OurWatch Preventing violence against women

Practitioner support guide

Working together to end violence against women

MEN IN FOCUS: IN PRACTICE - CHAPTERS 1-7

Purpose of the support guide

This is a support guide for the *Working together to end violence against women* video series, Chapters 1-7, which explain Our Watch's *Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women* (*Men in focus evidence review*).

The guide includes:

1. Introduction to Chapters 1-7.

2. Tips for practitioners.

3. Extra information on the drivers of men's violence against women.

4. Discussion starters.

5. Sources for the statistics used in these videos.

6. Suggested further reading.

7. Supports available.

Men in focus evidence review
ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/men-in-focus

About *Men in focus: Working together to end violence against women*

These videos are relevant to anyone working with men and boys and seeking to challenge and transform masculinities in the prevention of men's violence against women. Chapters 1-7 summarise the key messages from the *Men in focus evidence review*. They outline the links between socially dominant forms of masculinity and men's violence against women, and why working with men and boys is crucial to ending men's violence against women. Chapters can be viewed individually, or as an entire series.

There is an additional *Practitioner support guide* for Chapter 8 of this series.

Tips for practitioners

#1 Be prepared

#2 Use language that includes all women

#3 Tailor messages to participants

#4 Be action oriented

#5 Share support services with participants

Tips for practitioners

#1 Be prepared

- Know the relevant concepts, and social, political and relational theories that underpin primary prevention frameworks.

- Familiarise yourself with the sources of the statistics used in Chapters 1-7. Data on men's violence against women is frequently questioned, so knowing where information comes from (and what we don't have information on) is important. See 'Statistics' below for more information.

- Our Watch's *Men in focus practice guide: Addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women* (*Men in focus practice guide*) from page 100 has tips for preparing to work with men and boys and for designing prevention content.

#2 Use language that includes all women

- The category of 'women' is a socially constructed one, and part of a binary system of sex and gender categories that does not represent the gender diversity of the population. *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* (*Change the Story*) defines a woman as anyone who identifies and lives as a woman, which includes cisgender and trans women (see page 125).

- For more information, see ACON's *Trans and gender diverse inclusion: A language guide*, the Zoe Belle Gender Collective's Transfemme resources and Rainbow Health Australia's Pride in Prevention resources.

#3 Tailor messages to participants

- Explore how masculinities and men's use of violence against women look different in different communities and different contexts.

- Consider, for example, how and why men's violence against women with disabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is higher than the general population.

- Explore the additional and unique drivers of violence against different groups of women, and the specific actions that need to be taken across society to address these drivers. See *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children* and *Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities* for more information.

#4 Be action oriented

- Think about how your work can move beyond awareness-raising and into action:

  - Tie learning outcomes to actions that men and boys can take within their spheres of influence.

  - Look for ways that structures and systems can be changed to support this ongoing work.

  - Establish ways that men and boys can maintain accountability to their commitments for change.

#5 Share support services with participants

- Always share and promote the use of specialist support services when undertaking this work and tailor these services to suit participants' needs.

- Ensure opportunities for regular and structured debriefing are built into your work.

- Share relevant employee assistance program (EAP) details if available.

Additional information on the drivers of men's violence against women

In addition to the **gendered drivers**, *Change the story* identifies **four reinforcing factors** that are important areas that require change to end men's violence against women. These reinforcing factors are important to address alongside the drivers of violence:

- **Reinforcing factor 1:** Condoning of violence in general – this can lead to the 'normalisation' of violence.

- **Reinforcing factor 2:** Experience of, and exposure to, violence – particularly during childhood.

- **Reinforcing factor 3:** Recognises the role that heavy alcohol consumption, heavy gambling, mental health, poverty and natural disasters have in the frequency and severity of violence. These are recognised as factors that weaken prosocial behaviour – reducing empathy, respect and concern for women.

- **Reinforcing factor 4:** Resistance and backlash to prevention and gender equality efforts – including actions that seek to block change, uphold the status quo of gender relations, or re-establish male privilege and power.

Although addressing these factors on their own will not prevent all forms of violence against women, it is essential that actions are taken to address these reinforcing factors across all levels of society to minimise the severity, harm and impact of these factors on men's violence against women.

> The reinforcing factors for men's violence against women are unpacked in *Change the story* on pages 48-54.

Read **Change the story**
A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia (2nd ed.)

What's the difference between **gendered drivers** and **reinforcing factors?**

The gendered drivers of violence against women are a constant presence in society; they are manifestations of the underlying social context of gender inequality, and play out at all levels of society, from the individual to the institutional. These are the factors most strongly and consistently associated with violence against women in the evidence. The reinforcing factors are only sometimes influential. They are more context-specific or circumstantial and have a less consistent association with violence.

It is also important to note that men's violence against some groups of women is driven by multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination.

For example, the transphobia and transmisogyny that stems from cisnormativity and rigid gender norms drive high rates of men's violence against trans women. For more information see the Zoe Belle Gender Collective's *Transfemme resources and* Rainbow Health Australia's *Pride in Prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities*.

> See *Change the story* pages 46-47 for more information on the wider social context for men's violence against women.

Discussion starters

Chapter	Discussion prompts
CHAPTER 1 **Men in focus: working together to end violence against women**	Show this introductory video to participants for context before viewing the other videos.
CHAPTER 2 **Why focus on men and masculinity?**	Reflect on how gender is a key driver of men's violence against women and why we need to work with men and boys and address masculinities as part of the solution.
CHAPTER 3 **Socially dominant forms of masculinity**	Identify and challenge socially dominant forms of masculinity and identify the impact these have on ourselves and others.
CHAPTER 4 **Masculinity in society**	Identify that socially dominant forms of masculinity operate in different parts of society, not just at the individual level, and that this influences who is rewarded or valued.
CHAPTER 5 **The impacts of masculinity: violence against women**	Identify what each of the four gendered drivers of violence against women look like in day-to-day life and in society. Refer to page 17 of the *Men in focus practice guide* for further information about the gendered drivers of men's violence against women.
CHAPTER 6 **The impacts of masculinity: men's health and wellbeing**	Identify how outdated masculine stereotypes have negative impacts on men's health and wellbeing, as well as women and people of all genders.
CHAPTER 7 **Working with men and boys in primary prevention**	Reflect on actions that can be taken to be a part of ending men's violence against women. Reflect on opportunities to work with and influence men and boys, to challenge and transform outdated masculine stereotypes and the structures and systems that currently uphold them.

Statistics

The statistics referenced in the *Men in focus: Working together to end violence against women* video series, Chapters 1-7 are from the following sources.

Chapter 2

Statistic	Reference	Note
95% of women and 93% of men who have experienced violence, experienced it from a male perpetrator	Our Watch calculation from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2023). *Personal Safety Survey 2021-22*, ABS.	Calculated by Our Watch from the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey, which is a regular government survey of Australians' experiences of violence. Nearly 12,000 people took this survey.
1 in 4 women and 1 in 13 men have experienced violence by an intimate partner	Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2023). *Personal Safety Survey 2021-22.*	From the Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey.
1 woman is killed by her current or former partner every 9 days	Calculated from Bricknell, S. (2023). *Homicide in Australia 2020-21*. Statistical Report no. 42. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.	Calculated by Our Watch from an Australian Government homicide report from 2020-2021. Please note that this is an average and the figure may change over time.

Chapter 4

Statistic	Reference	Note
22% of CEOs are women	Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2024). WGEA Data Explorer. Canberra: Australian Government.	From the Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency's Data Explorer, which publishes information about gender equality in workplaces.
39% of members of the House of Representatives are women	Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2024). WGEA Data Explorer. Canberra: Australian Government.	From the Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency's Data Explorer. This refers to the 2022 House of Representatives.
9% of elite sports coaches are women	Australian Institute of Sport. (2023). *Women in high performance coaching: Fixing the leaky pipeline*. Canberra: Australian Government. Pg. 9.	From a report by the Australian Institute of Sport, a government agency supporting sport at the national level.

Chapter 6

Statistic	Reference	Note
Regular thoughts of suicide are reported by: ■ 22% of men (18-30) who conform to rigid ideas about how to be a man ■ 3% of men (18-30) who do not conform to rigid ideas about how to be a man.	The Men's Project & Flood, M. (2024). *The Man Box 2024: Re-examining what it means to be a man in Australia*. Melbourne: Jesuit Social Services. Pg. 91.	From *The Man Box* report by The Men's Project, Jesuit Social Services, about attitudes to manhood and the behaviours of Australian men.
Behaving dangerously while intoxicated is reported by: ■ 49% of men (18-30) who conform to rigid ideas about how to be a man ■ 21% of men (18-30) who do not conform to rigid ideas about how to be a man	The Men's Project & Flood, M. (2024). *The Man Box 2024: Re-examining what it means to be a man in Australia*. Melbourne: Jesuit Social Services. Pg. 101.	From *The Man Box* report by The Men's Project, Jesuit Social Services, about attitudes to manhood and the behaviours of Australian men.
People who are gay and bisexual experience depression at four times the rate of heterosexual people in Australia	Beyond Blue. (2023). Mental Health Statistics; Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2023). *National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, 2020-2022*.	From Beyond Blue, a national mental health organisation, calculated using an Australian Bureau of Statistics' survey of mental health and wellbeing. Approximately 16,000 households were involved in this survey.
The rate of death by suicide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men is 2.6 times that of non-Indigenous men	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023). National Mortality Database: Deaths by suicide among First Nations people. Canberra: Australian Government.	From the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, a government information and statistics agency, on deaths by suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
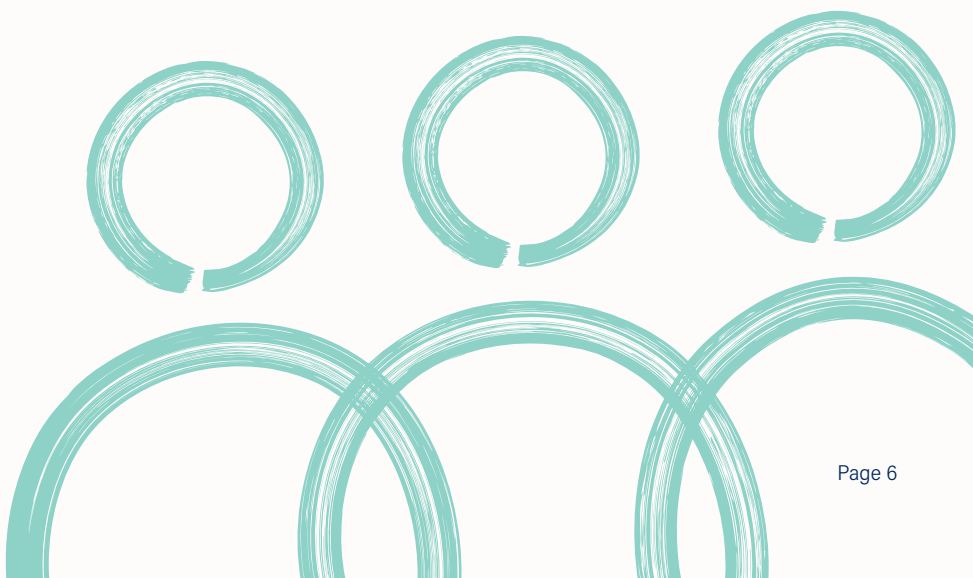
Further reading

In addition to the links above, here are some other key sources of information about the connection between socially dominant forms of masculinity and men's violence against women:

- *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* is Our Watch's evidence-based framework to guide a coordinated and effective national approach to preventing violence against women.

- *Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women* is an evidence review from Our Watch. It synthesises and analyses existing research on masculinities and violence against women to develop a deeper understanding of the links between dominant forms and patterns of masculinity and violence against women.

- *Men in focus practice guide: Addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women* is designed to support practitioners to address masculinities and work with men in the prevention of men's violence against women.

- *The Man Box 2024: Re-examining what it means to be a man in Australia* by The Men's Project, Jesuit Social Services, is a comprehensive study that focuses on the attitudes to manhood and the behaviours of Australian men.

- *Willing, capable and confident: Men, masculinities and the prevention of violence against women* by The Men's Project, Jesuit Social Services, and Respect Victoria examines examines how we can support men to engage more in actions to prevent gender-based violence.

Support is available

Violence against women is widespread across our society and impacts the lives of many people. If the content in these resources raises any issues for you, the following supports are available:

1800 RESPECT
☎ **1800 737 732**   🕐 **24-hours**   ⚡ 1800respect.org.au

Free national family and domestic violence telephone, online chat, and online video counselling services.

Australian Human Rights Commission National Information Service (NIS)
☎ **1300 656 419 or 02 9284 9888**
⚡ humanrights.gov.au/complaints

Information and referrals regarding workplace sexual harassment, for individuals and employers.

Men's Referral Service
☎ **1300 766 491**   🕐 **24-hours**   ⚡ ntv.org.au/mrs

Information and referral for men who are concerned about their use of violent or abusive behaviour.

13 Yarn
☎ **13 92 76**   🕐 **24-hours**   ⚡ 13yarn.org.au

Crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

QLife
☎ **1800 184 527**
🕐 **3pm-midnight, 7 days a week**   ⚡ qlife.org.au

LGBTIQA+ peer support and referrals for people wanting to talk about a range of issues.

Find out more at ourwatch.org.au

✕ **OurWatchAus**
twitter.com/OurWatchAus

f **OurWatchAus**
facebook.com/OurWatchAus

▶ **OurWatchAus**
youtube.com/@OurWatchAus

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