex ways.[42] Intersectional approaches to preventing violence incorporate an awareness of these differential power relations to understand and address the differences in men's perpetration of violence against women, as well as the differences in women's experiences of violence. The concept of intersectionality comes from the work of Black and Indigenous women. Links to some of the origins of the concept of intersectionality, along with contemporary reflections, are provided in Further resources 5.

Figure 4: Violence against women occurs in the context of multiple intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination, power and privilege

Multiple intersecting forms of oppression and privilege shape the social context in which violence against women occurs, and affect its prevalence and dynamics

Ableism

Transphobia & cisnormativity

Heteronormativity, homophobia & biphobia

Ageism

Sexism & gender inequality

Racism & colonialism

Class discrimination

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*.

See alternative text for Figure 4 on page 141.

Reference 10: The importance of intersectional understandings of men's violence against women

- It is important to understand the social systems, structures, norms and practices that create complex intersecting forms of discrimination and privilege, and that influence patterns of men's perpetration of violence as well as women's experiences of violence.[43]

- Awareness of men's differential relationships to power is necessary for collaboration, design and implementation of effective primary prevention initiatives that engage men from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Men's relationship to power is not uniform and men can experience both privilege and oppression at the same time.[44] 'Marginalised' masculinities include, for example, black or working-class masculinities – men who do not enjoy the same economic, political or social privileges that, for example, white, middle-class men do.[45] Nevertheless, black and/or working class men still enjoy some of the privileges afforded to men over people of other genders. Therefore, when working with men, male privilege and entitlement needs to be addressed in a nuanced way that does not treat all men as part of a homogenous group. Men's own experiences of marginalisation and trauma need to be held in a way that does not excuse their use of violence, but meaningfully connects with their identity and the power that they do have access to. These approaches are important when working in a strengths-based way and aiming to build connection and empathy.

Effective approaches include culturally specific design elements that respond to the intersections between gender and colonialism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, ageism and classism. Successful initiatives with men from diverse backgrounds won't just put intersectional 'spins' on mainstream approaches, or be added on at the end, but will be incorporated throughout.[46]

Reference 11: Gender-based violence and cultural representation

Violence against women is endemic across Australian communities and cultures. While marginalised women experience a heightened vulnerability to gender-based violence, there is insufficient evidence that any one culture or community, migrant or otherwise, is more or less violent than any other. However, in media and popular culture, immigrant and refugee men and cultures are represented as being more 'traditional', oppressive to women and as having greater tendency to commit violence against women. Conversely, immigrant and refugee women are portrayed as more oppressed, passive and lacking in agency.[47]

[Most] cultures are patriarchal, not more or less, but differently.[48]

Intersectional approaches are necessary to ensure men are engaged in ways that are effective, culturally relevant and not alienating. Ideally, 'this means explicitly redistributing power and resources so that people affected by multiple forms of inequality and oppression, and organisations representing them, are directing decisions about both what and how primary prevention programming occurs, and are funded to lead this work.'[49]

This means mainstream organisations should become allies to other culturally specific and community-based organisations, while simultaneously embedding intersectional approaches into their own work. Allyship means making the work of these organisations more visible, acknowledging the expertise they have in working with their community and encouraging adequate resourcing and funding preferentially goes to these organisations to work with their own communities where possible. 'Nothing about our mob, without our mob.'[50]

Reference 12: Working intersectionally

> We have to be careful that, in involving men [whatever their cultural background] in men's violence prevention, we do not replicate the same structures and processes that reproduce the violence we are challenging.[51]

Leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prevention initiatives

A number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations are leaders in primary prevention work. A number of grassroots, community-led and culturally relevant initiatives work with men to simultaneously address much-needed healing from intergenerational trauma experienced as a consequence of colonisation and ongoing dispossession, and address primary prevention of men's violence against women. These initiatives embrace the guiding principles of intersectionality, gender transformative practice, accountability to women and strengths-based approaches to address solutions across all levels of society. Practitioners and contributors to violence prevention work can gain much insight from these initiatives.

Trauma-informed approaches are central to these initiatives, and offer consideration for other initiatives to ensure trauma-informed principles are incorporated into practice. Part 3 includes a section that provides more detail on trauma-informed approaches, and examples are also provided below.

Reference 13: Prevention initiatives engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men

> Effective prevention strategies need to understand the context of historical and continued colonial and systemic violence experienced in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.[52] In particular, the cumulative impacts of dispossession, child removal, ensuing cultural breakdown, poverty, overcrowded housing, family breakdown, substance misuse and exposure to violence that have given rise to a cycle of intergenerational trauma must be acknowledged and attended to. While a greater understanding of the causes of violence does not excuse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's use of violence, failure to address these issues is likely to lead to ineffective violence reduction strategies.
>
> The Healing Foundation – Intergenerational Trauma Animation

Strategies to prevent and reduce family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities need to be positioned within broader community strategies that support individual, family and community healing through approaches that draw from both Indigenous culture and western practice. Any program that seeks to reduce and prevent family violence as an outcome should be developed in partnership with communities through a genuine co-design process that respects and supports local cultural governance.[53]

It is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to be able to lead prevention work in collaboration with women in their own communities. Prevention work should not reinforce hierarchies of masculinity, disempower or lead to further cultural breakdown, particularly if non-Aboriginal practitioners work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Indigenous theoretical and cultural frameworks are required for effective practice and should be funded more comprehensively, rather than frameworks informed by white, western gender assumptions and paradigms being adapted to try to fit Indigenous community needs.

Specific initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and boys can be found on pages 21–22 of *Changing the picture*.

Resources and program examples
- Healing Foundation – *Towards an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander violence prevention framework for men and boys* [PDF download]
- Healing Foundation – Men's healing
- Dardi Munwurro – Bramung Jaarn program
- Wadawurrung community – The Burndawan Project
- Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program – The Grow Model
- Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place – Men's group
- NPY Women's Council – Uti Kulintjaku, Ngangkari Program
- The Healing Foundation – Torres Strait Island Healing Forum (Saibai)

Research shows that to improve acceptance and enhance the impact of prevention initiatives with men, a gender-focused approach must be culturally relevant and community-driven.[54] Incorporating intersectional approaches requires suitable planning, consultation, collaboration and co-design. These aspects of the work are explored in Part 3 of this guide. Prevention initiatives delivered in mainstream settings stand to gain from culturally relevant approaches. For example, by focusing on the harmful impacts on men and boys of neoliberal capitalism and of *being* colonised and also of *doing* the colonising.[55]

Reference 14: Key strategies in intersectional approaches

Murdolo and Quiazon (2016) offer important considerations for intersectional approaches to primary prevention initiatives, including:

- engaging men through the leadership of women (not treating men exclusively as community leaders)
- framing prevention in meaningful, relevant and understandable ways
- interrogating and negotiating masculinities and men's different relations to patriarchy
- recognising men's intersectional disadvantage (without using it as an excuse to justify use of violence) and harnessing this to build empathy for women's experiences of inequality and generate activism
- strengthening communities through direct participation programs
- conducting research, evaluation and learning to help build the knowledge base regarding intersectional approaches to primary prevention work.

Adele Murdolo and Regina Quiazon – *Key issues in working with men from immigrant and refugee communities in preventing violence against women*

Methods for incorporating intersectional approaches into practice

Reflect on your own conscious and unconscious biases

Reflect on your own identity and experiences of power, privilege and inequality, and how this might affect your approach to prevention work. What discriminations have you experienced and what discriminatory systems have you been complicit with? What unconscious values, beliefs or assumptions might influence the way you work with people from different backgrounds to your own? How might this impact your perception of your own and other people's ability to change? What can you do to address these so that they don't get in the way of the work?

Practitioners, regardless of their gender, can use 'power over' behaviours in their role as facilitators. They may think that their role should be about demonstrating authority and transmitting knowledge, which can reproduce power inequities.

Critically reflective practice and self-awareness can help practitioners understand the ways in which we, as individuals, interact with and internalise structures and systems of patriarchy, colonisation, racism, classism and capitalism.

Suggested activity 2: Complicity and self-reflection

- Use Part 5.2 Complicity and privilege, pages 81–85 in *Men in focus*, as a tool for critical self-reflection.
- Project Implicit – Implicit Association Test

Reference 15: Unconscious bias

While unconscious bias training has become fashionable as a way of supporting diversity and inclusion initiatives, in and of itself it doesn't automatically lead to changes in behaviour or processes.[56] Practitioners and organisations should ensure that it is not used as a 'quick fix' that bypasses deeper and more structural responses to sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination. Awareness of the effects of unconscious bias needs to be complemented by significant and meaningful structural change.[57] Structural discrimination and disadvantage is discussed in Part 2 under 'Reference 23: Structural discrimination and disadvantage'.

For wholistic approaches to addressing these and other relevant practice issues, refer to the list of relevant training providers in Part 3 under 'Training and professional development'.

Be inclusive and responsive to diversity

When using images and stories, include people from a range of communities, cultural backgrounds and ages, and in different workplaces, for example blue-collar and white-collar, as well as people with disabilities. Make sure that your work does not unintentionally reinforce myths and stereotypes about violence against women in particular communities. Involve a range of different people and groups in the planning, implementation and governance of your prevention work, to reflect the diverse experiences and perspectives of the broader community.

Every prevention initiative should be tailored to make sure that it speaks to its intended audience effectively. Effective consultation and co-design will help to ensure that you understand the issues relevant to your audience's context, and their social norms and practices.

Learn from and consult people who experience multiple forms of discrimination

Actively seek out a variety of people and communities affected by violence. Follow them in the media or on social media as a starting point. Seek out and use research and literature produced by these people, organisations they work with and peak bodies representing them. Do as much work as you can yourself before placing demands on people from particular communities. Keep in mind that these people and the organisations they work for do a lot of work already with minimal resources and limited time.

Once you have done this preliminary work, where appropriate consult and collaborate directly with people and representative organisations. You may need to speak to people/organisations to find information that is relevant to your specific project, and if you do not talk directly to people with a clear plan, and with transparency, you may end up making unhelpful assumptions. Deeper engagement, not just consultation, is advocated, particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spaces, consistent with contemporary definitions of Indigenous data sovereignty – that is, people in communities with whom you work should decide what, why and how information relating to the violence they have experienced is shared and used. Relevant consultation and co-design processes and important considerations to make before using lived experience are explored in Part 3 under 'Consultation, co-design and collaboration'.

Build partnerships and alliances

Recognise that many communities have been doing this work for a long time. They have solutions and they should be listened to. Support their work and build partnerships that are meaningful and not tokenistic. Formally acknowledge or reimburse organisations or people with specific knowledge about a community for their effort and time. Below is some relevant information drawn from Our Watch's *Changing the picture*.

Reference 16: Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations

Primary prevention of violence against Aboriginal women and children work is not just for Aboriginal people and Aboriginal organisations to undertake. We know that a significant amount of violence perpetrated against Aboriginal women and their children is perpetrated by non-Aboriginal men.[58] The ongoing effects of colonisation, dispossession and genocide and associated experiences of intergenerational trauma continue to impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are further marginalised by systemic and structural racism. Therefore, culturally relevant and community-led approaches to undertaking primary prevention initiatives in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are required in parallel to broader anti-racism, decolonisation initiatives being supported by aspiring non-Aboriginal allies.

There is a significant amount of work that non-Indigenous Australians can and should undertake to support the work that Aboriginal communities already undertake to address men's violence against women. This work could include supporting Aboriginal organisations to access adequate resources to do their work. It also includes non-Aboriginal Australians making the effort to educate themselves and teach others about the impacts of colonisation and dispossession of Aboriginal Australians.[59]
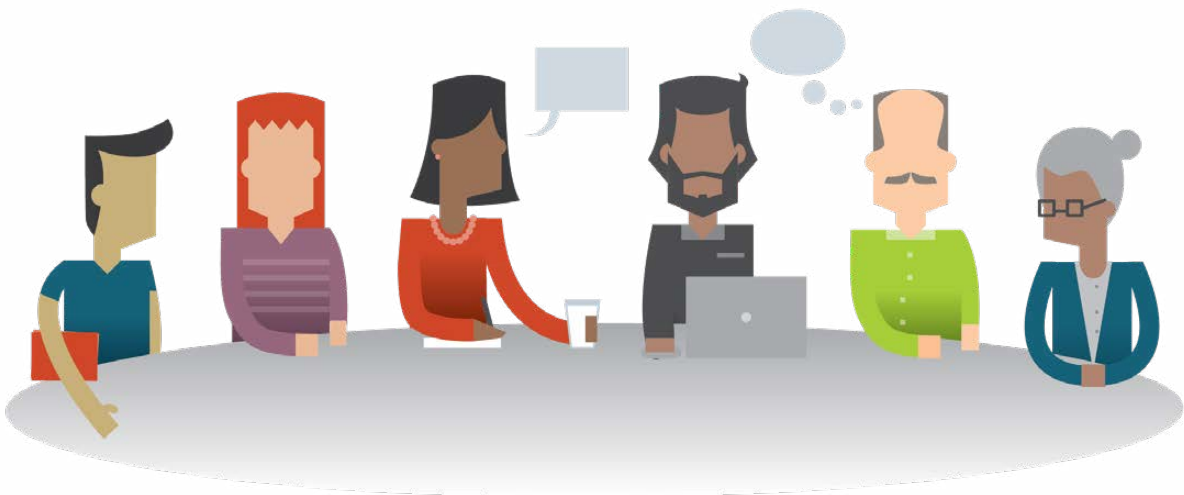
Non-Indigenous organisations working as allies in culturally safe ways

Where non-Indigenous organisations or services, or non-Indigenous workers, undertake prevention work that seeks to actively involve or engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants, or reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences, they should do so in culturally safe and respectful ways.

This requires non-Indigenous organisations to break down the silos they often work in, and instead prioritise the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, develop their cultural competencies, ensure cultural safety, and work in ways that are based on genuine and meaningful engagement and partnership. The aim should be to work with, not for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to be effective allies — recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's expertise and leadership, and supporting their goals and aspirations, including both their definitions of the problem and their development of their own solutions.

Non-Indigenous people involved in such initiatives need to respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world views, and cultural and community values and priorities, and work with these in genuine ways. They need to balance and incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's knowledge and values together with other relevant influences, frameworks and approaches in the contemporary context. This is complex work that requires practitioners with significant cross-cultural skills, expertise in two-way working, and the development of approaches that build strong relationships, alliances and levels of trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and organisations.

'Nothing about our mob, without our mob.'. This is not a slogan. This is critical, not only for our healing but for yours as our fellow Australians; this is the starting point for our relationship … You enjoy a positive legacy as a result of our dispossession. You have a responsibility to ensure we have a strong voice about our realities and to support our solutions, solutions that come from our cultural knowledge bases.

Warawarni-gu Guma statement

Additional resources
- Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) – Genuine partnerships resources and audit tool
- Richard Frankland speaking about the burden of the cultural load that Aboriginal people carry and his collective healing work
- Decolonizing Solidarity – A book for non-Indigenous Australians to develop their abilities to support First Nations Australians struggles for equality

Have a targeted approach

Invest effort and resources, with a targeted approach, to engage some groups in the community who may be overlooked or not participate otherwise. Be specific about who your prevention efforts are tailored for. For example, when intending to work with people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, clarify whether you are looking to work with and empower an 'ethno-specific' group, language-based group, or a group connected through shared experiences such as visa status or immigration pathway, for example.

Case study 2: The Gender and Disability Workforce Development program

The Gender and Disability Workforce Development program targets workers in the disability and social service sectors to change the attitudes, values and practices that drive the very high rates of violence against women with disabilities. The program provides workers with an understanding of how gender and disability inequality intersect to drive violence against women with disabilities, and the essential actions they can take in their work to prevent it.

The training content is designed in consultation with women with disabilities, many of whom also have lived experience of family or institutional violence. These women represent a range of ages, regional areas, sexualities, cultural backgrounds and experiences of disability. The training follows a co-facilitation model and is presented by one violence prevention expert and one woman with lived experience of disability. The target workforce also has higher-than-average rates of disability, so we are often fortunate to have our participants share their own rich lived experience in the training.

The target audiences of disability and social service workforces generally have a low baseline of prevention knowledge, so it can be a challenge to teach prevention frameworks concurrent to basic theories of disability and avoid information overload. Disability-based violence is also less gendered than general violence against women, as it can be perpetrated against men and by women at higher rates. As such, teaching a gendered model of violence prevention in this context can also be a challenge. A scaffolded approach to learning helps to mitigate these challenges, and the program has excellent outcomes in increasing knowledge, skills and awareness around violence against women with disabilities.

> [Training participant]: I hope that I do these things already, but this training reinforces treating everyone fairly and with respect, not to judge, if I believe something is not right … to do something about it.

More information about this program can be found on the Women with Disabilities Victoria website

Prevention practitioner (she/her)

Intersectional theory is a diverse field, populated by many different and significant perspectives. Below is a list of resources exploring intersectional feminism, followed by specific guides for intersectional approaches to prevention work.

Further resources 5: Intersectional approaches

Intersectional feminism

- Kimberlé Crenshaw – The urgency of intersectionality TED Talk
- Indigenous X – 10 things you should know about systemic racism
- Ruby Hamad and Celeste Liddle on how racism and sexism are not experienced separately but simultaneously – Intersectionality? Not while feminists participate in pile-ons
- Khadija Glba – Unless all of us are free, none of us are free

Guides incorporating intersectional approaches to primary prevention work

- Women with Disabilities Victoria have placed a disability lens over the gendered drivers of violence and the essential actions to prevent gendered violence
- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) – *Intersectionality matters: A guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities to prevent violence against women*
- Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC) – *Working with new and establishing communities to prevent family and domestic violence a good-practice resource* [PDF download]
- Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) – *Violence against women in CALD Communities: Understandings and actions to prevent violence against women in CALD communities* [PDF download]
- Rainbow Health Victoria – *Pride in prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities*
- Senior's Rights Victoria – Resources to assist in the prevention of elder abuse
- Michael Flood – Addressing intersections of social disadvantage and privilege in engaging men in violence prevention

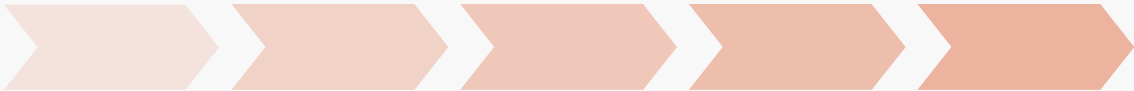# Gender transformative approaches

Gender transformative approaches address gender inequality and the gendered drivers of violence. They do this by challenging socially dominant ideas of gender, the gender binary and gender hierarchy. They invite men to transform their rigid adherence to essentialist gender roles and expectations and they simultaneously address other forms of intersecting inequality and discrimination.

R. G. Gupta's continuum of gender transformative practice provides a measure for how effectively prevention initiatives can incorporate gender critiques into their work.[60] At one end of the continuum, prevention efforts can be gender exploitative, unequal or neutral. These include approaches that either reinforce gendered stereotypes in their messaging (for example, 'Real men don't hit women' or language of 'male champions') or completely lack a gendered lens and overlook the different social positioning of men and women. These sorts of initiatives are unlikely to make an impact and risk reinforcing and perpetuating the gendered drivers of violence and the structures and norms that underpin them.[61]

In the middle of the continuum are gender-sensitive approaches that might be useful starting points as they do incorporate the different social locations of men and women. However, they often don't take the next step of explicitly transforming or challenging the social constructions of gender and gender inequality. Therefore, these approaches arguably cannot contribute to long-term changes addressing the underlying status quo that perpetuates gender inequality.

Gender transformative approaches sit at the desired end of the continuum. These approaches actively challenge and transform the current gender system through critical reflection on the attitudes, norms, structures and practices of gender that underpin inequality and help drive violence against women.[62] Gender transformative practice should be central to prevention efforts and is key to making fundamental, long-term change.

Figure 5: How gender transformative work differs from other approaches

Gender-unequal	Gender ignoring (or 'gender neutral')	Gender-sensitive	Gender-specific/ gender responsive	Gender-transformative
Perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing unbalanced norms, roles and relations.	Often based on claim of being 'fair' by treating everyone the same. Ignores gender norms, roles, relations, and gendered differences in opportunities and resource allocation. Very often reinforces gender-based discrimination.	Considers gender norms, roles and relations, but does not address the inequalities they create.	Considers gender norms, roles and relations and how they affect access to resources or create specific needs for women and men. Takes targeted action in response to meet these needs. Makes it easier for women and men to fulfil duties ascribed to them based on their gender roles, without necessarily seeking to shift the allocation of these duties.	Actively works to challenge and transform gender norms, roles, relations, power imbalances and their impacts. Seeks to address the underlying causes of gender-based inequities, and foster progressive changes in gendered power relationships.

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*. Content based on the WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale, with some adaptations.

See alternative text for Figure 5 on page 142.

The original table with further background information can be found at: Our Watch – A guide to help you work out how gender transformative your initiative is.

Practitioner reflection 6: Gender transformative practice

When working in a gender transformative way I often think about the complexity of the construction and policing that we all do, day in, day out, to keep gender binaries alive! What's right, what's wrong, what's acceptable, what's not? It's exhausting, but we all do it, it's infiltrated all of us. Whilst co-running workshops in a community men's story project, an experienced female writer had this 'aha' moment. She realised she was still enforcing gender stereotypes and binary thinking in her writing, when she realised characters in her books often had parents in gendered stereotype jobs and were heteronormative. She got so passionate about this 'aha' moment that since the project she has engaged other writers and publishers on a national level and has not only changed how she writes but has created an activist movement in the literary field! This is what gender transformative work looks like. Everyone – practitioners, community members, men, women, however you identify, don't identify – all of us doing internal and external work together to untangle and redefine it all.

Prevention manager (she/her)

Methods for incorporating gender transformative approaches into practice

A common starting point in engaging men is to explore and address socially dominant gender stereotypes and how they are policed and reinforced. Activities are suggested throughout this guide to help people reflect on how gender stereotypes are constructed in our world, and how these affect and limit people personally, interpersonally, in communities and organisations. People are encouraged to challenge binary and essentialist ideas of gender and what it means to be a 'man' or a 'woman'.

Suggested activity 3: Challenge essentialist ideas of men and masculinity

Utilise the findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) to highlight for your audience prevailing stereotyped beliefs about behaviours deemed acceptable for men in relationships, and their connection to men's violence against women. In particular, explore attitudes that essentialise stereotypes about men's sexuality and sexual behaviours and excuse rape, and the belief that women lie about experiences of sexual violence and intimate partner violence.

Intersectional approaches are crucial in making gender transformative approaches relevant to your audience, given the different ways that gender stereotypes are expressed and reinforced in different cultures, in different contexts and at different times. A relevant example is provided below.

Practitioner reflection 7: Disability and masculinity

Gender stereotypes, prescriptive notions of masculinity and femininity and the hierarchical gender binary can be harmful to people of all genders, as well as being one of the main drivers of violence against women. Rigid gender roles and stereotypes can have further negative impacts on people with disabilities, who may be unable to live up to traditional ideas about what it means to be a man or woman. This may be a result of their impairment, or it might be the result of the ableism, discrimination and disability stereotypes they experience in their everyday lives.

Some women with disabilities may be unable to live up to the domestic and care expectations placed upon women. While all women in society are disadvantaged by unrealistic beauty standards and the valuation of women on their appearance, this has even more significant impacts for women with disabilities. They are also often infantilised and are not expected to want to enter the workforce, seek higher education or start a family.

Because of ableist attitudes and structures in society, men with disabilities are often feminised and are not expected to live up to traditional standards of masculinity. A common reaction to this is the enactment of hypermasculinity, where men with disabilities will go beyond typical male behaviours to reassert their masculinity. This might look like attempts to 'overcome' or 'conquer' disability through physical accomplishments or other feats.

Hypermasculinity may also take the form of male peer relations that are sexist and extremely disrespectful towards women. These could be relations among men with disabilities, or among men with disabilities and their able-bodied peers. These sexist peer relations are especially dangerous when it is women with disabilities who are being targeted by the behaviour. Disability can also be a significant reinforcing factor for men who use violence, both as the result of an impairment, such as a mental health condition, or as the result of the experience of systemic ableism. For example, the ableist assumption that people with disabilities don't have sex could lead to young men with disabilities not being taught topics like respectful relationships or consent.

When working with men with disabilities in the prevention space, it is important to remember that their understandings and performances of masculinity may look different, and that disability stereotypes may be equally important to consider. When communicating around concepts such as gender inequality, it is vital to adopt an intersectional approach and not privilege gender as necessarily being the most significant site of oppression. You might use the parallels between gender and disability inequality as a way of communicating the importance of the issue. Remember also that men with disabilities have a statistical likelihood of being victim/survivors of violence themselves, and make sure you have supports available to them when discussing what may be a triggering topic.

Prevention practitioner (she/her)

Avoid being gender unequal or exploitative

It's critical that prevention efforts do not reinforce damaging gender and sexual stereotypes in their messaging or their approach.[63] For example, prevention efforts that say 'Real men don't hit women' can actually be harmful as they promote the idea that there is such a thing as a 'real man', which in turn suggests the existence of 'not real men'. Some practitioners and experts suggest that ultimately we should be encouraging men to loosen their rigid adherence to masculinity and its complicity in patriarchy, rather than encouraging alternative forms of masculinity. Others suggest that we need to use strength-based approaches to encourage alternative ways for men to be, perhaps broadening masculinity to include other behaviours such as being caring, nurturing, being emotionally expressive, etc.[64] If practitioners take this approach, in order to engage men and build rapport, they should be careful not to marginalise women's expression of these qualities – for example, by exalting men's nurturing over nurturing by women. An approach that could balance these tensions might invite men to simultaneously challenge rigid adherence to dominant ideas of masculinity and focus instead on healthy and respectful behaviours that *all* people, regardless of their gender identity, can and should express.

Practitioner reflection 8: Gender roles

Some behaviours associated with gender roles are not a problem in themselves. Often the resistance we get in training is around people thinking we're saying those sorts of things are inherently bad. We aren't saying that. What we are saying is that they shouldn't be associated with one gender over another. For example, there's nothing wrong with being nurturing of your family (often seen as a woman's job) or protective of them (often seen as a man's) – it's about allowing and encouraging everyone to engage in these behaviours.

Union organiser and trainer (she/her)

Reference 17: Example of a gender transformative program

Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program's Mums Can, Dads Can project is an Aboriginal community initiative that addresses the gendered drivers of violence and demonstrates elements of gender transformative and strengths-based approaches to primary prevention.

Suggested activity 4: Gender transformative reflective practice

Refer to Women's Health Victoria – *Towards gender transformative change: A guide for practitioners* and use the reflective practice questions to guide gender transformative approaches to your initiative.

Further resources 6: Gender transformative approaches

- EDVOS – the [Level Playground](#) website provides information, ideas, resources and activities for parents, caregivers and early childhood educators for learning, reading and playing to support the day-to-day work of raising children free from gender stereotypes
- Equimundo *Manhood 2.0* activities are gender-transformative initiatives to engage young people in reflecting on the impacts of harmful gender norms. *[Program H|M|D: A Toolkit for Action/Engaging Youth to Achieve Gender Equity](#)* – a more accessible, shorter version of Programs H and M.
- [Rutger's gender-transformative approach](#)
- Nice guise – What happens next? A [podcast exploring modern masculinity](#)

Maintaining accountability to women

Maintaining accountability to women is key to avoiding gender unequal or exploitative practices and taking a genuinely gender transformative approach. It's important to remember the many different thinkers, activists, community organisers, scholars and professionals who have been active in this work for a long time. From them, we have accumulated a wealth of experience, insight, knowledge, solutions and leadership to guide prevention initiatives. As such, the voices and concerns of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disabilities, women of colour, gender and sexually diverse people, and women and migrant and refugee women should be kept at the centre of our work, and the organisations that represent these communities should be appropriately consulted.

Suggested activity 5: Ways of maintaining accountability

With respect to personal and relational ethics

- Practice critical self-awareness. Be mindful of your own power and privilege and how these play out in your interactions with others – whether, and how, you exert power over others.
- Address the male privilege and sexism that you may bring with you to this work and the harm that this can do through colluding with and reinforcing gender inequalities.
- Be open to constructive criticism.
- Block out time during every stage of the program to have conversations with your team about gender, power, privilege and accountability and make sure there are follow-up mechanisms in place if something isn't working.
- Speak up and take action to address beliefs and behaviours that undermine gender equality and social justice.

During the development and planning stages of your initiative

- Listen to women.
- Partner with women's organisations.
- Consult with and incorporate First Nations, queer, disability and feminist approaches, individuals and organisations in the design, delivery and evaluation processes.
- Read women's work.
- Advocate for women.
- Don't have men making all the decisions.
- Make sure there is gender equality in working groups and if you can't have that equality then make sure it's really clearly justified why and that other steps to accountability are designed into the program.

During the implementation stages of your initiative

- Structure sessions that give equal space to facilitators of different genders. Prevention work is not only about delivering content – modelling the change we want to see is crucial.
- Have a woman opening sessions, leading proceedings, being the keynote speaker.
- Men can serve tea and coffee, tend to the drinks station and wash dishes while their women counterpart continues having post-workshop discussions with participants.
- To help deal with backlash and resistance, gender might be used strategically when deciding who presents what issues. For example, a man could introduce the subject of male privilege and entitlement and speak from personal insight; or a man could share his own experiences of gender-based violence for not being 'macho' enough.
- Use supervision and peer reflection spaces to focus specific attention on the accountability of your work to women and feminist ideals.
- Avoid taking the 'men will benefit' approach, to ensure that the benefit to men is not prioritised over gender equality.

Explore some of the practical ways of maintaining accountability in these resources

- Health West – *Working together with men: how to create male allies for gender equity in your community* includes a range of ideas to ensure that prevention initiatives remain accountable to women. Ideas include women's accountability panels and tips for allyhood
- MenEngage Alliance – resources, tools and promising practices to help you think about and take action to implement or improve accountability measures in your work with men and boys
- Reflective exercises in Namati – *All about power: Understanding social power and power structures*

Practitioner reflection 9: Critically reflective practice for men doing prevention work

As a cisgendered, heterosexual, able-bodied, neurotypical, middle-class man doing prevention work, self-awareness and awareness of others is paramount. This awareness is not about feeling shame or apologising for who I am. Instead, it reminds me of the importance of building more empathetic and attentive relationships with colleagues, family and friends. It brings my attention to the many situations where I am not expert and I do well to maintain curiosity by listening and seeking understanding of other perspectives. It reminds me to regularly check my privilege.

Men who work in gender equality and violence prevention spaces who might be expected to 'know better' are not exempt. A number of female colleagues have stated that one of the most challenging aspects of their job is dealing with male colleagues who are unaware of the ways that they perpetuate male privilege in the workplace. Therefore, I see that a key way to remain accountable to women in my work is to actively cultivate an environment with my colleagues of being open, inviting and responsive to feedback. In particular, I hope to foster relationships where my colleagues feel comfortable being honest with me about how they experience my expressions of gender and use of male privilege in my work.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Ideally, more men will begin doing prevention work in ways that maintain accountability to women. They/we can approach this work with a balance of humility, self-awareness and attentiveness to challenging everyday sexism and microaggressions. Women doing prevention work experience different challenges to men. They are more likely to experience backlash than men and less likely to receive praise or acclaim for doing this work, while men are often praised or valorised when they do. Women doing prevention work are more likely to be stereotyped, judged, undermined and vilified, sometimes in offensive and abusive terms.

Studies have shown that people are likely to listen more to a man than a woman delivering the exact same message.[65] Another study of ABC's *Q&A* program revealed how much more speaking time was afforded to panellists who were men, and that women panellists were interrupted more often.[66] In this vein, the manifestations of gender inequality that occur in the doing of prevention work should be identified, named and addressed. Given how much space men's voices and men's perspectives are given, in order to attain equity (as opposed to equality), women's voices should be at the centre of this work, and women should be in leadership roles. Undoubtedly, men should be doing this work – they/we just need to be aware of the 'pedestal effect' and the privileges they/we enjoy in this work in order to challenge and transform them.[67]

Practitioner reflection 10: Experiences of a woman doing prevention work

As a new practitioner working with men who use violence, I faced many challenges at the start. I thought I was prepared and had read enough to be able to deliver. I soon realised that I had to work harder than my male co-facilitator. At times I felt that I was not good enough for the job as I faced more resistance in the group and men did not respond well to my questions and discussions. The most challenging situation was when I felt that I did not have enough space to talk, and my male co-facilitator constantly talked over me and took more time in group discussions, and directed the whole session. I constantly doubted myself and my ability to be able to continue.

After a few weeks, I decided to explore this with my supervisor and it was only then that I realised that most women facilitators, [whether] experienced practitioners or new practitioners in this work, have had this issue and it is very common. I was encouraged to discuss the use of gender and male privilege with my male co-facilitator in a debriefing session. These discussions are not easy to have with male colleagues, but are required in this job.

I did have the discussion, with the help of our supervisor, in a respectful way. I was very happy with the result, as the male co-facilitator was open to listening and agreed that group sessions must be planned in a way not to reinforce patriarchy.

Prevention practitioner (she/her)

Practitioner reflection 11: Male privilege and entitlement as a practitioner

For me as a male practitioner, the manifestations of patriarchy – specifically male privilege and entitlement – are like weeds. I'm surrounded by these weeds and see how often they crowd out and choke a diversity of other people's perspectives. The seeds of these weeds lie dormant in the seedbed everywhere around me, waiting to spring forth and grow anew.

This analogy relates to being a man who experiences male privilege and entitlement in the world for no other reason than the fact of my sex at birth. I feel that I must remain vigilant and maintain a regular practice of 'weeding' to identify how and where male privilege and entitlement are present and threatening to creep in and take over my personal and professional relationships, my perspectives and my practices. I undertake a process of regular 'weeding' to prevent the weeds stifling the diversity of other things that I want in my garden.

Ways that I 'weed' include critically reflective practice, accountability practices, debriefing and peer supervision, training and development, and reading and listening to women. The benefits of this regular effort include having more empathetic and richer connections with colleagues, family and friends, and working in ways that parallel the changes that I want to see in the world.

It's not always easy, but it is worth it. I need all the men around me to be doing this work in parallel, so that together we can eventually get all of the weeds and the seeds of male privilege and entitlement out the world's collective seedbed.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Further reading
- Kris Macomber – 'I'm sure as hell not putting any man on a pedestal': Male privilege and accountability in domestic and sexual violence work
- Michael A. Messner, Max A. Greenberg and Tal Peretz – *Some men: Feminist allies and the movement to end violence against women*

Case study 3: Accountability to women in Project Momentum

Project Momentum was aimed at engaging male university students aged 18–30 in violence prevention activity. Redesign of the project sought to address a need to be more accountable to women. Women's voices, expertise and experience can be overlooked or employed in a token fashion in men's work, even though women have been doing prevention work for longer and are essentially the experts. One of the best ways to make your project enact intersectional feminist theory is to actually have diverse females in it!

The Women's Accountability Panel idea was created from evidence that suggested a key way to engage men in this space is to create context or activities that mirror how men connect and communicate with each other. This can help create a sense of familiarity and safety in order for men to be more open to new ideas and less defensive of challenges. This approach is used often in sporting programs where men are gathered around familiar activities and then engaged in prevention or masculinities work.

Part of the concept of Project Momentum is that men gather other men to work on grassroots project ideas that attempt to end violence in their communities. The Women's Accountability Panel was created for the men to pitch their project ideas to and to then take on the feedback and suggestions made by women on the panel. The panel, with project staff, would then give final approval or go ahead for their idea to commence.

This first attempt at creating a panel was a success, although not perfect! We learnt a lot, including about women's experiences and the complexity of holding men accountable and the challenges there, especially for young women who have had limited professional and personal experience of doing this.

Other groups and agencies are now attempting and adapting forms of this panel approach. There are services including those in the LGBTQIA+/queer and Aboriginal activist spaces that are attempting accountability panels in their men's-focused gender-based violence initiatives. Fierce and diverse people across the country are now adapting it and providing men with a real chance to be activated for change both personally and as part of the community.

> Doing men's work without women or diverse communities (those who experience the violence from men) is like creating a Black Lives Matter project without people of colour. Men working with men, in projects run by men for men is the patriarchy and this seems counterproductive to what we are all trying to achieve. We must do this work diversely and together. Just having a female member on your team does not make your men's program accountable. Just consulting with an oppressed group when it suits, or when they are invited is not accountability. Accountability to those impacted most has to be very deliberate, consistent and frequently reviewed and adapted to keep pace with progress made.
>
> Prevention manager (she/her)

While it is critical to consult and collaborate with women, feminists and organisations and groups representing diverse communities, it is also important to acknowledge the demands this puts on those people and organisations. People with whom we consult should be recompensed for the work they do in ways that are fair and reflective of their efforts. Pay women for their time and don't further replicate the unpaid nature of 'women's work'.

Further resources 7: Accountability to women

- Read and/or listen to: Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Amy McQuire, Larissa Behrendt, and Ruby Hamad
- The Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM) *Feminist Pocketbook* – a series of non-academic and accessible tip sheets to build the confidence and competence of practitioners, researchers, policy-makers and other advocates to understand and implement feminist approaches to addressing violence against women and girls
- Jane Nicholls – A user's guide to being a woman
- Bob Pease – Men as allies in preventing violence against women: Principles and practices for promoting accountability

Strengths-based approaches

Many men are already loosening their attachment to masculine stereotypes and many more would like to. Many men value their roles as fathers, sons, brothers, friends, colleagues and members of their communities. Some men would like to have more active roles as a parent; some would like to be able to show more vulnerability; some would like to see social and cultural norms shift so that the commonly accepted ways for men to behave and to express themselves are less constrained by the 'Man Box'. Many men value equality and justice, fairness and reciprocity.

Many values, beliefs and hopes men hold can be seen as strengths to build on and to activate in prevention work. A significant number of men hold either supportive or 'persuadable' attitudes towards the issue of gender equality.[68] Effective strategies that recruit men to prevention initiatives tap into these strengths. These strategies build rapport and make clear what needs to be done to end gender inequality and men's violence against women.

Strengths-based approaches incorporate much of what has been discussed in this guide so far. In particular, they challenge masculine stereotypes, encourage diversity of masculinities, and promote roles for men (and women) that challenge gender hierarchies and break down the gender binary. These approaches work with the significant number of men who want change or are open to change but don't necessarily know how to make it happen. They raise men's awareness of the issues and provide them with the knowledge and skills required to act as advocates and aspiring allies.

These approaches promote alternative ways of being a man and invite men to loosen their attachment to rigid gender roles and identities. Men are invited to build their empathy for the experiences of women and to use this empathy to reflect on the changes that are required to move towards gender equality across all levels of society. The motivations that men have for becoming supporters of and advocates for gender equality are identified and fostered. Prevention efforts encourage men to connect their emotions with their values in ways that inspire them to act.

Case study 4: Sons of the West (SOTW) – Engaging men in a safe environment

Sons of the West (SOTW) is a 10-week men's health program facilitated by the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation (WBCF) and local partners. It incorporates education on a range of issues and physical activity and, importantly, it brings men together and creates a sense of community.

The program is open to any man over 18 years old living, working or recreating in the western suburbs of Melbourne and Ballarat. Typically 600+ men get involved in SOTW each year, making it one of Australia's largest men's health programs. Participants are usually aged 18–90 years (with an average age of 51) and 50 per cent report being culturally and/or linguistically diverse.

WBCF can engage such a diverse group of men by leveraging the brand of the Western Bulldogs Football Club and the unifying nature of sport. SOTW is promoted as a free men's health program: a space for men to get together, talk, meet new friends, learn about health and get active. One of the core topics within the program is men and masculinities and prevention of violence against women. WBCF are careful to schedule this topic from week 6 onwards within the 10 weeks, to give participants time to get comfortable with each other and the program structure, and used to asking questions and learning from the presenters and each other.

Health promotion coordinator (she/her)

Empathy building and working with emotions

While evidence and knowledge are vital in prevention work, we aim to avoid operating solely on the intellectual level or getting drawn into never-ending debates. Engaging only cerebrally and arguing 'logic' are common ways that resistance and avoidance are expressed. Some men are already empathetic and emotionally expressive, and others can become more so. These traits are central to prevention work.

Men should be encouraged to move out of their heads and into their bodies and their hearts. This serves the additional function of challenging outdated stereotypes that encourage men to be logical and 'use their brains' while discouraging them from 'being in touch with their

emotions'. Not only is emotion traditionally labelled a sign of weakness in men, it is also weaponised against women when they are labelled as 'overly emotional' and 'irrational'.

Where appropriate, connect with your own and your audience's emotions. If done respectfully, identifying and working with fear, anxiety, shame and avoidance can be powerful in this work. Notice and name feelings that are present. Ask questions such as:

- *Why do you feel this way?*
- *What are these feelings doing in your body?*
- *What are these feelings doing in your relationships?*
- *What are these feelings doing to the group dynamic?*, etc.

Invite men to imagine what things might be like for women: *What do you think it might feel like to not feel safe walking down the street at night? What might it feel like to be coerced into sex, or to have sex forced upon you? What might sexism feel like?*

While working with emotions and building empathy are important and can be transformative, there are also limitations we should be mindful of. Men and boys can try to empathise, but ultimately they/we will never really know what it is like to be a woman and to experience gender inequality firsthand. Being the one who does the empathising can entrench power and inequalities if it is not associated with genuine gender transformative approaches. Passive empathy might lead to pity and sentimentality rather than being transformative.

In our work, therefore, it is just as important to invite men and boys to self-reflect and critically examine their/our complicity in the suffering of women and girls, and their/our sense of gendered entitlement. These kinds of reflections can lead to feelings of discomfort, shame, indignation and even self-victimisation that can lead to backlash and resistance.[69] Therefore, practitioners will do well to be prepared for this, and to employ strategic empathy in order to open up conversations rather than shut them down.

It is important that we discuss or elicit solutions and practical options so that people leave with something they can do in response to their feelings. For some men, it can be a gendered response to want to 'fix' things, but sometimes it is important to learn to sit with uncomfortable emotions. Reflecting on feelings can be a learning experience in itself.

Reference 18: Working with emotions

> If men are unable to acknowledge women's pain, they are unlikely to know how they and the society they live in contribute to that pain and what is required of them to address it … Men must be able to see women's pain as a precursor to seeing how they are implicated in the causes of that pain, and must take responsibility for it.[70]

See Bob Pease (2019) *Facing patriarchy*, Chapter 12 'Fostering a feminist ethic of care in men' – for more ideas and evidence about the imperatives of working with emotions, the challenges, the benefits, and the issues to look out for.

Amanda Keddie and Doris Bartel – [The affective intensities of gender transformative work: paper and video]

Practitioner reflection 12: Working with emotions

Therapeutic engagement skills such as working with shame, guilt and avoidance can really come in handy in this work. Being responsive is important as sometimes you may need to deviate from what you had planned. Noticing what comes up in a room and addressing it sensitively and constructively is a key skill in change work. There is a subtle and powerful art to responding to what comes up organically and incorporating it into your intended outcomes.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

In terms of intersectional approaches, everything discussed above about men developing empathy for the experiences of women can be extrapolated to white people trying to imagine what racism and colonialism might feel like for Aboriginal people, or what ableism might feel like for people with disabilities, or what heterosexism and cisnormativity feel like for LGBTIQ people. If we haven't had these experiences, we try to imagine by reading, listening and believing the people who have.

Suggested activity 6: Empathy-building

Ask the men in the room what they do to stay safe when they go out, especially at night. Generally, men don't have much of a routine (or any routine) for staying safe in public at night. A woman facilitator can then say what she does to stay safe when she goes out at night. Most women have a long list of things they do to stay safe, for example thinking about what clothes and what shoes they wear, messaging friends what time they plan to arrive, being mindful of where they park, carrying their keys between their fingers to use in self-defence if they need to, etc.

This activity enables men to gain a brief insight into how women experience personal safety very differently to (some) men. Make sure to reiterate the point that women are more in danger of being harmed by a man known to them than by a stranger in public.

This can be a good entry point into talking about male privilege. Use the male and other privilege checklists below as a starting point. Be sure to acknowledge and address other forms of intersecting inequality and privilege when doing these exercises.

- Project Humanities – Male and other privilege checklists
- Equimundo – *Manhood 2.0: A curriculum promoting a gender-equitable future of manhood* has a range of activity ideas

Further resources 8: Empathy building

- ABC Religion & Ethics – Women's stories can make a difference — but only if men will hear them
- Amanda Keddie – There's an urgent need to teach empathy but not everyone will connect or care

Strengths-based approaches work constructively with men where they are at in community-based and community-led ways. Contributors to this work use messaging and language that is familiar and meaningful to their audience. Intersectional approaches invite men to connect with their own experiences of inequality and marginalisation to build empathy for women.

Reference 19: Addressing gender inequality has benefits for everyone

Patriarchy imprisons men as well as women, although this manifests differently and unevenly, with women overall experiencing greater impacts and fewer benefits … The same dominant norms of masculinity and rigid gender roles that harm women (and gender diverse people) also harm men by producing negative physical, emotional and social outcomes for men themselves. This suggests that particular social and public health problems can be improved by efforts to challenge dominant and rigid forms of masculinity … gender transformative work that challenges dominant forms of masculinity has the potential to benefit everyone.

Challenging dominant forms of, or ideas about, masculinity is not about seeking to blame individual men. Rather, this work acknowledges that many men feel pressured to live up to dominant expectations about what it means to 'be a man' … Challenging the dominant social structures, norms and practices that currently define masculinity can deliver benefits for men as well as women and gender diverse people.[71]

Promoting positive male peer relationships

Prevention work promotes positive and respectful male peer relations where men hold each other to account, intervening as active bystanders and challenging the condoning of violence against women if required. Similarly, male peer relations are promoted as supportive spaces where it should be acceptable for men to behave and express themselves free of the confines of rigid gender roles. Strengths-based initiatives will incorporate these positive aspects of male peer relations and balance them with challenging the complicity men have in patriarchal structures and systems. Look for this balance in the examples provided throughout this guide, and think about how you will employ strengths-based approaches in tandem with accountable, intersectional and gender transformative approaches.

Reference 20: Being mindful of the 'men will benefit' approach

Prevention efforts increasingly highlight how men will benefit from a gender-equal system, and utilise this as a strategy to motivate men to engage with prevention. Work that aims to maintain a focus on women while also creating strategies that appeal to men should be approached carefully. Prevention work with men must remain relevant to women and women's organisations that address violence against women … research shows that dominant forms of masculinity, gender inequality and other structural inequalities, harm both men and women, in different and similar ways. This suggests that a focus on the benefits to both men and women do not need to be mutually exclusive. However, we must ensure that women do not fall out of the frame. A gender unequal system impacts both men and women, but it is nevertheless men who receive the majority of the benefits and women who are most negatively impacted.[72]

> 'Man hooks' can … lack intersectional reflection and often normalise the straight, white male, making assumptions regarding age, identity and ability, especially when used in sporting or relationship contexts.[73]

Intersectional approaches can support connection with men – especially men who do not feel very powerful and are marginalised on the basis of other power relations – and engage them while also being critical of patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity and their privilege as males.

**Further resources 9: Strengths-based approaches to working with men and masculinities**

- 'Dear Son': First Nations fathers pen heartfelt letters to family
- Michael Mohammed Ahmad – 'I try to show humanity and beauty': The challenge of separating Arab masculinity from patriarchy
- ARC Gender Relations – Men's groups
- HealthWest's Working Together with Men – Tips for allyhood
- Matt Brown, founder of She is not your rehab – The barbershop where men go to heal TEDx talk
- Dr Michael Flood – Engaging men and boys in preventing men's violence against women presentation and Why men need feminism and feminism needs men presentation

Solutions across all levels of society

While systems of patriarchy are expressed, upheld and reinforced by individuals, ultimately they are institutionalised, politicised and entrenched by structures, practices and norms in our society. To end gender inequality and gender-based violence, we can't just address single factors or individual causes of violence against women. Our work needs to be understood as part of a broader, multi-faceted approach to prevention. Solutions should be addressed at the broader policy, institutional and organisational levels as well as at the community and individual levels. The socio-ecological model (pictured below) demonstrates how structures, norms and practices interact with these different levels at which we seek to affect change across society. Refer to *Change the story* and *Changing the picture* for more in-depth explanations of these concepts.

Figure 6: A socio-ecological model for preventing violence against women
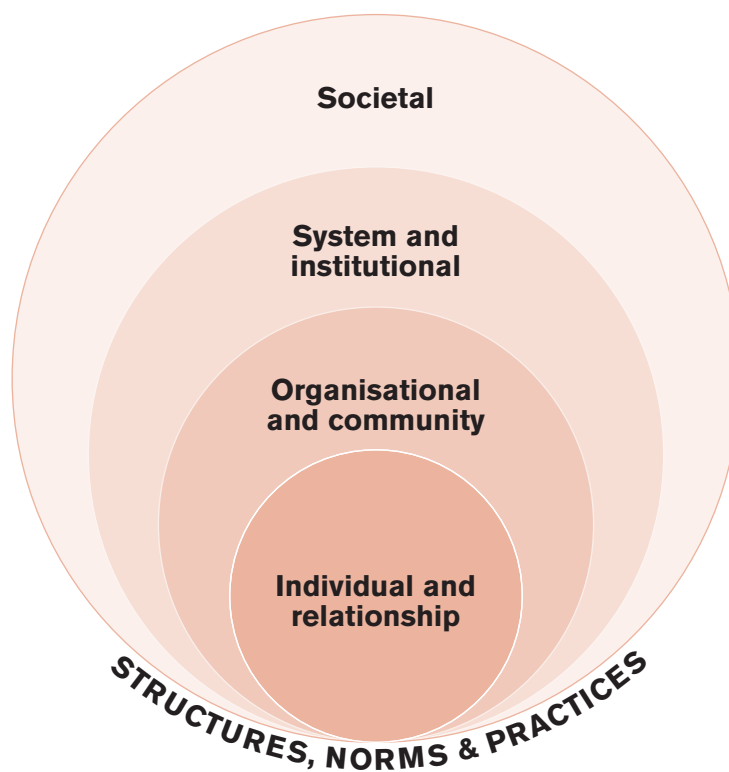
Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*.

See alternative text for Figure 6 on page 142.

Solutions across all levels of society emphasise the importance of tailored, intersectional strategies relevant to diverse communities, contexts and audiences that avoid a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. At the same time, prevention initiatives shouldn't occur in isolation from each other. You need to build partnerships and alliances where possible with other stakeholders, in order to share learnings and to build accountability, sustainability, longevity and diversity into prevention initiatives. Situate your work in the broader network of prevention initiatives and identify the level/s at which your initiative is aimed.

Reference 21: A whole-of-population, gender transformative approach

> Rather than focusing only at the individual level, or seeking single-factor explanations, prevention efforts require a comprehensive focus on how masculinities and gender inequality operate at all different levels of society. Prevention efforts should aim to be gender transformative. That is, to actively challenge dominant forms and patterns of masculinity that operate at and across structural, systemic, organisational, community, interpersonal and individual levels of society.[74]

> We can't only shift mindsets without making structural changes. Likewise, it's no good settling for gender equality within a patriarchal framework. As we continue to make necessary structural change, men need to simultaneously understand and then challenge patriarchal ideologies – including beliefs about the status of women, patriarchal peer relations, the exercise of coercive control in family life and their own individual patriarchal subjectivities.

> Men need to construct their sense of self outside of the framework of patriarchal masculinities. It is thus necessary for men to understand patriarchy and its influence on their lives if they are to find a way of challenging it.[75]

> These changes need to be made in parallel with solutions across all levels of society.

Ensure that your initiative is not limited only to awareness-raising

While raising awareness is critical to building knowledge and increasing literacy around the problems of men's violence against women, on its own it will not prevent violence. Awareness-raising campaigns should not divert money and resources away from prevention initiatives. Rather, they should be deliberately used to reinforce and strengthen complimentary prevention work. If not linked to clear solutions and actions, awareness-raising can actually reinforce the idea that violence is normal and common, rather than challenging people to think and act differently.

The aims and objectives of all prevention initiatives should be clearly stated, as should the ways in which organisations, institutions and groups of people are being compelled to make changes to structures, practices and norms. Part 2 of this guide explores important issues to address, along with corresponding, essential actions.

Reference 22: From awareness to action

> Current funded activity tends to be skewed towards the individual and community levels, with the aim of achieving attitudinal change, rather than supporting actions that will drive institutional, systemic and structural change … This is a significant gap as evidence points to the need for mutually reinforcing multidimensional approaches for primary prevention to be effective.[76]

While the effects of 'awareness-raising' initiatives on their own are usually somewhat limited, they can, when implemented as part of a broader range of strategies, help provide an environment in which social norms can be challenged and changed.[77]

Further reading

Amber Schultz in *Crikey* – Knowing it's a problem is the first step. Too often it's also the last

From awareness to action

Ways to challenge and transform structures, norms and practices include:

Individual and relational change

- Men become active bystanders.
- Men undertake at least half of the domestic chores at home and related child-caring responsibilities.
- Men have positive relations with other men that actively support and encourage gender equality.
- Men are activated to be allies, with ongoing commitment to primary prevention work.
- Men loosen their commitment to rigid, hegemonic masculine norms.

Organisational and community change

- Organisations have equal and adequate parental leave and family violence leave provisions.
- Organisation and management structures reflect greater equity.
- Organisations develop more collaborative and inclusive practices.
- There is an increase in financial and other resourcing commitments to gender equity and prevention work.
- Primary prevention approaches are embedded in policy and in practice.

Policy and legislative change at state and federal levels

- Advocacy for policy and legislative reform.
- Advocacy for women's health.
- Advocacy for childcare reform.

Case study 5: A whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education

The whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education is an example of how effective prevention initiatives work at multiple levels to challenge and transform structures, norms and practices to create lasting, long-term change. The whole-of-school approach addresses the school's culture, its policies and procedures, staff working conditions, professional development opportunities and support for staff, gender equality in the workplace, what is taught to children across all subjects and learning areas, and the relationships modelled to students by their school community, including staff, parents and community groups.

Suggested activity 7: Proven and promising techniques

Use the Handbook pdf (page 93) or online interactive resource to guide a reflection of what level/s of change your initiative will be aimed at, and what proven and promising techniques you will use to implement your actions. These include:

- direct participation programs
- community mobilisation and strengthening
- organisational development
- communications and social marketing
- civil society advocacy.

Longer-term changes

Longer-term changes that represent the goals of prevention work include:

System and institutional change

- Gender equitable, non-violent and inclusive organisations and communities.
- Policies and legislation that prioritise safety and equity for women.

Societal change

- Communities are safe for women, with elimination of violence in the home and in public.
- People of all genders are not negatively discriminated against on the basis of their race, age, religion, Indigeneity, disability, sexuality, history of migration, single parenthood, geographic location, education levels or socioeconomic status.
- Women and men hold at least equal positions of leadership in public life.
- Women and men have equal decision-making powers.
- Women and men are paid equally.
- Men and women equally take up parental leave.

Further resources 10: Solutions across all levels of society

- Our Watch – Equality and Respect in Sport
- Our Watch – *National primary prevention report: Report 1*

Part 2: Addressing gender inequality and the drivers of men's violence against women

Now that we've outlined the five guiding principles, we will explore some ways that prevention initiatives can address the structural, systemic, social and cultural drivers of men's violence against women. We have broadly grouped these topics under headings that represent issues to be addressed in all settings across all levels of society. Those working to prevent violence should have a degree of confidence with these issues in order to challenge and transform them effectively with their audiences.

As these issues are explored, think about:

- how you might already attend to them in your own work
- how you weave the guiding principles from Part 1 through this work
- what elements might be transferrable and likely to be effective in your setting, and
- what alterations and enhancements you might make for the messages to land most effectively with your audiences.

You will see in the following pages many examples of direct participation and organisational change initiatives. This reflects the work done to date in this field. Readers are encouraged to be creative in their approach to designing and delivering programs and campaigns that challenge and transform these issues.

A reminder is provided below to prepare yourself and your audience before you begin. This topic is explored further in Part 3 under 'Preparing yourself to do this work'.

Handling disclosures

Parts of this section are abridged from Safe and Equal – Responding to disclosures.

Given its prevalence, it is likely that you will encounter people personally and professionally who have experienced gender-based violence, who have perpetrated it or perhaps both. Undertaking prevention initiatives may prompt disclosures of family violence or sexual assault due to the awareness these initiatives raise and the environment they create for exploration of less frequently discussed topics. Therefore, it is important to know how to respond to disclosures. All organisations have a responsibility to ensure that staff and volunteers undertaking prevention activities are trained and confident to respond to disclosures.

In Victoria, the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) is the policy framework describing best practice for family violence risk assessment and management, based on current evidence and research. Some Victorian professionals and organisations are prescribed to align to the MARAM Framework, which was established in Part 11 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*. The MARAM Framework states that a broad range of services, organisations, professions and sectors have a shared responsibility for identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk, even where it may not be core business. If you want to learn more about assessing risk and responding to signs of violence, see the MARAM Foundation Knowledge Guide. Depending on your role, you may also be required to share information or request information to respond to family violence under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and Child Information Sharing Scheme.

Group settings or public spaces may not be safe places to disclose. Therefore, always emphasise that prevention spaces are learning spaces, rather than therapeutic spaces. Emphasise safe self-disclosure. If someone does begin to disclose, validate them and contain the disclosure. For example, "Thank you for sharing, that sounds really difficult" or "I'd like to talk to you about that in the break". Check in with the person at your next opportunity and provide them with support and referral services as required.

Knowing your responsibilities and your limitations when responding to disclosures is crucial. The three most important things you can do are to:

- listen, without interruption or judgement
- believe and validate their experiences
- provide information that will support them to make their own choices (as much as possible) in what happens next.

Things not to do when responding to disclosures include:

- try to 'fix' the problem for them, give them solutions or provide counselling
- talk about your own experiences of violence
- ask a lot of questions to try and find out details
- judge or criticise their choices or imply there's things they could have done to 'protect themselves'
- promise you will keep their confidence (if you're not able to do so as a mandated professional)
- get angry or frustrated at the person or their experience
- talk negatively about the perpetrator.

Depending on your role, you may be legally required to share the disclosure with other people if you believe there is an immediate risk of harm. Further considerations should be taken into account if a child or young person is making a disclosure. Ensure that you are aware of departmental policy around mandatory reporting and the Child Safe Standards.

People undertaking prevention initiatives should know about referral pathways for both victim survivors and perpetrators. Some relevant referral options are listed below. Note, these were correct at the time of publishing and should be double-checked before being shared with your audience.

Further resources 11: Common referral options

Situation	Service
Emergencies, immediate danger	**000**
Victim/survivor counselling and referral	**1800RESPECT** – 1800 737 732 www.1800respect.org.au A 24 hours a day, 7 days a week telephone and online trauma counselling service
Mental health crisis support	**Lifeline** – 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services for all Australians experiencing emotional distress
Family violence	**Safe Steps** – 1800 015 188 www.safesteps.org.au Emergency case management support, accommodation, outreach, advocacy, referral and information
Sexual assault	**1800RESPECT** and **Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)** – 9635 3610 www.casahouse.com.au Crisis care support, counselling, advocacy, support groups, secondary consultation and debriefing for health and other professionals, community and professional education
Complex trauma	**Blue Knot Helpline** – 1300 657 380 www.blueknot.org.au Trauma counselling and support for applicants for national redress for survivors of childhood trauma
Aboriginal family violence	**Djirra** – 1800 105 303 djirra.org.au Legal advice and counselling to Aboriginal women and children that are experiencing or have experienced family violence **Dardi Munwurrow Men's helpline** – 1800 435 799 www.dardimunwurro.com.au Crisis support line. 'Support the man … challenge the behaviour.'

Situation	Service
Multicultural family violence	**InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence** – 1800 755 988 www.intouch.org.au Services, programs and responses to issues of family violence in migrant and refugee communities
LGBTIQ referral and information	**QLife** – 1800 184 527 (3 pm – midnight, 7 days a week) www.qlife.org.au LGBTI peer support and referral for people in Australia wanting to talk about sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships **Rainbow Door** – 1800 729 367 (10 am – 5 pm, 7 days a week) www.rainbowdoor.org.au Connecting all LGBTIQA+ people to the services we need
Disability advocacy	**Disability Advocacy Resource Unit** – 9639 5807 www.daru.org.au Information and advocacy for people with disabilities.
Elder abuse support	**Seniors Rights Victoria** – 1300 368 821 www.seniorsrights.org.au Information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse, and to safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people
Perpetrator intervention services	**Men's referral service** – 1300 766 491 www.ntv.org.au Telephone counselling and referral service
Men's generalist counselling service	**MensLine** – 1300 78 99 78 www.mensline.org.au 24-hour telephone counselling and referral service
Medium-term support	Many workplaces offer **EAP** services. These provide staff and family of staff with 3 to 4 free sessions of confidential counselling. Find out if your workplace has EAP and how people can make contact with them if so.
Longer-term support	See your **GP**, get a mental health care plan and find a **counsellor** who's a good fit for you. Make sure that you find a counsellor who is qualified and experienced in addressing family violence issues. In some instances, the assistance provided by counsellors can end up being more detrimental than helpful if they're not experienced in working appropriately with family violence. As with any other profession in our society, these professionals may be susceptible to victim-blaming, mutualisation of violence, condoning of violence, or merely providing therapy when safety planning and risk interventions are required. Internet searches will help you find mental health professionals who specialise in family violence or sexual assault. The Australian Psychological Society has an online database that allows you to search for psychologists by location and by issue.

For further information about relevant support services, please visit Safe and Equal.

Suggested activity 8: Before you begin

Incorporate trauma-informed approaches to the delivery of your project that attend to the physical, psychological and emotional safety of your participants. Be clear and transparent about what topics will be explored. Inform people of their support options and identify appropriate people with whom participants can check in if they need to. These can include telephone helplines and, if available, work employee assistance programs (EAPs).

Outlining the problem of men's violence against women

Before we can end men's violence against women, we must first ensure that people know what violence is, how it is perpetrated, how it is experienced, how it harms, its prevalence, what causes it, and the underlying contributing factors. It's common for people to not be fully aware of the many different ways that violence is perpetrated by men, or that violence is more than just physical violence. Physical violence is incredibly serious and the leading contributor to illness, disability and premature death for women by preventable causes.[78] However, people should also be educated about the many other forms of gender-based violence. For a deeper analysis of masculinities and engaging men in prevention of men's violence against women, refer to the *Men in focus* evidence review.

Practitioner reflection 13: Acknowledging men's experience of violence

We find in our work with men, it is crucial to state upfront that 'Yes, men experience violence too – usually at the hands of other men. And yes, sometimes women perpetrate violence against men. But the majority of violence is perpetrated by men towards women [or other men], which is why we're focusing on that today.' If you don't do that right at the start of the conversation, there will be multiple people in the audience wanting to interrupt you and point this out. We have had men in our sessions who have experienced violence and if you don't validate their experience before moving into the content, you'll have lost them.

Union organiser and trainer (she/her)

Defining men's violence against women

Men's violence against women refers to all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual, emotional, financial, spiritual, social, physical, psychological and technology-facilitated violence. These acts of violence may be perpetrated by a partner, a family member, a friend, a colleague, someone close to or known to a woman, or by someone not known to a woman.

Women also experience structural violence perpetrated and reinforced by men, systems, structures, institutions, social attitudes and behaviours. These include, but are not limited to, institutionalised racism, sexism and classism, women's lack of control over their own bodies, hate crimes, racial violence, cultural violence, police violence, state violence, terrorism and war.

Violence may occur in the home, at work, in institutions, online or in public. It may be experienced as a one-off incident, but is usually part of broader, ongoing patterns of abusive behaviour. Its impacts can be far-reaching and long-term. For a detailed definition see 'What is violence against women and their children?' in *Change the story*.

Following, is a practitioner reflection about delivering education and training on the types of violence that occur, with a suggested activity for introducing these ideas to your audience.

Practitioner reflection 14: Introducing your audience to types of violence against women

Whenever I'm asked to either develop or provide training to communities or groups, I always make sure that the different types of violence and how they are used against women is clearly named and discussed. So that means a detailed list of the 20 or so forms, and examples of what this might look like. I do this to create a baseline of knowledge and understanding of what we're talking about, because there are still so many gaps in people's understanding of what we mean by 'violence'. We want men to stop it, or be part of stopping other men, yet a lot of the time they don't know what acts are violent.

When I hold training with groups of women they see the list and there is general consensus that yes, that list represents the acts. Sometimes women might have a question about a specific form: 'Could it look like this as well?', etc. When the room is mostly men, there is a heaviness, a mixed shock that comes into the room, with comments like 'I didn't realise there was so many [types of violence]', or 'How do you know these are all used that often? Like, how do you know these are facts?', or 'All men really need to see this', or 'There are men I know that do some of these things.'

I've learnt that with men this activity is more triggering than it is with victim/survivors. Shame and shock really mix in and it has to be placed in the training in a spot that has support built around it. I often have a breakout activity connected to it, so they can chat with others and have a moment to collect themselves.

I give examples of high-profile cases in the media that outline these forms or acts of violence and get them to begin to empathise with just how many micro and macro acts women experience on a daily basis. This activity can also help link to a 'homework' exercise that gets them to make note of other men's behaviour towards women as they go about their day. I had one young guy in a workshop who I knew worked in a bar and I asked him, as part of the group discussion, 'So you'd see heaps of acts of violence towards women in your job?' and he shook his head and said he worked for a really decent bar, etc., etc. I asked him to just try the activity at work and report back at the next workshop.

Next workshop he was almost ashen and speechless. 'I saw pretty much everything you listed. It's like I'd never worked there before, I had new eyes. Everywhere I looked I saw stuff I'd never noticed. We don't even have a policy for a lot of this stuff, or things they want us to do if this happens. I mean, that's what you mean by structural too, hey? The fact that we accept that will happen in a bar and do nothing about it, because it's just the way it is.'

It's really important to remember that something like even exploring what violence is can take a whole workshop and that activities that require men to go back into their world and report back are very crucial and powerful when done right.

Prevention manager (she/her)

Suggested activity 9: Types of violence

Start by brainstorming with your audience the different types of violence that people can think of as broad headings – for example, financial, sexual, social, psychological, spiritual, physical, etc. Write these down as headings. Fill in any headings that are missing until you have them all written down. Next, move on to brainstorming examples of each of these types of violence. See Practitioner reflection 14 for ideas to help prepare for the kinds of discussion this activity might lead to.

Note: It's important to prepare for the likelihood that you will have people in your audience who have either experienced gender-based violence or perpetrated it, or both. This means that in participating in exercises such as this, where different forms of violence are defined and named, some people might only be realising and/or naming behaviours that they have perpetrated, experienced or witnessed as constituting violence for the first time. For some, this work may motivate or encourage them to want to do something further about their own situation. For others, it might stir feelings of resistance to this work. This is where providing clear information on referral options is key, as is preparing for backlash and resistance. It will also be important to be prepared to respond to disclosures. Further information pertaining to these issues are explored in later sections of this guide.

Starting resources
- 1800RESPECT – What does domestic and family violence involve?
- Our Watch and Commonwealth Bank – videos of 8 leaders on how your workplace can support employees impacted by domestic and family violence
- Our Watch – *Unpacking violence: A storytelling resource for understanding nonphysical forms of abuse and the gendered drivers of violence against women*
- MARAM (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management) – Foundation knowledge guide

Resources that expand on different forms of violence that women experience
- Our Watch's *Prevention Handbook* website – Different types of gendered abuse
- ABC News – Britney Spears case highlights issue of reproductive coercion, which causes suffering for many Australian women
- Australian women read abusive tweets video
- Male writers react to mean comments their female co-workers get online video
- ABC News – Most women who reported incidents of street harassment were not happy about the response, new study shows
- *Guardian* – We've come to expect being treated badly on dating apps
- ABC *Four Corners* – Tinder: A predators' playground
- *The Conversation* – #MeToo on TikTok: Teens use viral trend to speak out about their sexual harassment experiences

This guide frequently refers to structures upholding inequality. A definition of structural discrimination and disadvantage is provided below, along with some examples of how they are experienced by women.

Reference 23: Structural discrimination and disadvantage

Structural discrimination and disadvantage refers to norms, policies and systems present within politics, the legal system, education, workplaces and healthcare that are intended to be neutral but in effect present obstacles to groups or individuals in achieving the same rights and opportunities available to dominant groups within the population.[79]

Examples include:

1. A report is made to the police of an Aboriginal woman experiencing family violence. This might lead to her children being taken away from her by child protection and her ending up in jail herself. This situation contributes to Aboriginal women being the fastest-growing prison population in Australia.[80] Alternatively, an Aboriginal woman does not report violence to the police because she is worried about the above scenario, and/or the possibility of her partner being harmed or dying in police custody.

    Not all of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody released in 1991 have been implemented[81] and not all women feel equally protected by the police or the justice system and these structures can be inequitable.[82]

2. Women are traumatised and retraumatised by the justice system by being strip-searched in prison, or by the way they are interrogated and treated when they report experiencing sexual violence.[83] Victim/survivors of sexual assault are either not believed, or are blamed for their abuse, or for not doing something to prevent it, or not reporting it as soon as it happened.[84]

3. Women with disabilities face barriers to leaving an abusive relationship such as inaccessible support services and appropriate resources not being available, or lack of access to paid family violence leave. Many women with disabilities cite fear of not being believed as the most significant barrier to accessing support.[85]

4. Women experience higher rates of poverty and are more reliant on their partners due to the gender pay gap, the amount of unpaid labour they undertake, and having less superannuation in retirement.[86]

Suggested activity 10: Types of violence and intersectionality

Men's violence against women is more prevalent and more severe for women who experience intersecting forms of marginalisation and discrimination. Explore and discuss how:

- Structures and social norms do not treat violence against some women as seriously as violence against other women.
- Systems and institutions can perpetrate violence against marginalised women.
- Society is less likely to hold men (and institutions) to account for this violence.
- Women's experiences of violence can be minimised, excused or invisibilised by systems, structures and social norms.
- Some men/people using violence will purposefully target victim survivors' identities and experiences as part of their use of violence. This includes direct actions towards the victim survivor, e.g., removing or breaking disability aids, or using systems to reinforce/perpetrate violence against them, e.g., falsifying reports to child protection leading to having children removed (systems abuse).[87]

Explore and discuss how prevention work should address the systems and structures that drive other forms of discrimination and inequality.

If you aren't already partnered with and promoting the work of Aboriginal community organisations, disability organisations, LGBTIQ organisations, etc., plan for how you could do this.

- Ideas for bringing intersectionality into practice – Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children

Further resources 12: The power and control wheel

If you are not already, familiarise yourself with Duluth's Power and Control wheel. The Duluth Model of family violence intervention is named after a city in North America where women developed a whole-of community approach to ending family violence. The power and control wheel forms a central part of the Duluth model in the way it identifies common behaviours of men who choose to perpetrate family violence. The wheel's design is based on extensive consultation with victim/survivors of family violence in which common abusive behaviours and tactics used against women are represented.

This is a commonly used resource that not only serves to educate, but also to support victim/survivors to understand that they are not alone and that much of what they have experienced is part of broader patterns of behaviour through which men maintain power and control in abusive relationships. The wheel can also be used with men to reflect on their use of any of the behaviours.

The Duluth website has videos explaining sections of the wheel, different versions of the wheel adapted to specific settings, and wheels translated into languages other than English.

Addressing 'myths' and misunderstandings related to gender-based violence is an important component of prevention work, but it does need to be done with caution. If too much focus is placed on myths and facts, there is evidence that people go on to remember the myth more than the fact.[88] Therefore, practitioners should be prepared to address any myths that are raised while doing this work, but it is not recommended to deliver a specific exercise framed as 'addressing myths'.

Practitioner reflection 15: Drivers of men's violence against women and reinforcing factors

Ensure that you address commonly held myths relating to the reinforcing factors, such as alcohol use or poverty. Discuss how these are not predictors of violence – rather, they are exacerbating factors. Violence against women occurs across the social spectrum. Men who use alcohol, men who don't use alcohol, men with mental health issues, men without mental health issues, men from all class backgrounds, all racial and religious backgrounds do and don't perpetrate violence. That is why none of these factors are considered drivers of violence, but are seen as contributing or reinforcing factors.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Reference 24: Common misunderstandings and myths about gender-based violence

Rape myths and victim-blaming

These include myths about why women are raped, where and by whom women are raped, whose fault it is, and the reality of how many rapes actually go unreported and how rare false reporting of rape is. Resources that help address some of these myths include:

- Maddy King via Triple J *Hack* – Guys, you can stop worrying about false rape allegations. They're extremely rare
- ABC News – Rough justice: How police are failing survivors of sexual assault
- Shaez Mortimer, Anastasia Powell and Larissa Sandy – 'Typical scripts' and their silences: Exploring myths about sexual violence and LGBTQ people from the perspectives of support workers
- Rachel Loney-Howes – *Online anti-rape activism: Exploring the politics of the personal in the age of digital media* discusses how rape of women is predominantly perpetrated by husbands, partners and family members, not strangers, and that it is more common than most people – men especially – would realise. The contested definitions of 'rape culture' are also explored.

Approximately nine out of ten women who have been physically or sexually assaulted reported that the assault was perpetrated by a man they know. This statistic challenges the 'good bloke' versus the 'monster myth', where the types of men who assault women are commonly portrayed by the media to be scary strangers stalking women down dark alleyways – rather than men known to women and often loved by women as being the more likely perpetrators of physical and sexual violence.

Family and domestic violence – Why don't they just leave?

ABC TV's *You Can't Ask That* – domestic and family violence episode

Men's violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience disproportionately higher rates and severity of gender-based violence, this is not a problem to do with Aboriginal culture. Currently there is insufficient data on the cultural background of men who perpetrate violence against Aboriginal women, but the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria (now Djirra) have routinely seen Aboriginal women who have experienced family violence at the hands of men from a range of different backgrounds and cultures, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.[89] Preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is everyone's business.

The drivers of men's violence against Aboriginal women can be found in *Changing the picture*.

Other resources

Our Watch and Diversity Council of Australia – *Myth busting domestic and family violence at work: Using evidence to debunk common myths and assumptions*

If appropriate, you may want to discuss with your audience:

- *What impact do these myths and misconceptions have on women, children and the problem of gender-based violence?*
- *How are these attitudes and beliefs reflected in structures and social norms?*
- *What can we all do, men in particular, to address these problems?*

Depending on your setting, and the level of resistance you experience, you may want to run activities that address the issue of violence against men and/or explore the issue of violence against LGBTIQ people. Brief suggestions for how this might look are offered below.

Suggested activity 11: Men's violence against men

Discuss and explore the links between men's violence against other men, rigid masculine stereotypes and gender roles, the Man Box, homophobia, condoning of violence, sport, and the military.

Suggested activity 12: Drivers of violence experienced by LGBTIQ people

Explore and acknowledge the drivers of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Highlight the links between these and rigid gender norms. Acknowledge and educate on how these lead to violence against LGBTIQ people.

Further reading

Rainbow Health Victoria – *Pride in prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities*

Prevalence of men's violence against women

The scale and the impact of men's violence against women has been researched and measured extensively, both here in Australia and globally. It is a problem that occurs across all social and economic contexts.[90] Additional forms of discrimination and oppression – including colonisation, racism, ableism, classism, homophobia, transphobia and ageism – intersect with sexism, increasing the prevalence, severity and impacts of men's violence experienced by women.

Intimate partner violence is the greatest health risk factor (greater than smoking, alcohol and obesity) for women aged 18 to 44 years and contributes more to the burden of disease (the impact of illness, disability and premature death) of women in this age range than any other risk factor.[91] On average, one woman a week is killed in Australia by her intimate partner or ex-partner, and approximately four in five victims killed by an intimate partner are women.[92]

While murder is one extreme result of gender-based violence, it is only the tip of the iceberg. In Australia, police deal with a family violence matter on average every two minutes.[93] One in three women report experiencing physical or sexual violence, or both, perpetrated by a man they know; one in four women has experienced emotional abuse by a partner; one in two women has experienced sexual harassment; and one in five women has experienced sexual violence.[94] As outlined in Part 2, there are many other forms of violence that are far more common and impactful than we can measure.

It is important to note that most, if not all, of the prevalence data relates to those who have experienced violence. Data on perpetration of violence is limited. Whenever you undertake prevention work you are recommended to seek out the most up-to-date data. Keep in mind the current limitations of prevalence statistics for all groups of people due to the lack of disaggregation of much of the data currently collected.
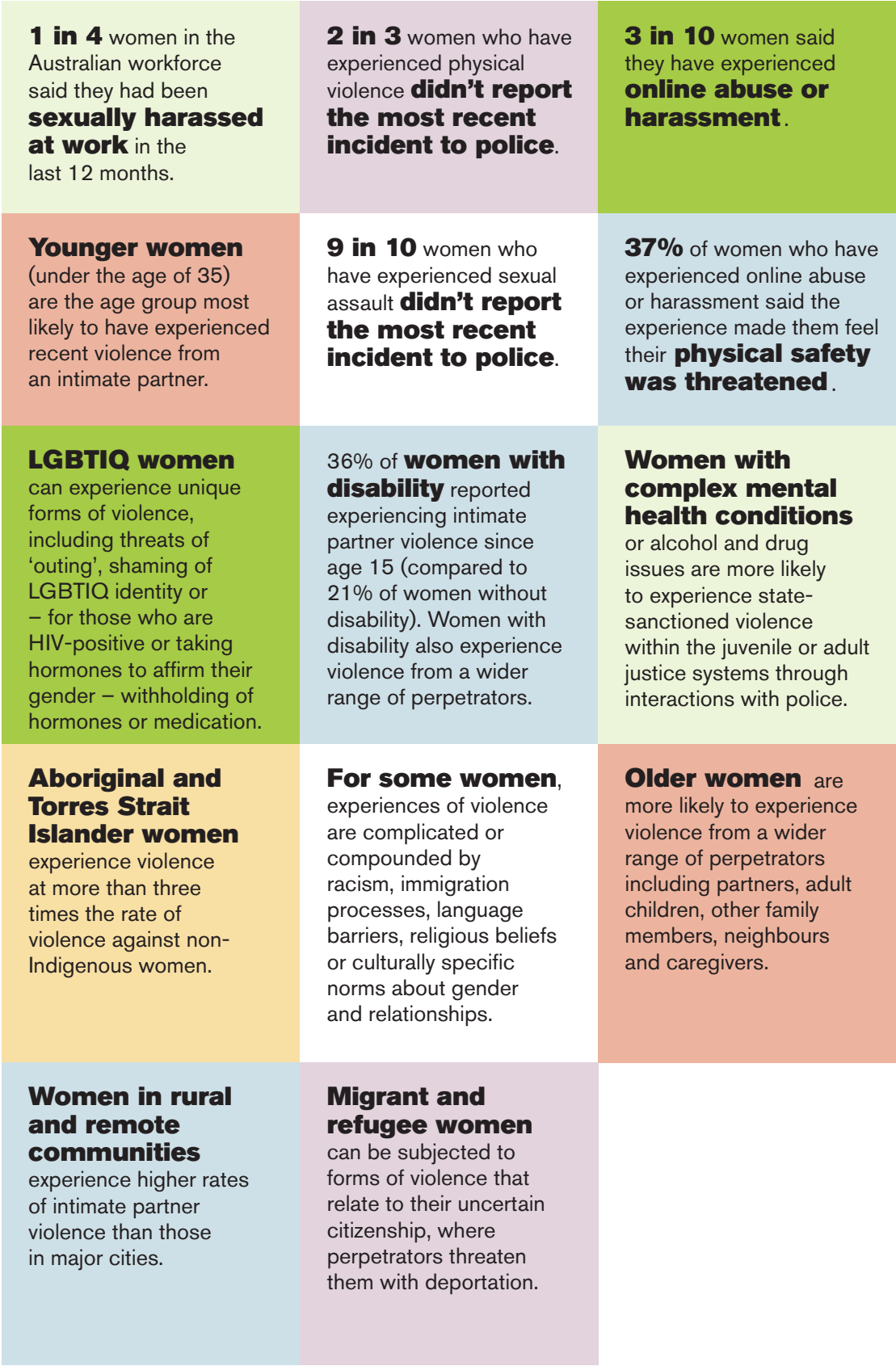
Further resources 13: Sources of up-to-date statistics

- Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) – *Violence against women: Accurate use of key statistics*
- Our Watch – Quick facts
- Destroy the Joint – Counting dead women
- Safe and Equal – Family violence statistics
- ANROWS – National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS)
- She's a Crowd – Counteracting violence through data collection
- Police reported family violence incidents occurring in all Victoria

Figure 7: Prevalence of various forms of violence against women in Australia

1 in 2	1 in 3	1 in 4	1 in 5
women has experienced **sexual harassment** in their lifetime.	women has experienced **physical violence** by a partner, other known person or a stranger since the age of 15.	women has experienced **emotional abuse** by a current or former partner since the age of 15.	women has experienced **sexual violence** since the age of 15.

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story*, with data from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017.[95]

Refer to alternative text for Figure 7 on page 142.

Figure 8: Types, prevalence and dynamics of violence against women in Australia: the current picture

1 in 4 women in the Australian workforce said they had been **sexually harassed at work** in the last 12 months.

2 in 3 women who have experienced physical violence **didn't report the most recent incident to police**.

3 in 10 women said they have experienced **online abuse or harassment**.

Younger women (under the age of 35) are the age group most likely to have experienced recent violence from an intimate partner.

9 in 10 women who have experienced sexual assault **didn't report the most recent incident to police**.

37% of women who have experienced online abuse or harassment said the experience made them feel their **physical safety was threatened**.

LGBTIQ women can experience unique forms of violence, including threats of 'outing', shaming of LGBTIQ identity or – for those who are HIV-positive or taking hormones to affirm their gender – withholding of hormones or medication.

36% of **women with disability** reported experiencing intimate partner violence since age 15 (compared to 21% of women without disability). Women with disability also experience violence from a wider range of perpetrators.

Women with complex mental health conditions or alcohol and drug issues are more likely to experience state-sanctioned violence within the juvenile or adult justice systems through interactions with police.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience violence at more than three times the rate of violence against non-Indigenous women.

For some women, experiences of violence are complicated or compounded by racism, immigration processes, language barriers, religious beliefs or culturally specific norms about gender and relationships.

Older women are more likely to experience violence from a wider range of perpetrators including partners, adult children, other family members, neighbours and caregivers.

Women in rural and remote communities experience higher rates of intimate partner violence than those in major cities.

Migrant and refugee women can be subjected to forms of violence that relate to their uncertain citizenship, where perpetrators threaten them with deportation.

Source: Our Watch's *Change the story* (see *Change the story* Appendix 1 for references).

Refer to alternative text for Figure 8 on page 143.

Prevalence of men's violence against women from different backgrounds

The identity and social location of both perpetrator and victim/survivor plays a significant role in both the perpetration and experiences of men's violence against women. Further information on this can be found at: The Equality Institute – *Family violence primary prevention: Building a knowledge base and identifying gaps for all manifestations of family violence*.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are up to 35 times more likely to experience domestic and family violence than non-Indigenous Australian women and are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence assaults.[96] One in three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls will be raped in their lifetime.[97] The urgency of the problem of men's violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is outlined in Our Watch's *Changing the picture*, which outlines misconceptions related to men's violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and the ways that colonisation and trauma interplay with the gendered drivers of violence.

Figure 9: The intersecting drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
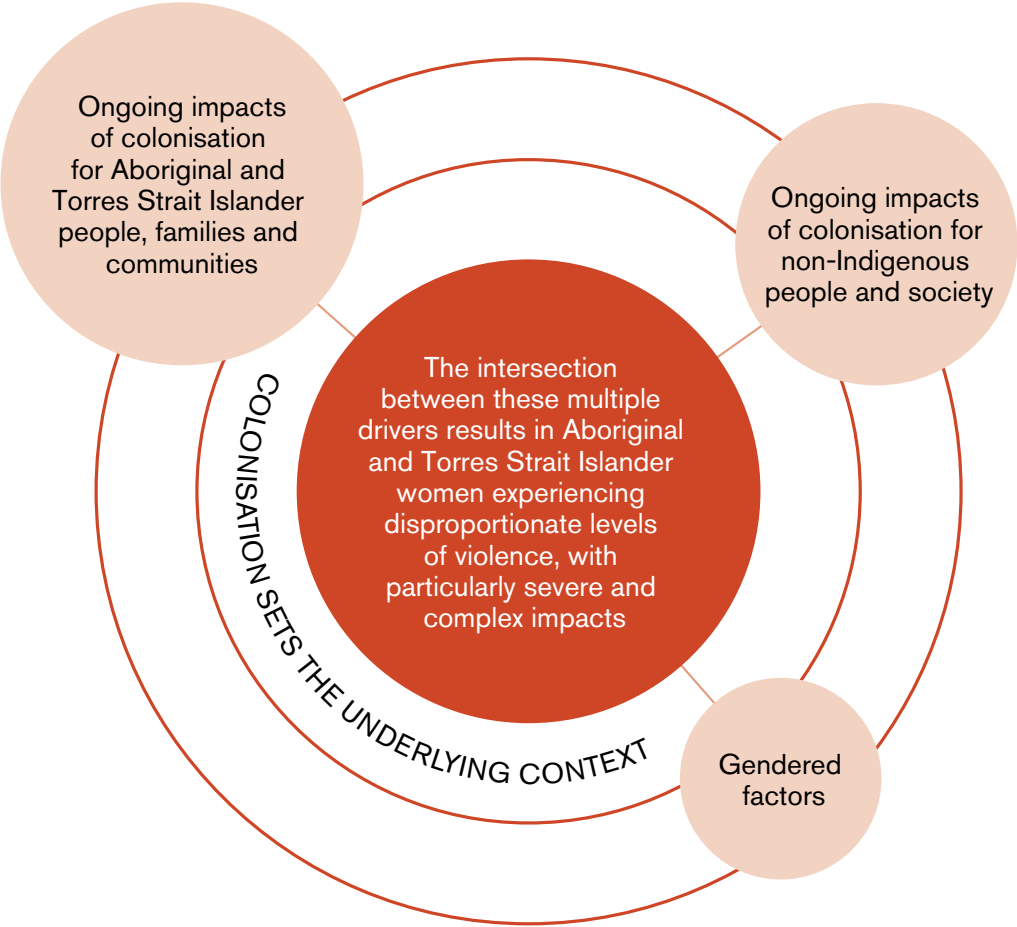
Adapted from Tangentyere Council. (2019). *The Grow Model of family violence primary prevention: Changing attitudes and beliefs to stop violence before it begins*. Mparntwe: Tangentyere Council, p. 4. Adapted with permission.

For example, gender-based violence is not a part of Indigenous cultures. **Violence is perpetrated against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women by men from a range of different racial and cultural backgrounds.**[98] This is important to note, as many people, especially in the media, imply that violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is only perpetrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have experienced structural violence since colonisation and through to this day, including dispossession, rape, murder and family separation.

The impacts of this violence perpetuate intergenerational trauma in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. While justice, truth-telling and reparations for colonial violence continue to not be addressed by settlers in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services incorporate healing processes into prevention initiatives to address this trauma. *Changing the picture* outlines essential actions that all Australians can take to address the legacies and ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities as well as for non-Indigenous people, and across Australian society.[99] Examples of effective initiatives working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are presented in Part 1 under 'Reference 13: Prevention initiatives engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men' and Part 3 under 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations'.

Further resources 14: Voices of Aboriginal women in primary prevention

- Hear Dr Hannah McGlade speak about the unique challenges involved with Aboriginal women's experience of gender-based violence, including the ongoing impacts of colonisation, genocide and intergenerational trauma and the need to address structural issues and expand the delivery of culturally safe, appropriate and community-led collective healing models to address violence prevention in Aboriginal communities.
- Antoinette Braybrook speech – First nations women fight family violence and win the vote
- Amy McQuire in IndigenousX – Mainstream feminism still blind to its racism
- Ashlee Donohue – A racist system is failing First Nations women. Let us lead the way on domestic violence
- *First Nations Telegraph* – Indigenous women respond to the domestic violence epidemic on NITV's We say no more
- National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services – Prevalence statistics and infographics

Women with disability

Women with disabilities are almost twice as likely to experience partner violence than women without a disability.[100] Young women aged 18 to 29 with disability were twice as likely to report experiencing sexual violence over their lifetime than those without a disability. Regarding impairment type, in the last year (to March 2021), people with cognitive and psychological impairments report higher rates of all types of violence compared to people with other types of impairments.[101] Sobsey and Doe's 1991 study postulated that 83 per cent of women with a learning disability in America had been sexually abused in their life, often repeatedly.[102] People who abuse women with disability are often carers, family members and other people known to the women. This creates difficulties in measuring the prevalence of violence against women with disability, and also responding to it and preventing it. Women with disability will often be reliant on the person abusing them for care and thus experience additional challenges in reporting abuse and seeking support.

Further resources 15: Violence against women with disabilities

Women with Disabilities Victoria – Preventing and responding to violence against women with disabilities

Women from migrant and refugee backgrounds

Violence occurs against women all over the world and across the social and cultural spectrum. Any single culture or race of people is no more or less violent than another. Patriarchy is ubiquitous, it just expresses itself differently in different cultures. However, the effects of gender-based violence, as well as barriers to help-seeking, are greater for women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.[103]

Reference 25: Violence against women from migrant and refugee backgrounds

Disclosure and help-seeking can be complicated by factors relating to culture, religion, language, past refugee experiences, current settlement experiences, citizenship status, financial insecurity, a lack of access to appropriate services and an absence of family and friends for support. [In addition] … mainstream service systems are generally not equipped to respond adequately to the specific needs of women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.[104]

Further reading
- Central News – Dr Anne Aly, advocate and survivor of domestic violence
- SBS Punjabi – Why do sexual assault survivors face so many barriers to justice?

LGBTIQ people

LGBTIQ people experience intimate partner and family violence at comparable, if not greater, rates than the general population.[105] Homophobia, transphobia, heteronormativity and cisnormativity impact the way that LGBTIQ people experience domestic and family violence, their likelihood of reporting the violence, and the supports they have access to if and when they do report. Certain LGBTIQ people are at even greater risk of experiencing family and domestic violence, not reporting it and being impacted by it. These include people that are under the age of 25, or are gender diverse or trans, or who have a disability, are multi-gender attracted, Indigenous, or from certain ethnic and cultural backgrounds.[106]

In addition, LGBTIQ people experience heterosexist violence and harassment in public.[107] The roots of this violence are in gendered constructions and reinforcement of social norms, heteronormativity and cisnormativity. This violence is gendered and solutions to addressing it share many commonalities to preventing violence against women.

Further resources 16: Gender-based violence experienced by LGBTIQ people

- Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society – Writing themselves in 4
- *The Conversation* – 9 in 10 LGBTQ+ students say they hear homophobic language at school, and 1 in 3 hear it almost every day
- An opinion piece that explores some of the complexities of intersectional understandings of abuse – LGBTQ elderly face abuse, but the Royal Commission let them down
- *Women's Agenda* – Let's change the conversation around family violence to include experiences of LGBTIQ+ people

Older women

Older women are disproportionately impacted by elder abuse.[108] Elder abuse can occur in the home, where it is predominantly perpetrated by family members, or in aged care facilities. The recent Royal Commission into Aged Care highlighted a litany of shocking examples of elder abuse, violence and sexual assault. Intersections of sexism and ageism are evident in Australia's aged care industry, where structural issues such as poor working conditions, low pay, casualisation of the (largely female) workforce and a lack of training and support for staff contribute to the substandard conditions in many aged care facilities that lead to abuse and violence occurring.[109]

Ageism intersects with gender inequality to increase the likelihood of older women experiencing abuse. Other factors such as disability, cultural and linguistic background and sexual orientation can increase the frequency or severity of the violence, and decrease the likelihood that the victim/survivor will report the violence and receive adequate support to stop it from continuing.[110] Elder abuse was observed to have risen during the COVID-19 lockdowns in Australia in 2020.[111] Older women are more likely to be living in poverty and are the highest growing population of homeless people in Australia.[112]

Further resources 17: Addressing gender-based violence experienced by older women

- Our Watch – Ageing without fear: Elder abuse discussion papers and Preventing intimate partner violence against older women
- Respect Victoria – Respect older people: 'Call It Out'
- Seniors Rights Victoria – Elder abuse

Women in rural and remote locations

Women experiencing domestic and family violence perpetrated by men in rural and remote areas are less likely to report their experiences of violence, as compared to women in urban settings. This is despite the incidence of family violence being higher in rural and remote areas.[113] Specific issues deter these women from reporting violence and seeking help, related to geographic location, isolation, lack of supports, and the social and cultural characteristics of living in small communities, which include fear of judgement, stigma and lack of privacy.[114]

Further resources 18: Women in rural and remote locations

ABC News – Primary prevention programs for domestic violence in the regions 'crucial' in keeping women safe

Impacts of men's violence against women and their children

The impacts of family violence on women and their children can be devastating and lifelong. A growing body of research highlights how children can be impacted by family violence in utero and how early exposure to family violence can cause lifelong physical and mental health issues.[115] Not only the experience of gender-based violence itself, but the underlying threat or possibility of gender-based violence, is a reality that many women live with on a daily basis. Women are inculcated from a young age as to what they should do and how they should behave to avoid being the victim of gender-based violence. Suggested activity 6 seeks to help men build empathy for women by enlightening them as to all the things women do (and are told to do) to stay safe from sexual predation.

The information in Further resources 19, below, will aid you in your delivery of primary prevention initiatives, and can help to build the motivation and engagement of your male audience.

Further resources 19: Impacts of violence

- Our Watch's *Prevention Handbook* website – The impacts of violence against women
- ANROWS – Fast facts – Impacts of family, domestic and family violence
- ANROWS poster displaying how intimate partner violence affects quality of life
- Victim Survivors' Advisory Council – stories of victim survivors

Impacts of violence on children

- A wheel displaying how violence affects children
- The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – Family violence: Effects on children's health
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute – Children exposed to intimate partner violence twice as likely to have poorer language skills and mental and physical health
- *Guardian* – Family violence can affect children even before birth, Royal Commission told

Impacts of COVID-19 on women and girls

As this guide was being written and published, the world was still very much in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Major crises and disasters often lead to spikes in violence against women.[116] Emerging research at this time is highlighting rises in the prevalence of gender-based violence during the pandemic as many women have been forced into closer living quarters with abusive partners, with fewer options for leaving these relationships as hard lockdowns have been enforced across the world. This rise in family and domestic violence is being referred to by some as the shadow pandemic. Women have been the worst affected by job losses, reduced hours, reduced incomes, increased burden of unpaid domestic labour (including home schooling), working on the front lines of the health responses to the pandemic, and working in precarious employment. This threatens to have a long-lasting impact on the gains that had been made in addressing gender inequality.

Further resources 20: Impacts of COVID-19 on women and girls

- VicHealth – *Victorians' experiences of sexism and sexual harassment while working remotely due to the coronavirus* [PDF download]
- Rainbow Health – *COVID-19: Impacts for LGBTIQ communities and implications for services*
- Monash University – Responding to the 'Shadow Pandemic' paper and webinars
- UN Women – How COVID-19 impacts women and girls
- Australian Institute of Criminology – *The prevalence of domestic violence among women during the COVID-19 pandemic*
- Cambridge University Press – Masculine norms and infectious disease: The case of COVID-19
- *Guardian* – Disaster patriarchy: How the pandemic has unleashed a war on women

Challenging the condoning of men's violence against women

When aggression and disrespect towards women are seen as natural parts of being 'one of the boys', it is more likely violence towards women will be excused – by the perpetrator, their peers and the wider community. In this way, violence condoned in structures and norms can be expressed and perpetuated at the individual level and cross over with another of the gendered drivers of violence: *Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control*.

Male peer culture can amplify control, domination and aggression as essential elements of masculinity. There are benefits and costs associated with living up to these expectations and the fragility of masculinity might make it feel difficult for men to disrupt or call out this way of being.[117] Suggested activity 21 explores ways that men can challenge and transform the 'Man Box'.

Exploring content related to the condoning of men's violence against women is an important way of bringing to light the many ways in which it occurs. Activities that highlight its prevalence and seek to challenge and transform it are suggested below.
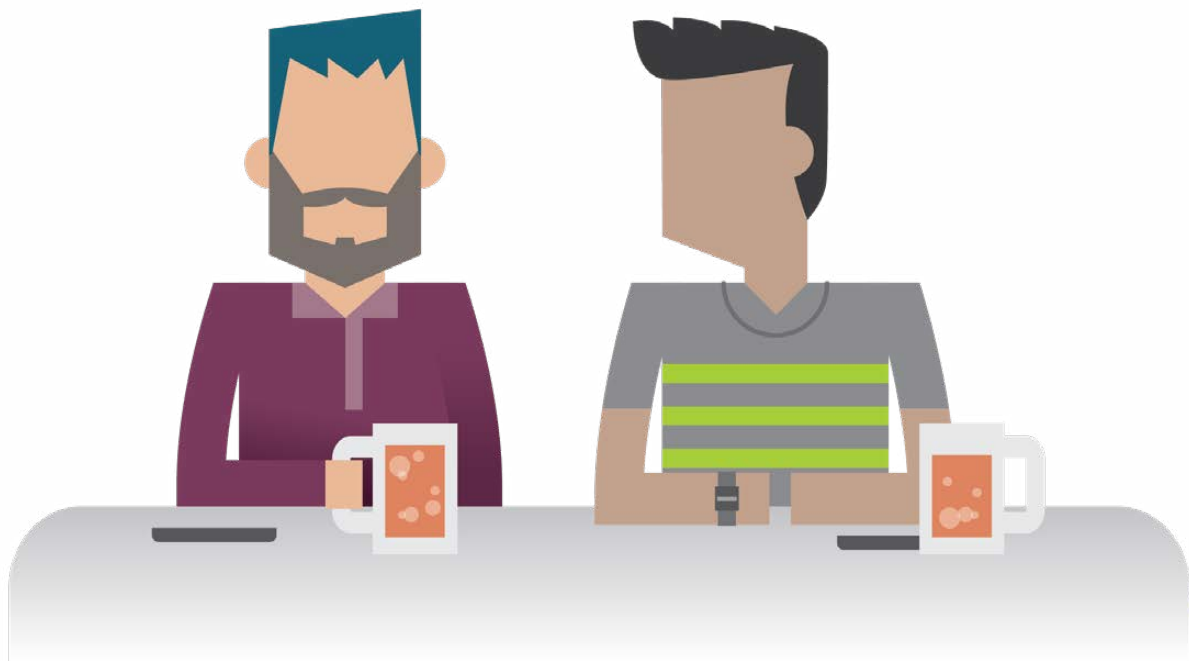
Suggested activity 13: The condoning of violence in the media and public

Provide examples and generate discussion of how men's violence against women is reported in the media. Analyse language that victim-blames, minimises the violence, and seeks to explain and excuse the perpetrator's behaviour. Do media reports appropriately address the gendered drivers? Do they misconstrue contributing or reinforcing factors such as alcohol use and mental illness as *causes* of the violence?

Find reports on violence against women of colour, women with disabilities, trans women and other women who face additional marginalisation and discrimination. Explore how victim-blaming is amplified and violence against these women is further justified and invisibilised.

Broaden the discussion to common statements people make about women who have experienced violence: *She was drunk. What she was wearing? Why was she there in the first place? Why didn't she just leave?*, etc. Explore how responsibility is put on women to keep themselves safe rather than on men to not be violent, and for other men to do something about men's violence? How are men who choose to perpetrate violence against women portrayed? How is men's violence minimised, explained, justified and invisibilised?

Examples:

- *Women's Agenda* – This could be the most egregious example of victim-blaming ever printed
- ANROWS – *Media representations of violence against women and their children: Final report*
- Tom Meagher – The danger of the monster myth
- Research showing a link between attitudes that condone violence against women and a corresponding increase in the rates of actual violence against women perpetrated by men – Misogynistic tweets correlate with violence against women

Discuss:

- *The impact that these attitudes and beliefs have on women and the problem of gender-based violence?*
- *How are these attitudes and beliefs reflected in structures and social norms?*
- *What can we all do, men in particular, to address these problems at all levels?*

Do an online search for 'sexist ads'. Discuss:

- How do these images promote sexism, objectification of women, gender inequality?
- How do they contribute to the condoning of violence in marketing?
- What stereotypes do these ads build on to sell their product?

If people argue that these are only light-hearted and people don't take them seriously, discuss how much money is spent annually on research and audience-testing ads in order to tap into human psychology.

Suggested activity 14: Social norms, attitudes, beliefs

Ask participants to think of examples in their own social settings where attitudes that condone violence against women are tolerated and even perpetuated. Generate discussion about:

- Men protecting other men who have used violence against women.
- Men in prominent positions who behave abusively experiencing no consequences.
- Men emphasising other men's good qualities when a man is alleged to have perpetrated violence, for example their contribution to their field.
- Men using homophobic slurs to put other men down.
- Men sharing jokes about rape and gender-based violence.
- Men's treatment of women in pornography that perpetuate the idea that women enjoy being harmed for men's sexual enjoyment.

Use stories from the media and the public sphere and share personal anecdotes where safe and appropriate to do so. What messages do these examples reinforce about men's violence against women and people with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations?

The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) encapsulates how Australians understand men's violence against women, their attitudes towards it, what influences their attitudes, and whether there is any change over time. It also gauges attitudes to gender equality and people's preparedness to intervene when witnessing violence or its precursors.

ABC News – What divides men and women? The Australia Talks survey reveals quite a list

Ways to encourage the essential action of strengthening positive, equal and respectful relationships between and among women and men, girls and boys are explored below with some relevant considerations for male allies and active bystanders. While bystander interventions that challenge sexist behaviours should be encouraged, we need to notice when these interventions also reinforce that which needs to be challenged – a dominant system and culture of masculinity that helps to drive gender inequality. Patriarchal attitudes are deeply embedded and internalised, and therefore difficult to shed, even in attempts to address inequalities and violence against women. This suggests the importance of considering and clarifying the motivations of men who engage in anti-violence work. The question of how men can be effective allies is an important one, and there is some new work that seeks to further develop this dialogue.[118]

While an absence of aggression and disrespect is a fundamental starting point, and active bystander interventions are important, 'not doing violence is very different to actively opposing it. A large number of men are not violent, but these same men remain silent and do not challenge violence-supportive attitudes, environments and situations. Nor do they actively challenge the dominant forms of masculinity or other power structures.'[119]

Suggested activity 15: Positive male peer relations

Discuss:

- What would positive peer relations between men that dismantle patriarchy and its impacts on women and gender-diverse people actually look like? What would men do differently when they are together with other men – socially, at the footy club, their place of worship, at work, making decisions, exerting power, etc.
- Do men talk to other men about rape and consent? Why is it always up to women, particularly victim/survivors, to be vocal about this epidemic when it is almost entirely men and boys who perpetrate rape and sexual violence?
- Similarly, do men talk to other men about family violence? Do men talk to other men and boys about healthy, equal relationships, what they look like and how to have them?

Further resources 21: Active bystanders and aspiring male allies

Active bystander resources
- Our Watch – Doing Nothing Does Harm
- VicHealth – How to be an active bystander
- Rule of Thumb podcast – Season two takes you beyond a bystander

Aspiring ally resources
- HealthWest – Tips for allyhood
- Women's Health West and HealthWest – 16 days of allyship
- Hannah Gadsby – 'The good men' and misogyny video
- Michael Flood – XY Online
- Steven Roberts – A very personal call to action for non-violent men to denounce men's violence
- The Commons Social Change Library – Did you March 4 Justice? Ideas for your next steps
- Equimundo Global – *So, you want to be a male ally for gender equality? (and you should): Results from a national survey, and a few things you should know*
- Keith Edwards – *Aspiring social justice ally identity development: A conceptual model* [PDF download]

Participant feedback 2: Active bystander workshops

[Participant feedback]: I know in the past I've been in situations where I've been a silent bystander to gender discrimination, so I found the workshop topic on how to be an active bystander really informative about how I could go about approaching these specific situations.

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Suggested activity 16: Structures and systems

Discuss how structures and systems condone violence, including examples – for example, the barriers victim/survivors of sexual assault encounter when seeking justice, and the reasons so many women do not report.

- Neeraja Sanmuhanathan in *The Conversation* – I'm a sexual assault counsellor. Here's why it's so hard for survivors to come forward, and what happens when they do
- ABC News – Why do so few sexual assaults result in convictions?

Discuss the inadequate supports and structural barriers for women who experience violence, sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Challenging and transforming patriarchy and gender inequality

The issues of patriarchy and gender inequality permeate all the drivers of men's violence against women. The information and activities provided below further outline the problem of gender inequality and offer ways to support men and boys, in particular, to challenge and transform the structures, norms and practices of patriarchy that reinforce it.

One of the gendered drivers of violence against women is *Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life*. The essential action to address driver is to *Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships*. Therefore, it can be useful to look at the manifestations of gender inequality in public and private spheres.

Suggested activity 17: Patriarchy and gender inequality in the public and private spheres

Explore how power is disproportionately allocated to white men in particular, in public and corporate institutions in Australia. What are the implications of this for decision-making in a diverse society?

Resources relating to the public sphere

- Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) – Australia's gender pay gap 2021 and Data Explorer
- UN Women Australia – When will she be right? video
- *Harvard Business Review* – The different words we use to describe male and female leaders

Discuss: What can be done to address these disparities in your particular setting, workplace, etc?

Resources relating to the private and domestic spheres

- Utilise The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey to explore and discuss the ongoing implications of women's disproportionate unpaid labour in the home, and how this impacts on women's poverty, homelessness and barriers to public participation.
- *Women's Agenda* – Men's violence and emotional abuse against women increases when women become breadwinners
- BBC.com – The hidden load: How 'thinking of everything' holds mums back

In light of this information and these analyses, what can be done by men to address these issues? What needs to be changed at structural and cultural levels to address these issues?

Suggested activity 18: Male privilege

This activity invites men to come to terms with what male privilege and entitlement is, how it manifests, and what sorts of things can be done to address its impacts. Coming to terms with male privilege is fundamental to maintaining accountability to women and gender transformative approaches.

Taking an intersectional approach means it is important to incorporate discussion about the different relationships that different men have to power and privilege and simultaneously to oppression and how these can change over time and in different settings. The male privilege checklist can be referred to, along with a number of other privilege checklists including white, able, educated, etc.

- Arizona State University – Male privilege checklist
- *New Yorker* – The origins of 'privilege'

While people can be invited to be more mindful of how privileges are expressed and experienced by individuals, practitioners should remind their audience that it is the structures and norms that uphold systems of privilege and oppression, not just individuals. Therefore, people can commit to actions that collectively challenge and transform structures, norms and practices that perpetuate gender privilege and 'disrupt the process of being coerced in an ongoing way into a dominant subject position.'[120]

It is important to explore content relating to patriarchy and gender inequality in a collaborative and intersectional manner to help reduce possible resistance and backlash. Anecdotally, practitioners report that men often express a significant turnaround in their thinking after engaging in this reflection, and accept that gender and other forms of privilege do exist in circumstances they had previously taken for granted. Below are some examples of men reflecting on their participation in a program addressing these and other relevant issues.

Participant feedback 3: Challenging male privilege

[Participant feedback]: This program helped by providing the opportunity to reflect on some of the privileges I have and how I can use this to make other people's lives easier and better.

[Participant feedback]: Something that I definitely noticed as I transitioned and began to be recognised as a man by the general public is that I was being treated a lot nicer by society. So I wanted to join this program initially because I wanted to understand how I could use this newly found privilege to better support the people around me.

[Participant feedback]: A great opportunity for us because we can develop alternative forms of masculinity that are very inclusive and respectful to all genders.

[Participant feedback]: This program is ultimately an open space that allows you to challenge your ideas, challenge the culture around you, and gives you the tools to empower not only yourself but others to be a force for good and to change the culture that you live in.

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Suggested activity 19: When women are not listened to

Use articles like these to generate discussion on how often men speak and interrupt women and how much time women get listened to in your setting.

- *Women's Agenda* – Men speak more and listen less when interviewing women, according to study of 2000 job interviews
- Clementine Ford – The disturbing reality behind the 'Q&A' panel
- Broad Agenda – The politics and price of interruption
- Rebecca Solnit – *Men explain things to me*

Discuss what men can do to address these issues. Ask:

- What can be done so that women and gender non-binary people's voices can be heard more equitably?

Further suggested activity

Note: Assess the appropriateness and safety of the group setting before undertaking this activity. Ideally it should only be done with a small group that already has rapport and a culture of respectful interaction. This is not to be done in an introductory session or with people who are unknown to each other. Be clear that you reserve the right to stop at any point.

Ask participants to list as many putdowns as they can. Things are likely to get rude. Note the gendered nature of these putdowns and facilitate a conversation about power, how these putdowns are a core part of our vernacular and usually reinforce the idea that women, LGBTIQ people, people from diverse cultural backgrounds and men who don't conform to dominant forms of masculinity are less worthy than white, straight males. Reflect on the difference between words for sexual promiscuity in women and men. Discuss the way that nouns for women are derivatives of the noun for men in the same position, for example *bachelor/bachelorette*, *waiter/waitress*, etc. On all forms, men tick the box for *Mr* while women must choose between *Mrs, Miss, Ms*.

Deepening activity

Fishbowls can be extremely powerful and enlightening sessions to run with mixed groups of people. They are an effective way of building empathy and insight and bringing emotion and personal connection to the issues of gender inequality and the impacts of patriarchy on women.

Nominate a topic of discussion such as 'what it's like as a woman to give feedback to men – colleagues, partners, etc.' or 'what it's like to be a woman in this organisation, sporting club, etc.' A number of women sit in an inner circle facing one another. A practitioner facilitates discussion among these women, and men and others sitting in an outer circle watch and listen without interrupting. After 20–30 minutes, the men and women can swap and the men are invited to talk about what it was like to listen to the women's experiences. If you have time, you can then swap back and the women can reflect on what it was like for them to hear the men talking about their observations.

Skill and care is required to run these activities successfully. See Training for Change – Fishbowl, panel and speak-outs: Three listening exercises for more guidance.

Suggested activity 20: Sexism

Use these articles/long reads/books to discuss the many ways that patriarchy permeates our world and impacts on people, particularly women. Reflect on how sexism and gender inequality is manifested in systems and structures and how this impacts on women's equality and independence.

- Ask your participants what it was like to learn some of these facts.
- Ask the men to reflect on what these issues might mean for women.
- Ask women to share any relevant experiences they feel comfortable sharing.

This activity could be run as a fishbowl exercise. See Suggested activity 19.

- *Guardian* – The deadly truth about a world built for men – from stab vests to car crashes
- Mary Halton in BBC News – Climate change 'impacts women more than men'
- IFHHRO | Medical Human Rights Network – Patriarchal attitudes and discrimination of women in health-care facilities
- *Guardian* – The healthcare gender bias: Do men get better medical treatment?
- Laura Bates speaking about a website that catalogues instances of sexism experienced on a day-to-day basis – The everyday sexism project
- Charlotte Higgins in the *Guardian* – The age of patriarchy: How an unfashionable idea became a rallying cry for feminism today

Further resources 22: Patriarchy and gender equality

- MenEngage webinar – Building alliances to strengthen the work against sexualised exploitation
- Kaya Wilson – The trans experience is an integral part of feminism
- See Reference 2 for more resources and references.

Understanding femininity and masculinity and focusing on gender transformation

One of the essential actions to address the drivers of men's violence against women is to *Build new social norms that foster positive personal identities not constrained by gender stereotypes*. This topic has been briefly explored in the Introduction under 'Gender and masculinities' and in Part 1 under 'Gender transformative approaches', with relevant references for further exploration.

While a degree in gender studies is not essential to do this work, a basic understanding of the social, cultural and historical constructions of gender is crucial for presenting these complex concepts in ways that are relevant, accessible and appropriate to your audience. Intersectional approaches must take into consideration the diversity of masculinities. Gender transformative approaches are essential so as not to inadvertently entrench gender stereotypes and hierarchies in your prevention efforts. Working across all levels of society is key to not individualising this issue. Accountability to women is important to honour and draw upon the insights and experiences of women from diverse backgrounds. This is also a common entry-point for strengths-based approaches that build engagement with men by exploring their own relationship with gender stereotypes.

Suggested activities and resources in this area begin with personal reflection on the concepts before moving on to challenge their manifestations in structures, practices and norms.

Suggested activity 21: Gender construction, gender roles, norms and expectations – the Man Box

Use examples from media and entertainment and personal anecdotes you are comfortable sharing to explore the social, cultural and historical constructions of gender.

Ask the group:

- What attributes are traditionally related to 'being a man' and what attributes are seen as 'unmanly'?
- What attributes are associated with how women are expected to be and behave, and what attributes are seen as unacceptable for women?

Introduce the concept of the Man Box. Get participants to name what attributes and traits sit within the 'Man Box' and which don't, for example:

In: strong, heterosexual, invulnerable, self-reliant, etc.

Out: emotional, 'needy', 'gay', weak, etc.

Lead a group reflection on the Man Box by asking:

- Who polices men's behaviours (for example, family, male and female peers, partners, society, institutions, etc.)?
- How are they policed, and what does this look like for you?
- What rewards and penalties exist for going outside or staying inside the 'man box'?

Discuss how rigid gender constructions lead to men's violence against women and men's violence against gender-diverse people.

• What happens to men who have expressions of masculinity different to the 'norm'?

This is an opportunity to link men's violence against women to biphobia, transphobia, homophobia, racism and ableism. For more information, Part 3.1 of *Men in focus* explores the dominant norms and expectations of masculinity in depth.

Resources to help

• The Genderbread Person – a teaching tool with activities, lesson plans and explainers for how to break the big concept of gender down into bite-sized, digestible pieces
• Jesuit Social Services – The Man Box
• VicHealth – Raising boys to be healthy men
• MenEngage Alliance – Challenging male gender stereotypes video
• Damian Alexander – Challenging gender stereotypes

Practitioner reflection 16: Facilitators building rapport to talk about gender

We find when discussing prevention of violence against women and masculinities with men in Sons of the West, it's important for the guest presenter to share a little about themselves to open up transparent, respectful two-way conversation. It also works to reduce a potential power imbalance between the facilitator and the audience, e.g. sharing a little about where they are from, their family, which footy team they support, etc. Our presenters also state that there is always more to learn about this topic and they look forward to exploring the subject together.

Health promotion coordinator (she/her)

Participant feedback 4: Unpacking masculinity

[Participant feedback]: One of the things that definitely was brought to my attention during this program was the fact that we get messages on what being a man is from literally everywhere in our community – from media, social media, our footy club, our parents, family, close friends.. So I think something that this mobiliser program is going to make me do in the community is be a representation of positive masculinity and stand up for what's right within community and set an example, so that people have positive images that they can draw on when they try to shape their own version of their masculinity.

[Participant feedback]: One thing I still remember is that to be a real man or a real woman means to be the real you instead of the stereotype of the gender.

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Promoting respectful relationships, consent and sex education

It would be impossible to not address dominant forms of masculinity and engage men in prevention work without discussing consent and healthy relationships across the lifespan. Intimate partner relationships and sex are domains where the personal is very much political. Gender hierarchies, norms and practices are often replicated and manifested in relationships and all of the gendered drivers of violence can intersect. Norms, structures and practices can play out in the way that unpaid domestic labour is performed in relationships, who undertakes emotional labour, how power and control and decision-making are shared, or not shared, and how sex is negotiated.

This area is relevant to children and young people, adults, parents and other people who care for, educate and deliver services to children and young people. While initiatives addressing these issues are much less frequently delivered to adults, this does not imply that all adults know how to have, or are having, equal and respectful relationships.

Issues covered in this area apply to the media, governments and other institutions that create policy, deliver services and reinforce structures, norms and practices relating to relationships, sex and sexuality. A range of age-appropriate and settings-based resources and ideas to address this topic are suggested in this section. For an overview of the classroom as a specific setting for respectful relationships education initiatives, and links to Our Watch's respectful relationships evidence paper, policy brief and toolkit, refer to Part 3 of this guide under 'Education and care settings for children and young people'.

Suggested activity 22: Depictions of relationships in popular culture

Discuss how unhealthy behaviours such as coercion, harassment and stalking by heterosexual men are romanticised in popular culture, music and movies. Get participants to brainstorm movies, songs and stories that feature these behaviours. Have some examples ready to watch or listen to, and discuss.

- ABC News – From Love, Actually to Love, Simon, how we think about romantic pursuit is changing
- ACON Say It Out Loud – Relationship role models

Deepening activity

Expand this exercise to reflect on how dominant models of relationships are mostly portrayed in the mainstream – that is, white, heterosexual, cisnormative relationships.

Reference 26: Let's talk – young women's views on sex education

Summary from Equality Rights Alliance panel

Young people have a right to information about sex and their bodies. This will lead to better physical and mental health outcomes for young people. Despite concerns held by some, young people are more likely to delay their first sexual encounter after receiving comprehensive, appropriate and evidence-based sex education. Sex education should be age-appropriate and start young. For example, consent can be introduced to children in infancy by way of teaching body autonomy – for example, asking children 'Can I have a hug?' and listening to them if they say no. Using correct anatomical terms for genitals is important so that young people are comfortable with their body and have the appropriate language to talk about themselves. This encourages children to feel that they have power over their own bodies and how they are treated. With a good sense of boundaries they will be more likely to know when those boundaries are at risk of being violated.

Sex education should be sex positive, and cover more than just the legal definition of sex. 'Unwanted sex' should be discussed and defined as 'This won't always fit within legal definitions of non-consensual sex but it is still not okay.' Discuss and define enthusiastic and affirmative consent including the different verbal and non-verbal ways this might be communicated.

Sex education should be gender transformative. Sex education and consent should not be taught differently to girls and boys. The different gendered complexities and consequences of 'yes-saying' and 'no-saying' in different contexts (for example, slut-shaming), and gendered perceptions regarding sexual activity (for example, girls as moral gatekeepers and boys as sexual initiators) should be addressed. Women should not be solely responsible for contraception. Sex education should not be heteronormative as a significant proportion of young people are LGBTIQ.

Female desire needs to be included and addressed. Women should enjoy sex and women's desire needs to be regarded as important as men's. Anatomy and physiology of the clitoris can be taught. Masturbation should be encouraged as a healthy way of learning what feels good. Young people should all be on the same page when it comes to what constitutes healthy, safe and respectful sex.[121]

Further resources 23: Consent

The following websites include links to age-appropriate consent resources relevant to various contexts and audiences:

- *The Line* – An award-winning campaign made up of hundreds of articles, quizzes, clips and interviews with and for young people about sex, dating and relationships
- Our Watch – Respectful Relationships Education

Suggested activity 23: Equal parenting and sharing of domestic labour

Explore equality in domestic partnerships by asking participants in your initiative to perform a rough audit of how much unpaid domestic labour they undertake in their relationships.

- ABC News – How much 'invisible work' are you doing each week?

Further resources

- Relationships Australia Victoria – Support for Fathers project
- VicHealth – *Baby makes 3: Implementation guide* [PDF download]
- *Sydney Morning Herald* – How 'emotional labour' became feminism's new favourite term
- French comic artist Emma – The gender wars of household chores: A feminist comic

Practitioner reflection 17: Gender equality in workplace policies

Achieving workplace rights with more family-friendly policies has actually entrenched some inequalities because while in theory any parent could work part-time and take up responsibility for care work, it is still usually the mother who does it (in heterosexual families). We often hear anecdotally that fathers who asked for parental leave were knocked back, whereas mothers would not have been. This contributes to the modern-day gender pay gap we see as women are periodically out of the workforce due to caring responsibilities.

This is an example of how structures, norms and practices must all change in harmony with one another for change to be effective and 'stick'.

Union organiser and trainer (she/her)

For further reflection on this issue

Annabel Crabb in *Quarterly Essay* – Men at work: Australia's parenthood trap

Addressing image-based sexual abuse, technology-facilitated abuse, pornography and sexploitation

With the rise of everyday use of smartphones and the internet, a new form of men's violence against women has emerged – that of image-based sexual abuse and technology-facilitated abuse. Similarly, there is research and practice work on addressing the negative impacts of pornography to young people, in particular in relation to masculinities and the primary prevention of violence against women.

Media, social media, other forms of technology, advertising and pornography can play a role in perpetuating the gendered drivers of violence. This takes place across all four drivers – through the condoning and perpetration of different types of men's violence against women, reducing women's autonomy, facilitating male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect to women, perpetuating gender stereotypes, and perpetuating models of unhealthy relationships. Concerns exist about the rate at which technology is facilitating and proliferating additional forms of abuse that laws, regulations, education and support systems struggle to keep pace with.[122] Suggestions are offered for action, education, campaigns, legislative and policy reform and other interventions addressing the gendered drivers of violence.

The ways in which image-based sexual abuse, technology-facilitated abuse, pornography and sexploitation manifest the gendered drivers of violence and are forms of violence themselves are often misunderstood, ill-defined and under-acknowledged. You may need to start by familiarising yourself with the meanings and implications of such issues as non-consensual porn, deepfakes, upskirts and sextortion. With this knowledge, you can design and implement initiatives that are appropriate and meaningful to your particular settings and audiences. Some ideas and suggestions follow below.

Practitioner reflection 18: Image-based abuse bystander intervention

We live in an age where no one has to travel across town to the old 'seedy' sex shop to source sexualised images or porn anymore – the internet provides us everything. We can even create (with or without consent) private images and content and share that (with or without consent) with strangers or people we are interested in.

Sharing images is even expected in hook-ups and early dating as a new way of connecting and building excitement. Tech evolved before we did as a human race. Tech is operating in a space of unequal power dynamics. The number of men I have worked with who are trying to be active bystanders, trying to not be 'that guy'.

When we talk about, 'What to do when your mate shows you pictures of his latest conquest', they honestly don't know what to say. They're also afraid to call their mate to account, and they are confused and almost shame that they don't want to see naked pictures of a girl they don't know, a girl who has not given permission. The fact that they don't feel good about that, and yet can't say that either, for fear of being seeing as 'not a real man', highlights the complexity of working with men and the skill you need, even when doing what seems like a really easy no-brainer consent activity.

Prevention manager (she/her)

Further resources 24: Technology-facilitated abuse, online safety and bystander interventions

The problems and relevant terminology
- *Honi Soit* – The culture of casual complicity in image-based abuse
- ABC News – Technology-facilitated abuse is creating 'terror' in women, and it's on the rise in Australia
- nine.com.au – The disturbing place where more than half of young Australian women have experienced harassment
- *The Australian* – 'Save it for Tinder, mate': Women call out sleazy comments on LinkedIn

Your rights online
- Just Sociale is dedicated to promoting and protecting the online human rights of all Australians – Your rights has information about online violence, trolling, privacy and responsible use of images
- The eSafety Commissioner has information, resources and online training geared to a number of different settings at different levels – from early childhood through all levels of schooling and education, to workplaces and seniors online

Education, advocacy and action on these issues
- Collective Shout – Addressing sexploitation
- Gender Equity Victoria – Online active bystander toolkit: responding to harassment on social media

Reference 27: Technology-facilitated abuse terminology

The naming of different forms of technology-facilitated abuse highlights tensions inherent in accurately representing the diverse contexts in which this abuse occurs, the diverse motivations of perpetrators of the abuse, and the range and extent of harms caused to victim/survivors of it.

Image-based sexual abuse (IBSA) – a useful term in that it places this abuse in the wider continuum of sexual violence and a product of rape culture. It includes taking or creating nude or sexual images without consent (including digitally manipulated images) and distributing or threatening to distribute these images. Being a passive bystander and knowingly viewing IBSA is complicit with sexual abuse.[123]

Revenge pornography – has been a useful term to bring more public attention to this form of abuse but is considered a media label that misrepresents the majority of experiences, fails to communicate the scope and severity of harm, is victim-blaming and risks misdirecting government policy and misinforming the public.

Non-consensual pornography – can be a misnomer as 'pornography' is produced explicitly for public consumption, whereas IBSA isn't, and this term fails to capture the reality of women's experience of it as a type of violence. It also runs the risk of getting caught up in legal and moral debates over pornography, which is a separate issue.

Intimate partner cyberstalking – refers to harassing or threatening behaviours using digital communications technology, which causes the victim to feel afraid or concerned for her or his safety. These behaviours can include gathering information, impersonation, computer hacking, false accusations, or repeated contact to monitor, harass, intimidate or threaten the victim in person or via mobile phone, email, internet sites, drone technology, or other means.

Digital dating abuse – the use of digital technologies to coerce, control, pressure, monitor, harass or threaten a dating partner. This can include IBSA, accessing password protected material without consent, surveillance and monitoring, and constant contact (cyber-stalking).

Technology-facilitated sexual assault – the use of digital and online communications technologies to arrange to meet a victim with the intent of sexually assaulting them. It can involve the use of deception, blackmail, bribery or threats to coerce the victim into engaging in a sexual act – also known as 'sextortion'.

Online sexual harassment (OSH) – offensive, humiliating or intimidating conduct that is unwanted or unwelcome and of a sexual nature. It can include a range of behaviours such as unwanted sexual attention or requests for sex, image-based harassment, simulated rape, rape threats, sexual coercion, hate speech and cyberstalking.

These definitions have been adapted from the following publications:

Nicola Henry, Asher Flynn and Anastasia Powell – Technology-facilitated domestic and sexual violence: A review and Image-based sexual abuse: Victims and perpetrators

A significant proportion of people, particularly men, consume pornography at various stages of their life and a significant number of young people are exposed to it early in their adolescence. Opportunities exist to raise awareness among boys about the ways in which the drivers of violence are manifested in pornography and the actions that can be taken to address them. Below are readings and resources on this topic.

Further resources 25: Pornography

- Our Watch – *Pornography, young people and preventing violence against women: Background paper*
- *The Line* – Supporting young people to think critically about pornography
- It's Time We Talked – information, resources and support for young people, parents, adults, schools and community groups to talk about porn
- ABC News – Ethical porn — does it exist and who makes it?

Part 3: Designing initiatives and connecting with your audience

You may already be skilled and experienced in primary prevention, or this may be a new area for you. Primary prevention may be the focus of your role, or it might be a partial component of a broader role. Whatever the case, maintenance of good practice and ongoing learning is central to prevention work. Skills required for this work involve a complex combination of primary prevention, group work, community development, culturally responsive practice, trauma-informed practice, advocacy, critical reflection and interpersonal skills. Project and/or initiative development skills, context/landscape scanning skills, planning, implementation and evaluation and learning skills are also great to have.

In addition, awareness of the social constructions of gender and masculinities, an understanding of men's attitudes and behaviours and the psychology that underpins these, and awareness of contemporary policy environments are important. Professional development and critically reflective practice are fundamental to developing and maintaining these skills. As the evidence base continues to build, new or different ways of practice in prevention come to the fore.

This part of the guide steps you through how to design your prevention initiatives. It encourages reflection and development of how primary prevention works, with links to relevant resources and organisations. As in other areas of the guide, there are some parts of practice that have limited practice materials and we will explore these here in more detail. For areas that are more established and documented, we will direct you to pre-existing resources.

Contributors to this work and practitioners are encouraged to develop creative prevention initiatives that employ various techniques, as outlined on pages 93–104 of *How to Change the story*, or to refer to the Proven and promising techniques listed online. These include:

- direct participation programs
- communications and social marketing
- civil society advocacy
- community mobilisation and strengthening
- organisational development.

Planning for prevention is a continuous cycle that doesn't have a clear start or finish point. You need to keep checking that the work you set out to do is happening, that the people and organisations that need to be involved are involved, and that there are no harmful consequences of the work.[124]

Figure 10: The prevention planning cycle
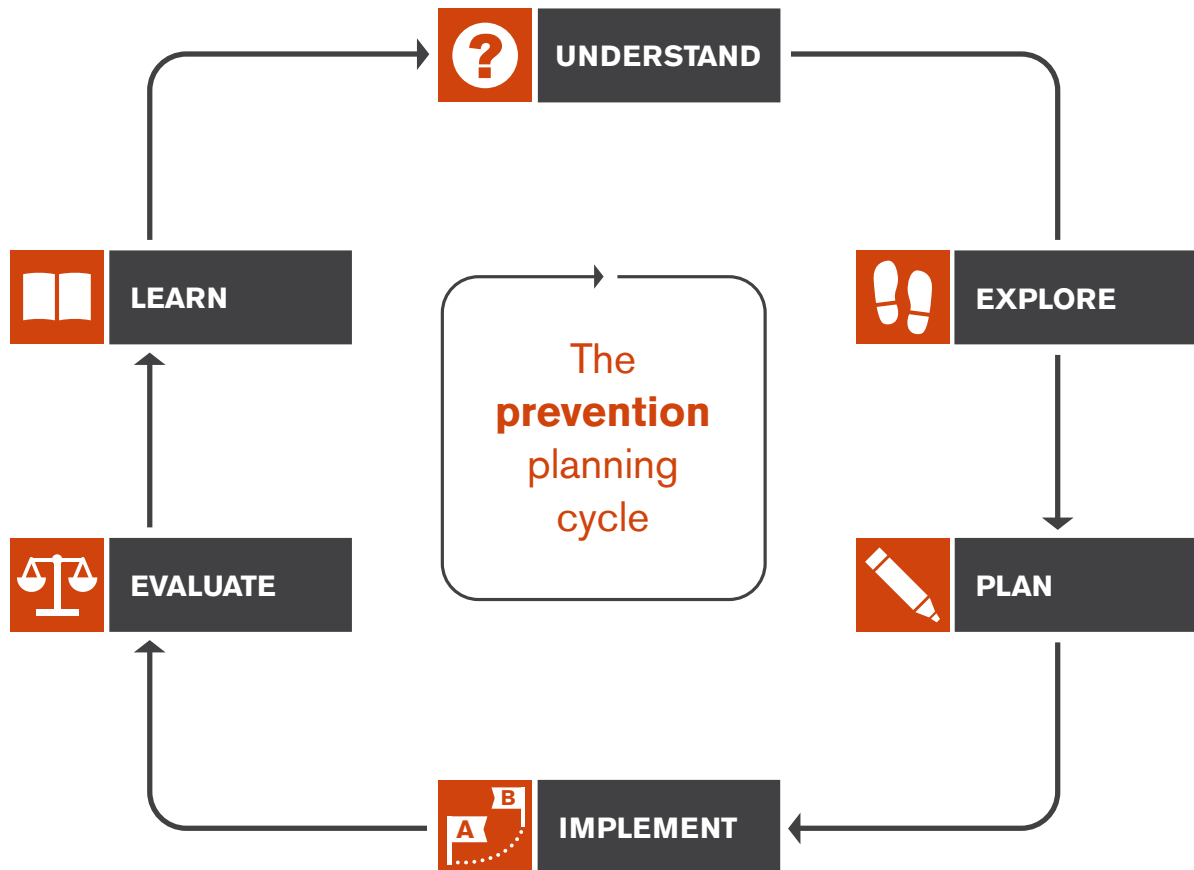
Source: Our Watch's *Prevention Handbook* website.

To assist with these endeavours, in this part of the guide you will find:

- Suggestions for **preparing yourself to do prevention work** and maintaining your work to the highest professional standards.
- Important considerations for how you will **consult, co-design and collaborate** in your work.
- Tips for how to plan for and deal with **backlash and resistance**.
- Ways to embed **sustainability** into your initiatives.
- Tips for making an **evaluation** plan.
- Examples of successful initiatives that have already been implemented in a variety of **settings**.

Further resources 26: Overarching resources to assist you along the way

- Our Watch – *Prevention Handbook* website: tools and implementation strategies and skills that will help you in this work
- Partners in Prevention (PiP) – a network of practitioners working across Victoria to prevent violence against women. PiP supports prevention practitioners in honing their practice skills, connecting with one another, and strengthening their knowledge of the evidence base around respectful relationships education and the primary prevention of violence against women.
- Safe and Equal – resource centre supporting workers and families, to help stop family violence
- Diversity Council Australia (Flood, M., & Russell, G. [2017]) – *Men make a difference: Engaging men on gender equality*
- Michael Flood – Engaging men and boys in violence prevention

Preparing yourself to do this work

This is deeply personal work that people can find simultaneously fulfilling and emotionally draining. How we collaborate, how we speak, the language we use and how we deal with power, conflict and tensions are integral to role-modelling in our work the changes we advocate for. Supportive organisational structures, ongoing professional development and personal nourishment are all required to do this work authentically, ethically and sustainably. Important considerations in this regard are discussed below.

Practitioner care

Practitioners may have their own personal experiences of gender-based violence, or know people who have. In addition, backlash and resistance are frequently encountered in this work and can have cumulative and lasting impacts on practitioner wellbeing. Because of this, adequate systems and supports are a crucial component of prevention efforts, to address the potential for trauma responses, vicarious trauma, burnout, compassion fatigue or spiritual pain.[125]

It is the responsibility of employers and other hosting and auspicing organisations to adequately attend to these aspects of prevention work. In practice, this looks like prevention initiatives being adequately funded and practitioner's wages, conditions and professional development opportunities appropriately reflecting the level of skill required to do this complex and nuanced work.

Essential supports should be in place to provide time and resources for:

- training and professional development
- debriefing
- supervision
- time to plan and evaluate prevention initiatives
- access to communities of practice
- learning circles and/or peer support networks.

These aren't always provided for, and practitioners may need to advocate for their inclusion. With sufficient supports in place and collective care ethics, practitioners can foster their own resilience as well as the resilience of their teams and their communities. Provided you are adequately supported in your work, you can do the things you know you need to do to nourish yourself and maintain your physical and mental wellbeing.

Self-awareness

Reflect on your motivations for doing this work. Ask yourself:

- Why do I want to engage men and/or address masculinities to prevent violence?
- What expectations do I have about doing this work?
- What values do I bring to the work?
- What life experiences shape my perspectives on gender inequality and gender-based violence?
- How do all of these things about me affect and inform my practice?

Further ideas on how to locate yourself in this practice are provided in Part 1 under 'Methods for incorporating intersectional approaches into practice'.

Training and professional development

Following are links to training providers and organisations who offer resources to help practitioners develop the skills and awareness that can support you to do evidence-informed primary prevention work.

Further resources 27: Organisations offering relevant training and resources

- Find and contact your local, regional or state/territory women's health service
- Sign up to Our Watch's Prevention in Action newsletter to find out about new resources and upcoming training and professional development opportunities
- Safe and Equal
- Women's Health Victoria
- Gender Equity Victoria – resource library, practice resources and scholarships
- Full Stop Australia
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd
- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
- Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health
- Women with Disabilities Victoria
- Rainbow Health Australia
- Jesuit Social Services – The Men's Project
- No to Violence (NTV)
- ShantiWorks
- Blue Knot Foundation – Trauma-informed care and practice
- YWCA Canberra
- Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program, NT
- Dawn House Incorporated, NT
- Motivating Action Through Empowerment (MATE), Qld
- WorkUp, Qld
- Women's Health and Equality Queensland
- Strong Women Talking, Qld
- Working Women's Centre, SA
- Engender, Tas
- Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing, WA

Case study 6: Equipping influencers to engage men and boys in challenging stereotypical constructions of masculinity

Masculine stereotypes are socially constructed. Therefore, they can be changed. Programs delivered by The Men's Project (TMP) at Jesuit Social Services (JSS) work with influencers who work with men and boys every day – teachers, social workers, faith leaders and early childhood educators – who have opportunities to challenge rigid adherence to masculine norms and gender stereotypes. We address the drivers of violence by defining, sharing facts about and condemning violence against women as well as promoting positive, equal and respectful relationships.

Cultural change needs to work from the ground up, while also addressing policy, structures and systems. In creating environments where men and boys are encouraged to challenge Man Box attitudes, it is crucial to equip influencers to lead with knowledge, skills and confidence (as well as to give them opportunities to experience their own attitudinal transformation). We call it 'influencing the influencers'.

Our programs include Unpacking the Man Box workshops and our Modelling Respect and Equality (MoRE) program. Workshops raise awareness of Man Box attitudes and their impacts, and promote self-reflection and the adoption of healthier masculinities as a strengths-based alternative for men and boys. Participants build their knowledge of key concepts and develop an action plan outlining how they can raise awareness of, and challenge, rigid adherence to stereotypical masculine norms. A framework for leading change is shared for participants to embark on their own project to raise awareness in their own community.

Previous participants of MoRE have initiated a range of actions as influencers, for example coordinating a program of guest speakers for community members working with men and boys; reaching local sporting clubs to activate discussions with young men; and developing a booklet of vignettes describing how people working in family violence have engaged men in their work. Participants themselves experience positive changes including increased knowledge of gender norms and improved confidence to engage as a positive influence in the lives of men and boys.

Prevention manager (he/him)

Trauma-informed approaches

When delivering prevention initiatives, you won't know the life histories and experiences of everyone in your audience. Experiences of violence are traumatising, as are other life experiences associated with colonisation, marginalisation, poverty, homelessness, homophobia, childhood abuse and neglect, family separation, sexual harassment, ableism, forced migration, and seeking asylum. Trauma affects people differently and trauma theory is a contested space. Medical models that neglect the social dimension of trauma can neglect the significant structural and systemic contexts that create oppression and marginalisation and can lead to trauma. Therefore, trauma-informed approaches to prevention need to work mindfully with individual experiences of trauma in conjunction with the social, political, economic, institutional, structural and historical contexts in which trauma is inflicted.[126]

Feminist pedagogies about social justice and safe and inclusive spaces are key to trauma-informed practice. How practitioners recognise and address trauma (for example, protective interrupting, handling disclosures, working with emotions, etc.) is key. A complicated skillset developed through professional development and experience combined with interpersonal and group work skills is required. It is beyond the scope of this guide to give specific instructions on incorporating trauma-informed approaches into prevention work. Collaboration and co-design with intersectional approaches go a long way to incorporating trauma-informed practice into prevention initiatives.

Practitioner reflection 19: Trauma-informed work with men

It's about finding the very fine balance between acknowledging individual men's real and perceived experiences of being a victim with their complicity in gender inequality and other forms of oppression. When this balance is found, men can be challenged within their window of tolerance. They can feel in control, respected and as though their feelings and life experiences are valid, while simultaneously [you are] inviting them [in]to a space of empathy for the inequality experienced by others.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Further resources 28: Gender-based violence and trauma-informed practice

- *Croakey* – Psychiatrists must challenge structural drivers of family violence and their own roles in trauma
- Bonnie Burstow – Toward a radical understanding of trauma and trauma work
- Vikki Reynolds – Trauma and resistance: 'Hang time' and other innovative responses to oppression, violence and suffering
- Blue Knot Foundation – Using a trauma lens when working with Domestic and Family Violence

Debriefing

Given the complex and challenging nature of doing prevention work that addresses masculinities and engages men, it is easy to be affected by the work. Debriefing is an important component of the work that can help attend to personal wellbeing and maintain the professionality of the work. Therefore, debriefing should be provided as a duty under state occupational health and safety legislations to ensure professional, ethical and sustainable primary prevention practice is maintained. Organisations should ensure that appropriate time, space and resources for regular and structured debriefing is built into any prevention initiative. Debriefing can be a space where achievements are celebrated, challenges are attended to as early as possible, and practitioners can learn from one another.

Debriefing agendas can help ensure that necessary issues are addressed. An example is provided below.

Suggested activity 24: Example debriefing agenda

- Date, time and location
- People present
- Key themes addressed in today's session/this fortnight, etc.
- Successes, achievements, outcomes, etc.
- Challenges:
  - Issues of concern arising from practice – organisationally/ with the audience, etc.
- Reflecting on the professional/co-facilitation relationship:
  - How is the working relationship going?
  - Facilitator's use of privilege – male, white, university-educated, able-bodied, neurotypical, cisgendered, heterosexual, etc. – with:
    › audience/participants
    › colleagues, co-facilitators
  - Any times that collusion with participants/audience was occurring?
- Reflecting on the participant engagement:
  - Facilitator's use of 'power over' participants?
  - Power relations and their impact on the participants and the learning environment, in relation to social support and mutual respect.
  - Inclusivity in calling on participants/participant contributions.
  - Participant engagement in gender transformative ideas.
  - Degree of collaboration.
  - Recognition of difference and diversity.
  - Instances of challenging narrow ideas about gender.
  - Was learning and content connected and meaningful for participants?
- Issues requiring follow-up
- Outcome of any issues followed up since last debrief
- Focus of next session/fortnight, etc.
  - Planning and preparation required for this.

Reflective supervision

Reflective supervision is common for human service work and can be used within prevention practice to support professional and sustainable practice.[127] It provides space for critical reflection and learning to enhance key skills and competencies and to translate theories into practice. Reflecting on *how* masculinities are addressed and men are engaged is essential to intersectional and gender transformative practice, and for exploring practice tensions, dilemmas, assumptions, biases and blind spots. Supervision is an invaluable part of practitioner care, in which we can talk about how the work affects us, address the possibility of vicarious trauma, and consolidate our ways of nourishing ourselves in our work.

Regular and structured supervision arrangements should be incorporated into prevention initiatives as an integral part of practice, rather than an optional extra. If you don't have access to appropriate supervision internally, your host organisation should support you to receive external supervision. This should be adequately resourced and incorporated into funding agreements. If it isn't, you are entitled to advocate for its inclusion.

Practitioner reflection 20: Inspiring supervisors and mentors

Hopefully you are fortunate enough to encounter inspiring mentors in your journey doing prevention work. Experienced mentors can share the wisdom, passion, commitment, resilience and joy that help to elevate and inspire your practice.

One such mentor for me has been Vikki Reynolds. She has a raft of resources on her website and videos, including a talk about Resisting Burnout with justice-doing – Part 2: 'Trauma' and Resistance.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Further resources 29: Finding a supervisor, peer support or mentor

- Ask colleagues if they have any suitable recommendations.
- Conduct internet searches for qualified supervisors in your area:
    - Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) – find a supervisor
    - AHPRA Psychology Board – find a supervisor.
- Safe and Equal – Primary prevention communities of practice

Determining your audience's preparedness to do this work

It's helpful to get a sense of your audience's knowledge levels and their preparedness to engage in prevention work as early as possible. It's helpful to know what sort of attitudes about men's violence against women and gender inequality are prevalent among your audience. What level of motivation is there in your setting for primary prevention initiatives? What's already happening in your setting/local area, and can you collaborate to harness some of the existing momentum for change?

The diagram below represents the continuum of preparedness for engagement of men in your audience. Knowing where men in your audience are at on this continuum will help you identify the level at which your work can be directed and how your message should be pitched. Developing your messaging is explored more later in this section. For example, where there is resistance or an absence of knowledge, you may need to focus more in the beginning on entry-level awareness-raising. If there is less resistance and an indication of readiness for action, your work might then focus on motivating 'persuadable' people to action and into allyship.

Figure 11: Continuum of male engagement
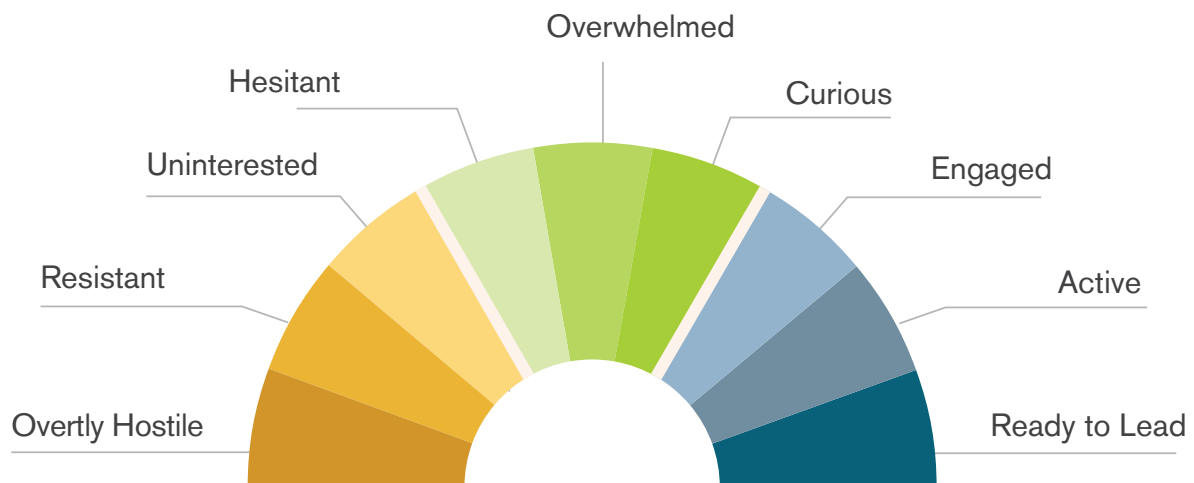
Source: Funk, R. (2006). *Reaching men: Strategies for preventing sexist attitudes, behaviours and violence*. Jist Publications

See alternative text for Figure 11 on page 144.

If you do anticipate resistance, think about ways you will address this. Questions to ask and considerations to reflect on include:

- *What do the people in your audience value?*
- *What motivates and inspires them?*
- *Where do they find meaning in the world?*

This knowledge will help you to build a message and a narrative that is meaningful and engaging to your specific audience, which will allow you to build a motivational approach to undertaking primary prevention work.

Further resources 30: Understanding organisational and cultural contexts

- Our Watch – Workplace Equality and Respect staff survey tool for staff to provide feedback on their experiences in the workplace and how gender influences and shapes their working lives
- Lumen Learning – The importance of audience analysis

It's helpful to plan for how you can incorporate this early work into the evaluation of your initiative further down the track. The information you gather will be the baseline you are building on and you will be able to analyse and gain insight into the change and shifts in your audience's awareness, behaviours, motivations and readiness to engage in change work.

Make sure that you provide information (in a format appropriate for the audience) about the purpose of any survey and how the analysed results will be used. Plan ahead for securely managing any information gained to de-identify any personal data and ensure confidentiality. Evaluation of prevention activities is explored later in this guide.

Suggested activity 25: Icebreakers

Icebreakers can be used to build rapport as you guide people into the work you are undertaking together. They can be used to check in with your audience about their existing level of familiarity with the content you are about to discuss. Before proceeding with this type of exercise, ensure that you know at least the basics with regards to prevalence of different types of violence in order to address questions or any forms of backlash or resistance that may arise.

You can ask people to position themselves on a spectrum from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' in response to statements such as the following:

- *Violence against women affects everyone.*
- *Violence against women is unavoidable – it will occur no matter what we do to try to prevent it.*
- *I can make a difference in preventing violence against women.*
- *Violence against women is a men's issue as much as it is a women's issue.*
- *I would know how to respond if I heard a friend making a sexist joke.*
- *Generally, Australians understand there is a link between gender inequality and violence against women.*

Ask people why they positioned themselves where they did in order to generate discussion and ensure that participants understand that this is a respectful and non-judgemental space.

Broad questions such as these can garner a great deal of information about what knowledge people already have and also how they feel about gender-based violence and gender inequality.

Consultation, co-design and collaboration

Meaningful and thorough consultation, co-design and collaboration are necessary to create prevention initiatives that are accessible, culturally relevant and likely to be effective at engaging men and addressing masculinities in your intended audiences.

Prevention initiatives may focus on audiences within an organisation or community group, or they may focus on audiences external to your host organisation, or perhaps both. Organisational change processes and community consultation, co-design and collaboration can and should incorporate the guiding principles for addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women. Following are suggestions for how this can be done.

Knowing your audience

Consultation, co-design and collaboration are important for knowing your audience and for ensuring that you speak to the appropriate people throughout the planning stages of your project. Find out if the people and communities you are planning to work with have been consulted before. What was the outcome of this consultation? People in certain communities or settings may have experienced extensive consultation before, or none at all. This is particularly important given the history of disempowering and at times violent work by those

intending to 'do good' with marginalised communities, such as community development initiatives imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Consultation is just the first step in developing initiatives.

Practitioner reflection 21: Consulting community

Consider community fatigue, and readiness. Sometimes communities are not at a point to be open to discuss certain topics. Practitioners should respect that and may have to change a project's direction accordingly.

Prevention practitioner (she/her)

Co-design and collaboration should be undertaken in ways that incorporate the guiding principles outlined earlier in this guide. In this way, the diversity of your audience should be highlighted and the knowledge and strengths they bring to the work brought into focus. Communities should lead on identifying and naming the problem in their own words and be empowered to define their own solutions to the problem. Co-design should be understood as a learning opportunity, rather than us assuming our own expertise as practitioners, and designing that learning into programs. This will help to ensure the accessibility of your initiatives and the development of appropriate and effective messaging. Feedback loops should be incorporated so that these approaches can be refined and evolve over time.

Reference 28: Co-design

[Practitioners are now aware of] … the importance of community-led, designed and initiated activities, and the importance of building genuine trusting reciprocal relationships. While there is evidence of increasing awareness of the need for prevention activities to emerge from community-led design processes and approaches that articulate and respond to multiple forms of discrimination alongside gender inequality, this awareness is not yet being consistently translated into practice.[128]

Further information

International Association for Public Participation – Public Participation Spectrum

Incorporate in your plan partnering with other organisations where appropriate. If you or your organisation or community group are not expert in issues to do with gender-based violence, find a local organisation that is and seek their support. Be mindful that organisations doing this work are inevitably under-resourced. Plan ahead to afford the process of collaboration plenty of time and think about how the process can be as mutually beneficial as possible. Below is a case study that encapsulates many aspects of what has been discussed, and what these look like in practice.

Case study 7: Women's Health in the South East (WHISE)

WHISE practitioners worked in partnership with a local council to co-design a program with newly arrived men and women that sought to build community capacity, promote gender equality and prevent family violence. This work was prioritised, as the early settlement period is a time of change and transition.

Relationship building and co-design were vital in doing this effectively, safely and sustainably. We worked together with community interpreters and young men and women from the community, looking at pre-existing educative materials that explored the harmful impacts of rigid gender stereotypes, gender inequality, and family violence. Engaging non-violent men as allies was important to help prevent and manage backlash within the community. Practitioners were mindful that men can perceive community sessions as being women's business, hence why a multi-layered whole-of-community approach is superior to single or multiple educational sessions.

Together, we tailored the existing content to meet community context and need. The introduction of gender stereotypes and norms and the potential harmful restrictions that come with them was both informative and challenging to some people in the community. Careful consideration was required about how to introduce this content in culturally safe ways. We discussed realistic examples of potential backlash to promoting the benefits of moving away from traditional gender norms. This included concern that men in the community were likely to feel that we were telling women not to continue doing their traditional household jobs, which might lead to some men restricting women's ongoing participation in the program.

A solution to this dilemma came from a suggestion to shift the focus from the parents' generation to that of their children. It was decided that content could be framed around the benefits of both parents being proactive in positive parenting, which included how to avoid the risk of gender framing their child's identity. Through this process of co-design, the key message became that all children deserve to grow up and achieve their dreams, whatever their gender.

Participants loved the positive parenting content – in particular, how to foster self-esteem in children of any gender by giving all children positive feedback about their unique skills and qualities, and avoiding encouraging particular traits based on a child's gender.

[Participant feedback]: I learnt a lot about relationship information that is very helpful for me. I will follow that.

Prevention manager (she/her)

Practitioner reflection 22: Consultation and co-design

All projects engaging with diverse groups should be informed by deep consultation with members of that group. When a project is engaging with a number of communities, representatives from each need to be involved in a co-design process that embeds lived experience in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project.

Some co-design processes can be tokenistic, with individuals being brought into discussions as a tick-box exercise, but not being engaged in a meaningful way. For valuable consultation to be sought, discussion spaces need to be made safe and accessible for individuals to share their lived experience and expertise. For women with disabilities, this means information must be provided before the session, and in various accessible formats, to ensure participants have the time and space to develop their inputs, with support if needed. Discussions of violence may be distressing for some group members, so consultations should be supported with access to debrief and referral services.

To ensure an intersectional approach to project development, consultation should be sought with diverse individuals even from one specific group. For example, for effective consultation with women with disabilities, participants should represent a range of ages, regional areas, sexualities, cultural backgrounds and, importantly, experiences of disability.

Finally, it is vital that all co-design consultants be paid for their work. Assuming that members of diverse groups should provide their labour voluntarily contributes to societal inequalities and perceptions that the time of certain individuals is worth less than that of others. As prevention workers, it is essential that we challenge this and model best practice in our work. If you are unsure of how to directly engage consultants for co-design, consider contacting representative organisations that may have resources you can draw on.

Practitioner (she/her) working with Women with
Disabilities Victoria – 'Nothing about us without us'

Further resources 31: Consultation, co-design and collaboration

- People with Disabilities WA – Training toolkit: For organisations co-designing with people with disability
- Community Tool Box – Creating and maintaining coalitions and partnerships
- Ideo.org – Design kit: Co-creation session
- Safe and Equal – Embedding lived experience

Organisation preparedness

You may need to determine how prepared your organisation is to undertake changes required in prevention work. Extensive resources are available to assist with organisational change assessments. Many assessment tools identify the strengths of organisations that can propel change work, and what barriers or challenges may impede the work. These include an organisation's structures, decision-making processes, policies and procedures, and its formal and informal cultures.

A force-field analysis is one way of charting and assessing these forces in your organisation. Our Watch has a suite of tools and resources to support change in organisational structures, policies and norms on its Workplace Equality and Respect website. More detail can be found below.

Further resources 32: Organisational assessment tools

- Our Watch – Workplace Equality and Respect implementation guide, planning tool and self-assessment tool
- Women's Health in the North (WHIN) – Preventing and addressing violence against women (PVAW): Organisational assessment tool

Organisational resistance

Despite your best intentions and efforts, you may find yourself dealing with organisational resistance. This might be coming from within an organisation or from the outside. External accountabilities – to government and funding bodies, for example – can create complexities. Practitioners should be mindful of the possible impact this may have in terms of hindering or skewing internal accountabilities, such as to gender transformative approaches, for example.[129]

You may need to make a strong case for why action must be taken that outlines the benefits of change both internally and externally. Organisations often don't want to be seen to be getting left behind and this can be a strong motivator for action. A clear case for why it would be more costly for an organisation *not* to act can also be a powerful impetus for change. Dealing with backlash and resistance is explored further in the next part of the guide.

Practitioner reflection 23: Dealing with organisational resistance

In my experience working with men in violence prevention and intervention settings, I have often encountered far deeper and more challenging resistance from the organisations I work within than from the men themselves.

In my experience, men want to be challenged – in respectful ways, of course – about the gendered nature of violence, male privilege and the perpetuation of patriarchy in their personal and professional relationships. If initiated effectively, I've found that men are ready for this work and it can be done effectively without alienating them.

I've had to develop sophisticated ways of advocating to management to support and authorise these approaches. I've found that collaborating with like-minded colleagues and advocating evidence-based approaches helps with this.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Messaging to engage men and address masculinity

The messaging strategies of social change initiatives are becoming more sophisticated. *How* we talk about the problem of gender inequality and men's violence against women to effectively engage audiences is being researched and tested. In line with a gender transformative approach, it is important to find the balance between what the audience is influenced by and what they respond to without inadvertently reinforcing the drivers of men's violence against women. This is particularly important when addressing masculinities and engaging men and boys through messaging and campaigns.

It is important to plan messaging and incorporate it in ways that are relevant to the communities you are working with. If co-design and collaboration are done appropriately, this should be meaningfully incorporated into that process. Incorporate culturally relevant and settings-specific approaches to effectively engage your audience. Find a balance between building rapport and challenging and transforming attachments to socially dominant forms of masculinity, or to the concept of masculinity itself. Employ an intersectional approach that acknowledges and addresses the impacts of racism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, ableism and cisnormativity.

Reference 29: Framing gender inequality

The Common Cause framework seeks to activate positive values, goals and ambitions in audiences. It emphasises the importance of describing your vision and sharing messages that celebrate and affirm – for example – *Everyone has the right to marry the person they love*.

This approach helps to build rapport, trust and engagement. Once you develop messaging that brings people on board with your shared vision, you can explore the roadblocks to achieving that vision. This is when you can start talking about patriarchy, sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, capitalism and other factors that reinforce inequalities. Remember, this is not about individual blame, and your messaging should help avoid that perception.

VicHealth adopted this framework in one recent piece of research, that, rather than being considered prescriptive, can provide guidance for developing messaging that engages a 'persuadable' majority of our audience. This strategy was found to be effective in motivating people to become supporters and advocates for gender equality.[130] This research encourages us not to waste time pandering to or arguing with the small (but loud) group of staunch opponents. It recommends some time being spent on outlining the problems of gender inequality before moving on to make your messaging solutions-focused. For example, talk about how 'There are things that all men can do to end violence against women.'

VicHealth's incorporation of a common cause framework and relevant testing of messages can be found in their *Framing gender equality: Message guide* and their *Framing masculinity: Message guide*.

The *Common cause handbook* and other relevant toolkits can be found on the Common Cause Foundation's website

Practitioner reflection 24: Discussing gender-based violence

It's really important when working with men that you do not shy away from the 95 per cent fact, or from having the 'Lets talk about the all men argument.' When we soften the context of why we are doing this work, why we are targeting and working with men, then we are actually colluding. We can't just run programs to support men to feel better about themselves, be more emotionally healthy, etc., and not talk about violence, because men are violent to each other.

Once they link that fact, that they at times fear other men and are often attempting to compete or fight with other men, and where and how violence (in all its forms) is normalised in their life – it's only then do they shift from privilege and shame into a willing mindset, that can make the links to what they do and how they can contribute to change. They can then also explore how by not by standing up to or holding other men to account they are benefiting, even if they are one of the 'good guys'.

You are not doing any men a favour by not talking about the elephant in the room, even if you are running early intervention, engagement programs, you have to honour the truth. Many men have said to me that acknowledging and exploring the personal fear they feel towards what other men might to do them is liberating, and it was only when they made that link that they realised just how exhausting and even more frightening it must be for women and other targeted individuals.

Prevention manager (she/her)

Case study 8: Monash University, The Masculinities Project

The Mobiliser Program (TMP), part of The Masculinities Project, was developed by Respectful Communities at Monash University. Respectful Communities is an interdisciplinary team, including a number of students with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, who are passionate about social and cultural change. TMP works with students who are men who are interested in gender equality and prevention work. Workshops equip participants with knowledge and skills to engage their peers in relevant conversations and to develop their own creative prevention initiatives.

Consultations were undertaken with key stakeholders to ensure content was inclusive, evidence-based and accountable to women. Consultation continues alongside the project to ensure that it evolves and remains relevant. Consultation highlighted the fact that running a gender-exclusive program could be perceived negatively in the community. To mitigate this, and ensure the program was inclusive, community experts guided the use of language that made it clear the program was open to all men and gender diverse students with lived experience of masculinities.

Getting buy-in

To get support from Monash University's Respect, Now, Always Advisory Committee, we knew it would be critical to present evidence about the importance of men's engagement in prevention, and to also show that the program had the support of students who would be involved. This support enabled the implementation and ongoing continuation of TMP.

Engaging students at all stages of the program development ensured buy-in and sustainability, as did consultation with groups like our student associations. Students were employed to research and assist with all stages of project development. Having men who were curious and engaged participating in this program enabled facilitators to engage in rich discussion and to guide their passion for prevention into the most effective and appropriate means.

Activating men

TMP participants were encouraged to continue their learning and share their knowledge and experiences in unique and creative ways, to promote the activation and allyship of other men. One student changed the topic of their research project to explore the impacts of masculinities in STEM fields. Another student received numerous books on men and masculinities as Christmas gifts from their family, who had noticed his increased interest in, and passion for, the subject. Since then, the student has created a book club with other men to continue his and their learning.

Research/Evidence base

The key challenge for TMP was balancing evidence-based approaches with appealing to and engaging men in spaces safe enough for them to be vulnerable in. This influenced decisions on defining the audience, choosing the facilitators, and marketing and promotion of the program. We noticed that many existing healthy masculinities programs drew upon stereotypes or norms of dominant masculinity in order to promote programs to men, and many programs exclusively use men as facilitators. In consultation, one provider told us that 'Women facilitators won't be listened to.'

Women have been the key drivers and developers of TMP and we disagreed wholeheartedly with the suggestion that women could not facilitate such a program. This would have been in contrast to maintaining accountability to women and we found no evidence that women facilitators were detrimental to the effectiveness of the program. In fact, having a woman and a man facilitate enabled us to model equal and respectful relationships between two different genders.

We are still testing different promotional techniques to see how much we can lean into a norm or stereotype around masculinity while steering clear of using masculine stereotypes. While sign-ups have been very low, our plan is to engage a marketing student to incorporate our desired messaging and increase sign-ups.

Evaluation

TMP is currently being evaluated by Monash University, who are conducting a suite of evaluations of healthy masculinities interventions.

Monash University – The Masculinities Project

Prevention manager (she/her)

Working with values

Values that many people hold – such as fairness, equality, compassion, anti-violence and human rights – can be tapped into as a way to build connection to the messaging of your initiative. For example:

- *What does it mean to be a good dad?*
- *Do people believe that women, men and non-binary people should be able to enjoy the same opportunities in life and live free from discrimination?*

Occupational health and safety (OH&S) and legal considerations

It's helpful to know what the relevant OH&S and legal requirements regarding gender equality, anti-discrimination, and human rights are in your state or territory, and how they relate to your particular setting/s. Part of your messaging can be: 'This is what we *have to do* to comply with legislative and OH&S requirements.' Research the history of development of human rights and equal opportunity legislation in Australia and globally. It is interesting to note how recent many of these protections in law are, and this can be a useful teaching tool – to point out how far we have come, but how far we still have to go. It can also help to deal with resistance and backlash, by saying that these are 'the right things to do'.

Further resources 33: Discrimination law

- Lenore Taylor in the *Guardian* – The Sex Discrimination Act: Why legislating for equality is not the end of civilisation
- Australian Human Rights Commission – *A quick guide to Australian discrimination laws*
- The Fair Work Ombudsman – Protection from discrimination at work

Language, building empathy and rapport

It is an art to use accurate and descriptive language that honours women's diverse experiences of men's violence and inequality, that does not minimise or individualise, blame, shame or deflect, avoid or misattribute, *and* that builds rapport and motivates men to take action to address these issues. And to do all of this with intersectional and trauma-informed approaches to gender transformative practice!

You should be able to use your supervision, peer support and mentoring arrangements to create spaces for critical reflection on your use of language. Getting feedback from people who observe you doing your work is also a great way to critically reflect.

Building rapport

Men, in particular, can be wary, unsure and even fearful of where this work will take them and what it will ask of them, especially if they haven't engaged in it before. They may be thinking all sorts of things, including: *Why is this important? Why should I have to do this? Here we go, I'm going to get a lecture. Am I going to be told I'm a bad person, that all men are bad? What about violence against men? I've had bad experiences where women have hurt me, so when are we going to talk about that? I'm a good man, I don't hit women.*

You might not jump straight into having in-depth, critical discussions on patriarchy, male privilege and entitlement, but you will need to plan for how you build up to addressing these issues. Build trust and commitment to the objectives of your initiative. This is where connecting with people's values is helpful. Remain open, attentive and responsive to your audience. Check in and ask questions.

Practitioner reflection 25: Collaborative approach

Prevention practitioners aim to work *collaboratively* with their audience. This can be visualised as a balance point between collusion on one side and coercion on the other of a set of old-fashioned scales. A collaborative approach finds 'power with' participants, or is 'power neutral', as opposed to a 'power over' (coercive) approach. We can challenge long and deeply held beliefs in collaborative ways without alienating men – and also without necessarily being 'liked' by them.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Group agreements

For face-to-face prevention work, group agreements help to set expectations early for the commitment to the process that participants are expected to have and the level of accountability they want to aim for. Prepare people to be moved out of their comfort zones, without invoking shame, while encouraging growth. We can't and won't create change without people feeling uncomfortable along the way.

Case study 9: Building rapport and finding a way into challenging discussions

Beliefs about traditional gender norms are often tightly held and might be linked to self-identity, sports clubs, workplaces or peer culture. The Men's Project at Jesuit Social Services seeks to understand context and create environments that meet people where they're at. We build rapport by providing an open and enquiring space that is inclusive and acknowledges diversity.

Sharing results from our research into the Man Box provides opportunities for reflection on the impact of these norms on all of us. Facilitators are skilled in critical reflection and sharing their own ongoing journeys in relation to attitudinal change.

At times, our facilitators may begin with a focus on health and well-being before moving to the use of violence. While the facts about violence against women as well as the gendered drivers of violence are foregrounded, participants are asked to reflect on what they can do to prevent violence. This is a strengths-based approach that views men and boys as 'potential contributors to change' as opposed to 'potential perpetrators'. We start with action that men and boys can take in their own lives – including being non-violent themselves, before positively influencing others.

We explore fears associated with challenging Man Box attitudes and the profound collective and individual policing mechanisms that occur when it is challenged. Calling out these dynamics often provides participants with the relief of being understood, as well as the perspectives of others. In this way, empathy building is balanced with the realities of power and privilege. For instance, activities such as the privilege walk are used to raise awareness of the way others experience the world. The discussions that ensue highlight a key message: while not all men are violent, all men have a role in preventing the use of violence.

Our approach places particular emphasis on the impact of habits. We challenge beliefs that have often been long-held and are embedded across societal systems. Thus, change takes time. During the transition phase, old habits will continue to surface while new ones become ingrained at a neurological level. Failure to allow for this gradual neurological shift can risk men feeling as though they've failed, either because they view the change as too difficult, or because others around them criticise them for failing to adopt change instantaneously.

People may be wedded to their beliefs for a host of conscious and unconscious reasons. Judging these reason will not create change. While we must always hold people who use violence accountable, to prevent the use of violence we need to create environments where men's perspectives can be listened to, engaged with and challenged, followed by the presentation of an authentic alternative for embodying healthier masculinities. Our success in engaging men and creating sustainable change is reliant upon providing men with positive and achievable actions that can be adopted in favour of outdated ones they have had modelled to them previously.

Prevention manager (he/him)

Know your stuff

While you don't need to memorise everything (there's a lot we need to know in doing this work!), being familiar with the content you are delivering is essential. Knowing where to go for statistics or data, for example, can be important when dealing with resistance and backlash. Being confident in your knowledge of relevant concepts and the social, political and relational theories that underpin prevention work, will allow you to tailor this information into accessible formats for your audience. Theories relevant to this work include feminism, gender, critical race theory, post-colonial theory, queer, disability, anti-oppressive practice, trauma and change theory.

Accessibility and inclusivity of your language

Your language should be accessible to your audience. Be mindful of language barriers. Avoid jargon and acronyms. Remain committed to developing your awareness of areas where you may have unconscious bias, assumptions or blind spots. Use consultation and co-design to address these important considerations. Think about who is represented in your language and who is left out, and who might feel alienated or negatively impacted by it. If there are people left out, acknowledge this and be transparent about your reasons for leaving them out.

Practitioner reflection 26: Using tools native to your setting

Use language that is native to the setting that you are working in. For example, when working with trade unions, discussing classism can be a way into exploring gender inequality.

Union organiser and trainer (she/her)

Further resources 34: Language

- *Men in focus* – Glossary on page 101
- *Change the story* – Glossary of terms on page 133
- Map of Indigenous Australia: to be more specific than 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person'. Ask people where their family are from and how they would like to be identified
- Indigenous X – Appropriate terminology for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – it's complicated
- People with Disability Australia – Language guide
- Autistic Choya – ableist words and terms to avoid
- TransHub – language guide
- ACON – recommended sexuality, gender and intersex related indicators to capture our communities in data sets
- LGBTIQ+ Health Australia – Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard for sex, gender, variation of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables, 2020 ('2020 Standard')
- Council on the Ageing (COTA) – *Challenging ageism*
- Multicultural Centre For Women's Health – *Intersectionality matters: A guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities in Australia* (page 8)
- W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) – How to make your presentations accessible to all
- Women's Health West – *Speaking publicly about preventing men's violence against women: Curly questions and language considerations*

Methods of communication

Masculinities are identified, felt, understood and expressed in different ways, by different people at different times. Likewise, different men have different ways of engaging with campaigns, different learning styles and different accessibility requirements. The way your message is communicated needs to take into account these different considerations. Considerations for accessibility requirements include people not being able to **see** well, or at all; **hear** well, or at all; **move** well, or at all; **speak** well, or at all; or **understand** information presented in various ways well, or at all. Utilising a variety of methods for engagement and communication helps to address different accessibility needs and also to maintain the interest of your participants. Different methods of communication with related examples in practice are outlined below.

Visual

Include diagrams and infographics. Especially when you are talking about statistics, or complex concepts, think about how you can depict this information visually.

Further resources 35: Visual representations of information

- The Genderbread Person – Poster and teaching resource
- Trans Student Educational Resources – infographics
- Safe and Equal – Resource library
- Australian Human Rights Commission – *Face the facts: Disability rights*
- National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services – prevalence statistics and infographics

Physical

Ensuring that it is done in an accessible way, engaging people physically can help them get out of their heads and into their bodies, and become more actively engaged. This can also help to convey complex concepts in ways that help to build empathy.

Suggested activity 26: Engaging men in awareness of men's violence against women

Encouraging men to recognise their complicity in the perpetuation of men's violence against women is notoriously difficult to do. Part of the process of understanding men's violence against women is becoming more aware of the consequences for women, and conscious of the significance of men's involvement in those processes. Below is an example of a workshop exercise used to encourage men to recognise their complicity in the structures and cultures that perpetuate violence against women.

I'm sitting with a group of men in a circle and I roll out a long sheet of paper, which has a timeline from 5000 years BC to the present day. I scatter some felt-tipped pens across the paper and I say to the men: 'What I would like you to do is to think about ways in which men have used their power over women. This may be in the form of violence, discrimination or unequal treatment. It can include something that impacts on all women, or just some women, or just one woman. It can include an event that you remember from history, or a recent or contemporary event that you remember being reported in the media. It can also include something that impacted on a woman in your life. You may also want to consider whether there's anything that you do not feel particularly proud of in terms of your own behaviour in relation to a woman in your life. You may not choose to disclose this. But I want you to think about it.'

I give the participants a few minutes to think and then I invite them to come forward and name the event they want to record on the timeline and the date on which it occurred. After recording the event on the timeline, they return to their seats. Participants come forwards as many times as they want, until there's nothing more they want to record. I do not allow any discussion during the exercise.

At the end of the exercise, the timeline is covered with numerous incidents of violence and abuse against women, including personal disclosures about women in their own lives who've been affected by violence, and it sometimes includes self-disclosure by the men about their own complicity in the abuse of women.

When the timeline is completed, we sit silently to reflect on the events that the participants have recorded. From my experience in running the workshops over a number of years, the exercise always evokes emotional responses in the men, ranging from sadness and distress to anger as they reflect on the extent of the processes of victimisation and violence against women throughout history, in contemporary society and in their own lives and the lives of women they love.

This exercise provides an example of how men's emotional investments in privilege can be disrupted. If men are to be engaged in promoting gender equality, they need to recognise the role that emotions play in sustaining their privilege, and address the barriers that inhibit them from experiencing compassion, empathy and sadness in response to the suffering of others. When men are emotionally engaged in the injustices experienced by women, they are more likely to interrogate their own complicity in women's oppression and to recognise their responsibility to challenge their own unearned advantages. This strategy of engaging men emotionally in addressing men's violence against women is also applicable with other privileged groups in relation to, for example, racism, homophobia and class elitism.

Suggested activity 27: Other physical forms of engagement

The privilege walk can be adapted to suit any setting and to address different forms of prejudice, inequality and discrimination. Instructions on how to run the exercise and a video of it being conducted can help you determine the appropriateness of this exercise.

Note: With all of these exercises, always ensure their appropriateness and make any necessary adjustments in the co-design phase of your initiative, particularly with regards to intersectional considerations.

Further resources

American Psychological Association – classroom exercises designed to raise the awareness of psychology students about social class and socioeconomic issues in six categories: attitudes; discrimination; income; oppression; privilege; properties; and resources

Reflective

Create opportunities for silent and inward reflection. Encourage journaling, writing letters to yourself and capturing personal reflections. These can be shared at a later time if appropriate, or just kept as a reminder of insights gained and commitments to action going forward.

Using lived experience

Using case studies and the lived experiences of victim/survivors can be an effective method of communicating messages and building empathy. Sometimes a story that people hear is the thing that they remember the most from a workshop or training session.

Ensure ethical procedures guide your use of testimony and lived experience. Don't just share someone else's trauma inappropriately and be mindful to not retraumatise people. Collaborating with appropriate organisations that work with victim/survivors is strongly recommended, to ensure that the process of collecting and using testimony is undertaken safely, with informed consent and appropriate privacy and confidentiality. People should be recompensed for their input in this regard.

You may also help participants in your initiative recognise their own lived experience, or experiences of others (particularly women) in their lives. Remember to connect lived experiences to the bigger picture, so as to not individualise the problem of men's violence against women.

Further resources 36: Lived experience

- Safe and Equal – Embedding lived experience
- Safe Steps – Survivor Advocate Program
- Victim Survivors' Advisory Council – YouTube channel
- The Everyday Sexism Project
- Tarana Burke – Founder of the Me Too movement

With all of these methods of communication, always take participants' accessibility requirements into account, and create and nurture space/s where all voices can be heard.

Dealing with backlash and resistance

Backlash and resistance are an inevitable part of prevention work. The terms are often used interchangeably, but they do mean slightly different things. Resistance refers to any responses that deny or avoid the imperative or refuse to take adequate action, or pretend to take action towards progressive social changes required to address gender inequality and to prevent men's violence against women.[131] Figure 12 shows the variety of forms in which resistance is expressed or experienced in the course of primary prevention work.

Figure 12: Forms of resistance
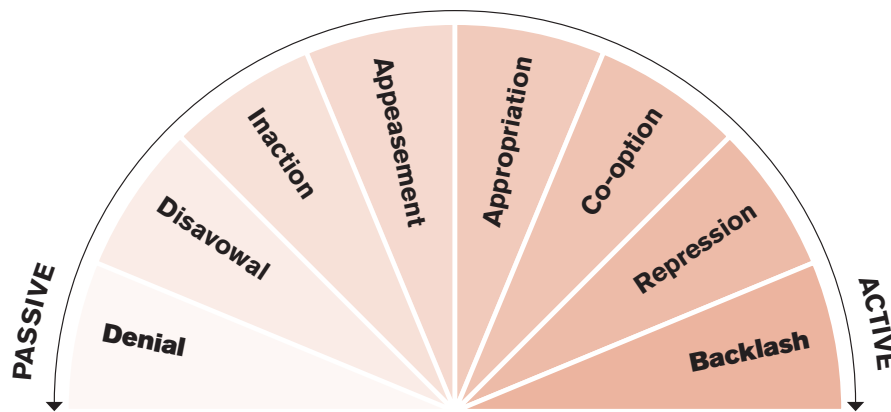
Our Watch's *Change the story*, with content based on VicHealth's representation of forms of resistance in *(En)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives*.

See alternative text for Figure 12 on page 144.

Backlash refers to the response that women and others experience when they are poised to make genuine social and political gains. It is an attempt to maintain or reinforce gender inequalities and push women back into acceptable social roles.[132] Backlash and resistance can occur at all levels of the socio-ecological model including political, institutional, community and individual levels. Backlash and resistance can come from people of all genders, yet men are more likely to express it in relation to gender equality. This could be to defend thei r privilege; to protect the status quo, from which they benefit; or to deny any associated feelings of shame that would come from admitting their complicity in gender inequality.

In undertaking work to engage men and address masculinities understanding backlash and resistance and proactively working to anticipate and address them is essential. At an individual and community level, resistance shouldn't be seen as a problem in and of itself. It can generate useful energy to work with in your change initiatives. Managing resistance and backlash effectively is supported by planning your initiatives well and being prepared to respond in the moment. Effective interpersonal skills are required to respond to resistance constructively, without shaming. In group discussions, it is important to keep a balance so that these voices don't take over, dominate or derail the process that everybody else is there to gain from. Dealing with backlash at higher political or institutional levels requires vigilance, advocacy, mechanisms for accountability and activism.

Importantly, given the inevitability and relentlessness of resistance and backlash, self-care and celebrating successes are profoundly important while doing primary prevention work.

Practitioner reflection 27: Curiosity as a tool for working with resistance

The simple use of curiosity is great. When there is resistance, asking more 'why' questions can really develop a discussion. 'Why would we not be able to change our start times to accommodate mothers who drop children off at school?', or 'Why would we want to continue to expect mothers to do most of the child-rearing, etc.?' These questions are not meant to antagonise, just to quietly challenge people who resist by saying 'But this is how we've always done it', or 'Changing it would be too hard, or too idealistic', etc.

Union organiser and trainer (she/her)

Practitioner reflection 28: Organisational support with backlash

Backlash is draining and can be harmful for the practitioner. I have occasionally ended up in tears after delivering training! There is an OH&S obligation to protect the health and safety of workers in this field.

Prevention practitioner (she/her)

Further resources 37: Backlash and resistance

- Eastern Health, Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) and Queensland University of Technology (QUT) – *Engaging men: Reducing resistance and building support*
- Safe and Equal – Facing resistance in your work
- VicHealth – *(En)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives*
- Michael Flood, Molly Dragiewicz, and Bob Pease – *Resistance and backlash to gender equality: An evidence review*: in particular, framing strategies

Suggested activity 28: Backlash

Provide examples of what happens to women and non-binary people when they speak out, especially in the media and in the public sphere. Discuss the reasons for this backlash and its impacts on the women it is directed at.

- *Guardian* – 'It took on a life of its own': The story behind Julia Gillard's misogyny speech
- *Women's Agenda* – The perils of being a woman with a platform: Emma Alberici the latest target
- YouTube – Famous women read mean tweets

Practitioner reflection 29: Ways to address a common form of resistance

A common form of resistance occurs when men say, 'Well, what about violence against men?', or 'What about women's violence?'

The response I have developed to this common form of resistance is along the lines of: 'Preventing violence against women does not mean that other forms of violence don't also matter. This would be a bit like saying, "Hey, stop trying to find cures for cancer when heart disease kills so many more people."'

As a society, we simultaneously research problems and seek solutions to a wide variety of issues that cause death, disability and injury. Ending violence against all people requires different, and at times complementary, approaches that are based on evidence, theory and the experience of long-term activists, advocates and practitioners. Other work can and should and has been undertaken to address other forms of violence and other forms of harm that impact people of all genders.

Importantly, violence-prevention work should always incorporate and complement the vast research undertaken and frameworks developed to end violence against women, rather than undermining or negating it.

Prevention practitioner (he/him)

Building sustainability into your design

Change takes both time and numerous initiatives supporting the transformation of norms, practices and structures across all levels of society. Evidence shows that ongoing prevention initiatives sustained over a longer period of time are more successful and effective than brief, one-off initiatives.[133] Prevention work then needs to be ongoing and coordinated. We encourage policy makers and funders to support longer-term initiatives to support long-lasting change.

Nevertheless, if you are working on time-limited projects there are things you can do to support the sustainability of your work. These include:

Values, goals and mission

Write clear statements regarding the values underpinning your work and the goals of your initiative. Your mission statement, or the strategy of your initiative, will communicate how you propose to meet your objectives. This will convey both the importance and the substance of your initiative. This, in turn, will help build partnerships and coalitions and inform the choices you make about how to approach your evaluation.

Building coalitions and partnerships

Build mutually beneficial collaborations with other stakeholders to foster the longevity and reach of your initiative across multiple levels of society.

Policies and systems changes

Determine which elements of your work can be put into effect as policies and procedures. Look for ways your work can create change in systems and structures.

Timeframes

Set clear and transparent targets for when you plan to achieve certain milestones.

Practitioner support and supervision

Prepare yourself to do this work and ensure that you have structures for ongoing professional development and support.

Further resources 38: Sustainability of initiatives

- The Equality Institute – Global scoping of advocacy and funding for the prevention of violence against women and girls
- Community Tool Box – Promoting adoption of the initiative's mission and objectives
- Washington University – Program sustainability assessment tool – pdf or interactive online tool

Evaluation

Men in focus notes that few primary prevention initiatives working with men and masculinities have been comprehensively evaluated. This creates a situation where we have 'a lack of up-to-date data that measures the effectiveness of initiatives which seek to engage men and boys in prevention efforts, particularly in an Australian context. An increased focus on evaluation to measure and monitor the impact of this work is critical.'[134]

A sound evaluation of your initiative could help to build the evidence base for this work and assist in the delivery of other primary prevention projects in the future. Reflections on the challenges and successes of your work are valuable insights into this underreported field of practice.

Reference 30: Evaluation

> Future tracking reports could investigate how our evaluation approaches can avoid confusing or conflating short-term appearance of change with sustainable change by identifying how we can best describe and take into account successes along the way, while remaining focused on the need for long-term transformation.[135]

As discussed earlier, it is a good idea to establish your evaluation plan before you begin implementation, and to incorporate feedback loops to reflect on and use analysed data to further strengthen your initiative during implementation. Developing an evaluation plan in collaboration with your key stakeholders will assist in clarifying the short- and medium-term changes that your initiative will contribute to and thus what it is that you will actually be doing. You will identify questions that will help to understand if and how your initiative has contributed to the desired shifts in the drivers of men's violence against women. Evaluation should, of course, follow the same principles as any other part of prevention work by not replicating unequal power and making sure that diverse views are included meaningfully.

There are a great deal of resources supporting development of evaluation plans in primary prevention work. Links are provided to online resources and examples, including an online program that can help you build a program logic for your initiative. Theories of change or program logics can provide a foundation for program design and evaluation processes by outlining how you expect the desired change to happen, and how your initiative will contribute to the anticipated change. Section 9 of the Handbook provides detailed information to assist in this area.

Practitioner reflection 30: Evaluation and measuring impact

It's so important to remember that working with men is a dynamic and moving space. We are on the frontline of experimentation; we are building the evidence base. Which means it's exciting, but also risky and ever-evolving. So there is a great responsibility when you are attempting and doing this work to make sure you capture it as best you can.

Choosing the most appropriate evaluation can be tricky in this space – especially for projects which are generally on short-term funding cycles, that are also attempting community-based activation or change – because not all evaluation techniques are suitable for that style or for that funding context.

With Project Momentum, a traditional academic model of evaluation was used: baseline questions, pre and post interviews, etc., because it matched the funding body's requirements and mirrored the first iteration's approach. But it became quick learning for us that those traditional methods were not flexible enough to capture all the findings in a community, grassroots model like Working Together With Men. So, our pearls of wisdom to share from this process are: to check out emergent techniques like developmental evaluation (DE) which is better suited to social innovation efforts that are being attempted in complex environments. We also got really excited about ripple mapping and I wished we could have gone back in time to apply that approach from the start. Another one was principle focused evaluation which we were able to create a set of Male Ally principles from. We hope to apply them to future work and have made them available to the public as well.

Emergent techniques also provide the chance to capture voices and experiences from more diverse peoples and communities as well, because it's not just capturing verbal interviews or English questionnaires. These methods often provide people with the chance to collaborate, redirect and drive the direction/findings of the 'research', rather than it being owned and controlled by a 'smarter' other. They can also highlight the powerful learning from hindsight and celebrate the process, rather than just the outcome.

Another key thing is: share, share, share, warts and all, because we need to know what doesn't work, almost more than what does. We can't be shame about our findings, we have to be brave if we're going to transform and create a new world order!

Prevention Manager (she/her)

Further resources
- HealthWest – *Working together with men: Final evaluation report* [PDF download]
- BetterEvaluation – Developmental evaluation and Principles focused evaluation

Further resources 39: Evaluation

- INCEPT – a resource to support monitoring and evaluation of individual and collective prevention of violence against women and gender equity programs or projects
- VicHealth – *Evaluating Victorian projects for the primary prevention of violence against women: A concise guide*: with tools, templates, worksheets and an online program logic model builder
- Safe and Equal – Evaluating prevention activity
- Maiam Nayri Wingara – Indigenous data sovereignty: key principles

Settings

Prevention initiatives can and should be undertaken in as many settings, with as many institutions, organisations, communities and groups of people as possible. Examples of setting-specific initiatives and relevant resources are provided here, and contributors to this work are encouraged to think about how they can adapt these ideas to suit their own specific contexts.

Workplaces

Workplaces provide significant opportunities to reach large populations, particularly of men, who may not be reached through other settings. Workplaces include industry, employer networks, unions, employment agencies and the public and private sectors. There is strong potential to shape social norms and relationships through activity to influence organisational culture, work environments and practices. Organisations can derive direct benefits from this activity.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Our Watch – Workplace Equality and Respect (WER) website • Gender at Work – Framework • Our Watch and Diversity Council of Australia – *Myth busting domestic and family violence at work* • ABC News – Sexual harassment affects workplaces across Australia. So what can we do better? • Multicultural Centre for Women's Health – *5 ways intersectionality helps us to understand gender inequality in the workplace* • Community Tool Box – Changing policies: An overview	• Victorian Trades Hall Council – We are union: Safe respectful workplaces hosts a range of tools and resources • Our Watch and Commonwealth Bank – videos of 8 leaders on how your workplace can support employees impacted by domestic and family violence • Our Watch – *Organisational strategy to strengthen our intersectional approach 2018–20* • Victoria Police – *Equal, Safe and Strong: Victoria Police gender equality strategy 2020–2030*

Government and political parties

Government institutions are workplaces and the same considerations for workplace equality and respect apply to all levels of government. Government and political parties are also more than workplaces, given the authority and power they have to play a fundamental role in addressing gender inequality and preventing violence against women through policies, legislation, allocation of resources, development of public infrastructure and setting long-term social agendas.

In addition, we expect our governments to lead by example in the way they address issues of gender inequality and men's violence against women in their own respective workplaces. As a democratic society we have the ability to collectively demand our governments do everything in their power to support and promote the ambitions of primary prevention of men's violence against women and gender equality. The March 4 Justice campaign in 2021 was an example of this collective mobilisation of women, women's movements and supporters to demand better from our federal government's response to the treatment of women in government offices.

Research shows that the best policies by governments on men's violence prevention are in those countries which have the strongest autonomous women's movements.[136] Structural and political change requires a critical mass of people advocating and lobbying our leaders. Some issues worth lobbying for include: policies and adequate budget allocations supporting and promoting gender equality and prevention initiatives, equal pay for human service professions and other underpaid work predominantly performed by women, reinstatement of the checks and balances and powers of a Women's Ministry and greater representation at political decision-making levels of Aboriginal women, working-class women, women with disability, women of colour, and women from diverse religious communities.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• ABC News – 100 years of 'firsts' • *The Conversation* – To fix the culture in Canberra, we need to take a sledgehammer to male privilege • *The Conversation* – Women are (rightly) angry. Now they need a plan • Joanna Richards, 50 |50 Foundation – A toolkit for gender advocacy • The Commons Social Change Library – Did you March 4 Justice? Ideas for your next steps and Theories of change	• Our Watch – Prevention toolkit for local government • Victorian Local Government – Gender Equality in Local Government • Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector – Advice for local government to support local councils to comply with the *Gender Equality Act* • Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector – Leading practice resources to help organisations achieve gender equality in the workplace • Fair Agenda – Campaigns

Education and care settings for children and young people

Schools and education centres play an important role in the socialisation and cognitive and emotional development of children and young people. Within this setting there is the opportunity to build students' critical literacy of media and popular culture, including gender stereotyped and sexualised content and imagery; and to influence not only education programs and curricula but the whole education environment, as education institutions are workplaces and community hubs as well as places of learning.

This setting includes childcare and early learning centres, and primary and secondary schools. In particular, Our Watch's Respectful Relationships resources include a toolkit, evidence paper and policy brief for a whole-of-school approach to gender equality initiatives in schools and school communities.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Our Watch – Respectful relationships: evidence paper, a brief for policy makers and final evaluation report • Victorian Department of Education and Training – Respectful relationships • Safe and Equal – A Whole School Approach to Respectful Relationships Education in Schools and Tools and resources for supporting schools and early childhood services to deliver evidence-based respectful relationships education • *The Line* – Articles, quizzes, clips and interviews with and for young people about sex, dating and relationships • Our Watch – #BecauseWhy campaign • JSS Men's Project – A story of the path of a boy to a man [PDF download] and further resources	• Our Watch – Whole-of-school approach to respectful relationships education • Inspiro and Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) – *Take action for gender equality and respect: A student guide* • EDVOS – Level Playground information, resources and activities for parents, caregivers and early childhood educators • South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault and Family Violence (SECASA) – Schools program • Jesuit Social Services (JSS) webinar – Promoting healthier masculinities among adolescents

Universities, TAFEs and other tertiary settings

Activity in this setting can directly influence people during the critical transition from school to work, or during career change. These centres are also organisations through which social norms can be shaped and changed. Effective gender equality programs in education institutions can help reduce the gender segregation of the future workforce. This setting includes academic, vocational and training environments. Case studies and participant feedback from this setting have been provided throughout this guide, in particular from Monash University's Masculinities Project

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Our Watch – Respect and Equality in TAFE • Our Watch – Educating for Equality: a whole-of-university approach • Respect. Now. Always programs in Australian Universities • End Rape on Campus	• Monash University – The Masculinities Project • Respectful Communities, and diversity and inclusion strategies at Monash University • The Stop Campaign – ANU • Victoria University – Respect & Responsibility program • Swinburne Student Union – Be a Better Human • RMIT – The Gender Equity and Justice – Community, Teaching and Learning Project

Sport, recreation, social and leisure spaces

These settings provide an opportunity to reach large groups and communities, particularly young men. These contexts exert a powerful influence on gender relations as they impact on attitudes, behaviours and social norms. Sports leaders can also be influential as community champions and ambassadors. This setting includes local and regional clubs, professional institutions, state and national associations and the organisations providing services and facilities to them. It also includes social and leisure spaces, licensed venues and facilities.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Our Watch – Equality and Respect in Sport • Our Watch and national sporting organisations (NSOs) renew their commitment to prevent violence against women • *Runner's World* – Women deserve to run without fear	• Western Bulldogs Community Foundation's men's health program – Sons of the West and homepage • No More – engaging men where men gather, through sport • Victorian Women's Trust – Club Respect • City of Moreland – Sports club tools, tip sheets, policies and strategies for building inclusive clubs

Media, popular culture and advertising

This setting refers to the industries and organisations that deliver media in all its forms – print, television, radio and social media. It also refers to the variety of industries, mediums and corporations that contribute to popular culture and shape consumer choices and behaviours. The media and other organisations and leaders in this setting have strong potential to contribute to the development of more positive social norms, given their wide reach and significant influence. Some activity may be led by industry, whereas others will involve partnerships with government and community. Media and other related organisations have potential to develop into workplaces that actively support equal and respectful relationships. In this setting there is also potential to address the influence of pornography on social norms relating to gender and relationships.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• *The Conversation* – Australian media is failing to cover domestic violence in the right way: New research • Media Diversity Australia – *Who gets to tell Australian stories?* • Kalinya Communications – *Victorian-based print media coverage of Aboriginal Family Violence* [PDF download] • *Guardian* – The Guardian view on online abuse of female journalists: A problem for all	• Our Watch – Media Making Change and Reporting violence against women • Gender Equity Victoria – Online active bystander toolkit: Responding to harassment on social media • shEqual – a movement for advertising equality • *The Conversation* – Male voices dominate the news. Here's how journalists and female experts can turn this around

Arts and entertainment

The arts are a valuable medium for exploring and challenging social norms and encouraging community participation. The arts can be a place to raise awareness of gender stereotypes and to explore alternative forms of masculinity and femininity. This setting includes community networks and professional organisations across the creative industries, including visual and performing arts, film and literature.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• *Scenestr* – Women call for an end to toxic culture in the Australian music industry • *The Industry Observer* – Four women allege rape and assault as new research shows breadth of Australian music's #MeToo plight	• VicHealth – Gender equality through the arts • Access All Areas – a collaboration of music industry, LGBTQIA+, community and women's health stakeholders to advance opportunities for gender equity, diversity and safety in music • LineupsWithoutMales – Instagram account

Online gaming and other online spaces

Online gaming and other online spaces, sometimes referred to as the 'manosphere', represent crossover spaces where online and offline antifeminist and racist networks meet, where women experience significant sexism and abuse, and where men's violence against women can be condoned, glorified and celebrated. In these technosocial spaces, technology is enabling an amplification of male hegemony and new articulations of aggrieved manhood.[137] While limited examples of specific primary prevention initiatives exist in this setting, selected readings are offered below to raise awareness of the extent of the problem in these spaces and give ideas for new and creative initiatives to address these issues.

Tools, resources and important issues to address
• Feminist Frequency: fighting abuse and challenging sexism in gaming today • Kotaku – 59% of women gamers use non-gendered names online to avoid harassment, study finds • Polygon – Gaming's toxic men, explained • Anastasia Powell, Gregory Stratton and Robin Cameron – *Digital criminology: Crime and justice in digital society* • Michael Salter – From geek masculinity to Gamergate: The technological rationality of online abuse

Health, family and community services

Many agencies in this setting have a longstanding history in leading community development and cross-sector initiatives. As they provide direct services across the population, they have strong potential to influence individuals and communities. Health and social service programs can be an important means of reaching groups that are outside other settings – for example, young people outside the education system, first-time parents, and newly arrived migrants and refugees. This setting includes hospitals, community health, family support and relationships centres, settlement and migrant resource centres, maternal and child health, pre- and antenatal care, primary health, mental health and other social services.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• XYonline – articles on engaging men as fathers • Promundo and Plan International – *9 Tips for parents: Raising sons to embrace healthy, positive masculinity* • VicHealth – *Masculinity and health: A framework for challenging masculine gender stereotypes in health promotion*	• Relationships Australia Victoria – Support for Fathers • healthAbility – Baby Makes 3, education and social change for gender equality in parenting • Men Care – a global fatherhood campaign • The Parent Hood • Respect Victoria – Respect older people: 'Call It Out' • Council on the Ageing (COTA) – *Challenging ageism*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations

Numerous examples of promising practice being led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations have already been introduced in Part 1 of this guide. Additional information and resources can be found below.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Djirra – Aboriginal women's family violence service resources • Healing Foundation – *Towards an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander violence prevention framework for men and boys* [PDF download] • Uncle's advice – YouTube video • Deadly & Proud stories and YouTube channel • ANROWS – Warawarni-gu Guma statement	• Healing Foundation – Men's healing • Dardi Munwurro – Bramung Jaarn program • Wadawurrung community – The Burndawan Project • Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program – The Grow Model • Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place – Men's group • NPY Women's Council – Uti Kulintjaku, Ngangkari Program

Disability groups and organisations

Many examples of promising practice from disability advocacy groups have been provided earlier in this guide. Contributors to prevention work should be aware of not using ableist rhetoric and deficit-based language when discussing people with disability, as this can contribute to the condoning of violence. More detail on appropriate use of language can be found in various links provided throughout this guide. Further relevant information and resources that highlight the intersecting forms of violence experienced by women with disability can be found below.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Respect, inclusion and equality: Building workforce capacity to prevent violence against WWD – webinar • Women with Disabilities Victoria – *Inclusive planning guidelines for the prevention of violence against women with disabilities* [PDF download] • Youth Network WWDA – violence and discrimination resources • People with Disability Australia – Language guide	• Women with Disabilities Victoria – Gender and disability workforce development and resources • Migrant Resource Centre North West Region – Diversity & Disability Program • Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) – projects and publications regarding violence and safety

LGBTIQ communities and organisations

Many examples of promising practice within LGBTIQ communities and organisations have been provided throughout this guide, as well as important areas of crossover and relevant considerations for contributors to prevention work in other settings. Links to further relevant organisations, initiatives and resources are provided below.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Rainbow Health Victoria – *Pride in prevention: Messaging guide* • TransHub – inclusion strategies and language guide • Minus 18 – Champions for LGBTQIA+ youth • Transfemme – Stories, tips and resources to support healthier relationships between trans women and men	• BlaQ Aboriginal Corporation – visibility of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQ+ community • ACON. Say It Loud – Healthy relationships • Thorne Harbour Health – the ReVisioning (tertiary prevention) program

Refugee and migrant communities and organisations

Important considerations for contributors to prevention work with refugee and migrant communities have been provided earlier in this guide, along with some examples of promising practice. Additional links to existing organisations, initiatives and resources are provided below.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• ANROWS – *Best practice principles for working with men from refugee backgrounds who use domestic and family violence* • Dalal Smiley and Mohajer Hameed – Men speak out on migration and gender roles research and webinar, • Multicultural Centre For Women's Health – Making the links podcast • Safe and Equal – Are You safe at home? • Health Translations Victoria	• inTouch – Motivation for Change (MFC) tertiary prevention program • Multicultural Families Organisation – My Body = My Consent • Wellsprings for Women – women's health, safety and wellbeing programs • The Oorja Foundation – focused on issues affecting the Indian migrant community in Melbourne

Faith-based contexts

These environments are a powerful influence on social norms and beliefs, and leaders can play a key role in building respectful relationships. Groups in this sphere can affect individuals and communities through the delivery of programs and services. This setting includes places, networks and associations that are brought together on the basis of faith, religion or belief.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• Partners in Prevention – Preventing violence against women and family violence in faith settings webinar • ABC News – Half of Aussies say they're 'feminist'. For Muslim women, it can be more complicated • *Melbourne Anglican* – Evaluation of Preventing Violence Against Women program finds hopeful cultural shifts • Anglican Church of Australia – Ten Commitments for Prevention and Response to Domestic and Family Violence	• Interfaith Network – Promoting equality and respect: An interfaith collaboration on preventing family violence • Anglican Diocese of Melbourne – prevention initiative • Before It Starts – a primary prevention program developed by Anglicare and Youthworks • Lebanese Muslim Association – The binding knot healthy relationships • The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights – Islam and Muslims oppose violence against women [PDF download]

Legal, justice and corrections contexts

The work of these sectors provides an important foundation for prevention by ensuring safety for victims and accountability for perpetrators. However, they also have a role to play in prevention as organisations that actively promote equality and respect in their environments and daily practice. This setting includes the many sectors involved in intervening in violence after it has occurred, such as police, courts, law and justice agencies and rehabilitation services.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• *Guardian* Full Story – Are police biased when responding to domestic violence? • *The Conversation* – Carceral feminism and coercive control: When Indigenous women aren't seen as ideal victims, witnesses or women	• Women's Legal Service Victoria – Starts with Us • Women's Legal Service Tasmania – Rule of Thumb podcast: insights into the difficulties and inequalities women face when they come into contact with the legal system in Australia

Public spaces, transport and infrastructure

Local, state and federal governments have a particular role to play here, as well as communities and organisations that contribute to planning and development. Consideration of equality and diversity during planning and development can have a significant bearing on the extent of women's economic, social and civic participation, and also on access to facilities, transport and public spaces. This setting involves the wide range of industries and sectors that influence the development and use of public environments and resources in our society.

Tools, resources and important issues to address	Examples
• The World Bank – Handbook for gender-inclusive urban planning and design • *The Age* – Time to end Canberra's statues of limitation	• City of Whittlesea – Gender equity in design guidelines • She's a Crowd – counteracting violence through data collection • XYX Lab – exploring gender-sensitive design practices and theory • YourGround – mapping social inclusion for women in public spaces

Key issues for further consideration

This guide should be regarded as a part of the ever-developing approaches to addressing masculinities and engaging men and boys in the prevention of men's violence against women. This work has been ongoing for decades and will continue for many years to come. This guide will be open to review and development, in an iterative process reflecting the way that, as practitioners, we develop our own practice via action learning approaches. As practitioners and contributors to prevention work who use this guide, you are encouraged to critically reflect on your use of it, in your teams and with other people doing work in this field. It is recommended that this guide be reviewed and refined in the future, that it be responsive to feedback and to developments of knowledge from the field.

Practice-based knowledge and practitioner wisdom is fundamental to developing best-practice approaches to prevention work. We must determine more ways of incorporating this knowledge and wisdom into practice. Theoretical and socio-political understandings should remain central to developing our approaches to work in this field. Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing unique to different communities should also be prioritised given the leadership and excellence displayed by Aboriginal community-controlled prevention initiatives.

Multifaceted methodologies should be used to gather more insight into the prevalence of the problem and people's lived experiences in ethical and equitable ways, to inform this work more richly. The experiences and insights of people from marginalised communities need to be included, for example Indigenous people, LGBTIQ people, people with disabilities, people living in rural and remote locations, and people from different ethnic and faith backgrounds.

Organisations, stakeholders and practitioners who are working in communities with men and boys should be consulted. This and other resources should be incorporated into policy as credible knowledge. Collection of data and research remain important to this work; however, they should not be prioritised as more superior forms of knowledge attainment, but seen as complementary processes. In the collection of data, we should be asking: how can we include people from marginalised groups who are currently excluded? Data that is collected should be disaggregated to bring more awareness to the different experiences and rates of prevalence of men's violence against women in different parts of our society and also to help determine different prevention approaches that work with different communities and different audiences.

Practitioners have asked for the development of more communities of practice and professional networks to help connect people doing this work. Practitioners and contributors to this work would also like to share this framework with people and organisations working with men in ways that adhere to essentialist notions of masculinity and manhood, to invite them to incorporate a greater focus on gender inequality and the gendered nature of violence in their work.

Initiatives need to be long-term and delivered across all levels of society in order for maximum effectiveness. Therefore, institutions, organisations, workplaces and community groups will ideally commit to this work for the long-term and find ways to embed prevention approaches into regular practice. Long-term studies are required to monitor and evaluate these efforts and to reflect on what works, so that this can be fed back into prevention approaches.

Given the universality of the problem of gender inequality and men's violence against women, combined with the unique ways in which it manifests and intersects with other forms of inequality and marginalisation in different places in society, a plethora of creative, responsive and settings-specific prevention approaches are required. We encourage you to take this guide to your communities, workplaces, organisations, institutions and governments and create ways of applying some of its approaches to your unique settings.

With a supportive context that includes policy levers to drive structural change, and sources of funding that support long-term, interrelated prevention activity, we can challenge and transform the norms, structures and practices that reinforce gender inequality and lead to men's violence against women.[138]

For further ideas, see Part 6 of *Men in focus* – Future prevention activities to address masculinities and engage men.

Glossary

It is recommended that you access the glossaries of a range of different publications to find definitions specific to the field of interest you are exploring. Suggestions are made in Further resources 34 for language guides and glossaries from specific organisations for specific areas of practice.

Alternative text for figures

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

Infographic showing the relationship between primary prevention and other work to address violence against women. The relationship between these is depicted as a pyramid that narrows from broader whole-of-population initiatives to response services for individuals.

- **Primary prevention:** whole-of-population initiatives that address the primary ('first' or underlying) drivers of violence against women.
- **Early intervention (or secondary prevention):** aims to change the trajectory for individuals at higher-than-average risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence.
- **Response (or tertiary prevention):** supports victim–survivors and holds perpetrators to account, aiming to prevent the recurrence of violence.
- **Recovery:** ongoing process that enables victim–survivors to find safety, health, wellbeing, resilience and to thrive in all areas of their life.

Figure 2: The gendered drivers and factors that reinforce violence against women

Infographic showing the four gendered drivers, the social context, and the four reinforcing factors.

The four gendered drivers of violence against women are:

- Driver 1. Condoning of violence against women
- Driver 2. Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
- Driver 3. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity
- Driver 4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

The gendered drivers sit within the social context of gender inequality and other forms of oppression.

There are also fours factors that reinforce violence against women:

- Reinforcing factor 1. Condoning of violence in general
- Reinforcing factor 2. Experience of, and exposure to, violence
- Reinforcing factor 3. Factors that weaken prosocial behaviour
- Reinforcing factor 4. Resistance and backlash to prevention and gender equality efforts.

Figure 3: Eight essential actions to address the gendered drivers of violence and change the social context in which it occurs

Infographic of the eight essential actions:

- Essential action 1. Challenge the condoning of violence against women
- Essential action 2. Promote women's independence and decision-making in public life and relationships
- Essential action 3. Build new social norms that foster personal identities not constrained by rigid gender stereotypes
- Essential action 4. Support men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and positive, supportive male peer relationships
- Essential action 5. Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life
- Essential action 6. Address the intersections between gender inequality and other forms of systemic and structural oppression and discrimination, and promote broader social justice
- Essential action 7. Build safe, fair and equitable organisations and institutions by focusing on policy and systems change
- Essential action 8. Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys, in public and private spheres.

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Figure 4: Violence against women occurs in the context of multiple intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination, power and privilege

Infographic showing multiple intersecting forms of oppression and privilege that shape the social context in which violence against women occurs, and affect its prevalence and dynamics. The illustrated intersecting forms of oppression and privilege are:

- ableism
- ageism
- racism and colonialism
- class discrimination
- sexism and gender inequality
- heteronormativity, homophobia and biphobia
- transphobia and cisnormativity.

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Figure 5: How gender transformative work differs from other approaches

Infographic showing a five-step scale, ranging from gender-unequal to gender-transformative:

- **Gender-unequal:** perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing unbalanced norms, roles and relations.
- Gender ignoring (or 'gender neutral'): often based on claim of being 'fair' by treating everyone the same. Ignores gender norms, roles, relations, and gendered differences in opportunities and resource allocation. Very often reinforces gender-based discrimination.
- **Gender-sensitive:** considers gender norms, roles and relations, but does not address the inequalities they create.
- **Gender-specific/gender responsive:** considers gender norms, roles and relations and how they affect access to resources or create specific needs for women and men. Takes targeted action in response to meet these needs. Makes it easier for women and men to fulfil duties ascribed to them based on their gender roles, without necessarily seeking to shift the allocation of these duties.
- **Gender-transformative:** actively works to challenge and transform gender norms, roles, relations, power imbalances and their impacts. Seeks to address the underlying causes of gender-based inequities, and foster progressive changes in gendered power relationships.

Figure 6: A socio-ecological model for preventing violence against women

Infographic showing each of the four levels of the socio-ecological model:

- Individual level
- Organisational and community level
- System and institutional level
- Societal level

Specific actions are needed to address the norms, structures and practices that operate across all four levels.

Figure 7: Prevalence of various forms of violence against women in Australia

Infographic showing the following statistics:

- 1 in 2 women has experienced **sexual harassment** in their lifetime.
- 1 in 3 women has experienced **physical violence** by a partner, other known person or a stranger since the age of 15.
- 1 in 4 women has experienced **emotional abuse** by a current or former partner since the age of 15.
- 1 in 5 women has experienced **sexual violence** since the age of 15.

Figure 8: Types, prevalence and dynamics of violence against women in Australia: the current picture

Infographic showing the following statistics:

- **1 in 4** women in the Australian workforce said they had been **sexually harassed at work** in the last 12 months.
- **2 in 3** women who have experienced physical violence **didn't report the most recent incident to police**.
- **3 in 10** women said they have experienced **online abuse or harassment**.
- **Younger women** (under the age of 35) are the age group most likely to have experienced recent violence from an intimate partner.
- **9 in 10** women who have experienced sexual assault **didn't report the most recent incident to police**.
- **37%** of women who have experienced online abuse or harassment said the experience made them feel their **physical safety was threatened**.
- **LGBTIQ women** can experience unique forms of violence, including threats of 'outing', shaming of LGBTIQ identity or – for those who are HIV-positive or taking hormones to affirm their gender – withholding of hormones or medication.
- 36% of **women with disability** reported experiencing intimate partner violence since age 15 (compared to 21% of women without disability). Women with disability also experience violence from a wider range of perpetrators.
- **Women with complex mental health conditions** or alcohol and drug issues are more likely to experience state-sanctioned violence within the juvenile or adult justice systems through interactions with police.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women** experience violence at more than three times the rate of violence against non-Indigenous women.
- **For some women**, experiences of violence are complicated or compounded by racism, immigration processes, language barriers, religious beliefs or culturally specific norms about gender and relationships.
- **Older women** are more likely to experience violence from a wider range of perpetrators including partners, adult children, other family members, neighbours and caregivers.
- **Women in rural and remote communities** experience higher rates of intimate partner violence than those in major cities.
- **Migrant and refugee women** can be subjected to forms of violence that relate to their uncertain citizenship, where perpetrators threaten them with deportation.

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Figure 9: The intersecting drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Infographic showing the intersection between colonisation as the ongoing and underlying context in addition to gendered factors that drive men's violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities, as well as for non-Indigenous people and society, and their intersection between multiple drivers result in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experiencing disproportionate levels of violence, with particularly severe and complex impacts.

Figure 10: The prevention planning cycle

Infographic showing the key stages of a prevention planning cycle: understand, explore, plan, implement, evaluate and learn. Prevention planning is a continuous cycle with no clear start or end point.

Figure 11: Continuum of male engagement

Infographic representing the continuum from overly hostile, resistant, and uninterested, through to hesitant, overwhelmed, and curious, and onto engaged, active, and ready to lead.

Figure 12: Forms of resistance

Infographic representing the scale of backlash, from passive to active. The forms range in order as denial, disavowal, inaction, appeasement, appropriation, co-option, repression, and backlash.

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