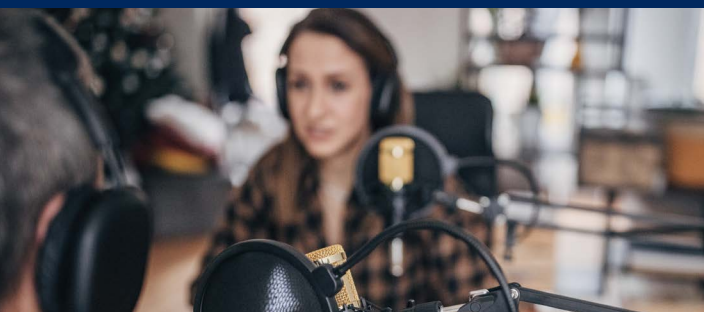


# How equality and respect in media can help stop violence before it starts



## Gender based violence is preventable.

Research tells us that the media is a powerful driver of social change and can positively influence the culture, behaviors and attitudes that drive violence against women and their children.

As former Australian of the Year Rosie Batty said, *'the media is uniquely placed to stop violence before it starts'*.

You can help build capacity for more respectful and responsible reporting by encouraging your journalist networks to attend Our Watch media training and apply for opportunities such as the Our Watch Masterclass or the Walkley Foundation Our Watch Awards.

Our guidelines and tipsheets provide easy reference material media can use to ensure reporting does not further harm victim-survivors and is part of the solution to end violence against all women and their children.

## How can the media prevent violence against women

Media coverage of violence against women and their children has significantly improved in Australia in recent years, but there's still work to do.

Accurate, safe and respectful reporting on violence against women is the **first step**.



**Safety first.**  
Leave out details that might identify survivors



**Name the violence** for what it is



**Keep the perpetrator** in view



**Use respectful language** and headlines



**Reflect the evidence**



**Use appropriate imagery**



**Quote experts**



**Include support options**

## Gender equitable and inclusive newsrooms

Given the average person spends a third of their life at work, workplaces play an important role in shaping attitudes towards gender equality and addressing the drivers of violence against women.

Media organisations still have a way to go in addressing gender inequalities.



Incidence of workplace sexual harassment in the **Information, Media and Telecommunications industry** is

# 64%

considerably higher than the national incidence rate of 33%.<sup>1</sup>



# 56%

of **women in media** view the industry's commitment to gender equality negatively, with 69% believing gender pay audits are the main issue that employers need to address.<sup>2</sup>

**Women are also under-represented as byline authors** in the most prolific sections of media: **sport** (18%), **politics** (41%) and **finance** (37% women).<sup>3</sup>

## Positive Duty

Media organisations are workplaces, just like any other workplace. The *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces* report recommended changes to legislation to improve the prevention of and response to sexual harassment in workplaces.

This led to the passing of *The Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Respect at Work) Bill 2022 (Cth)* which introduces a positive duty on employers to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, as far as possible. This means that employers need to focus on prevention (stopping sexual harassment before it starts) and addressing the drivers of sexual harassment.

To support employers in meeting their positive duty obligations, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has released *Guidelines for Complying with the Positive Duty*.

### Our Watch's Workplace Equality and Respect Standards align with the standards outlined in these guidelines.

Working to meet the Our Watch Workplace Equality and Respect Standards places organisations in a good position to meet their positive duty obligations.

# Our Watch's Workplace Equality and Respect Standards

## **Standard 1.**

**Commitment** to workplace gender equality and preventing sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence.

## **Standard 2.**

**Conditions:** applying a gender lens to workplace policies and practices to ensure they are fair and equitable.

## **Standard 3.**

**Culture** where all people feel safe, confident, and supported to actively challenge gender bias and discrimination, gender stereotypes and harmful gender norms without adverse consequences.

## **Standard 4.**

**Support** and respect for people who experience sexual harassment and gender-based violence through policies and practices that consider the impact of trauma.

## **Standard 5.**

**Core business:** promoting gender equality in our external engagement with customers, stakeholders, and the community.



# Contact us to find out more



Find out about **professional development opportunities, newsroom training and new resources** by signing up to the media mailing list or emailing:  
**[mediamakingchange@ourwatch.org.au](mailto:mediamakingchange@ourwatch.org.au)**



Find out how the Our Watch Institute can **support your organisation in your work** to end violence against women through **training, policy and strategy development**:  
**[ourwatchinstitute.org.au](http://ourwatchinstitute.org.au)**



For **stories, quotes and background information**, contact Our Watch's Media and Public Affairs team all hours:  
**[media@ourwatch.org.au](mailto:media@ourwatch.org.au) or phone 0448 844 930**



See **[ourwatch.org.au](http://ourwatch.org.au)** for more details.

## References

- 1 Time for respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces, 2022
- 2 Women in Media Industry Insight Report, 2024
- 3 Women in Media Gender Scorecard, 2024