Our Watch Submission to the Second Action Plan

Prepared by Our Watch

July 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

Our Watch acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We pay respects to Elders past and present and recognise the continuing connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had to land, culture, knowledge, and language for over 65,000 years.

As a non-Aboriginal organisation, Our Watch understands that violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is a whole of community issue. As highlighted in Our Watch's national resource *Changing the picture*, there is an intersection between racism, sexism and violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Our Watch has an ongoing commitment to the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children, who continue to experience violence at significantly higher rates than non-Aboriginal women. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who continue to lead the work of sharing knowledge with non-Aboriginal people and relentlessly advocate for an equitable, violence-free future in Australia.

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Executive summary

Our Watch welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Second Action Plan (2027–2032) under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*. As Australia's national organisation for the primary prevention of gender-based violence, Our Watch works to embed gender equality and stop violence before it starts.

This submission focuses primarily on *Priority Area 2: Prevention and Early Intervention,* and draws on our national frameworks, the evidence set out in the ANROWS *Evidence to action* consultation paper, our experience supporting implementation across Australia, and a structured consultation with 62 participants from 55 organisations undertaken to inform this submission.

A decade of national investment has established prevention activity across Australian communities — in education, workplaces, sport, media, local government and community organisations. The Second Action Plan is the opportunity to build on these foundations and accelerate progress: to move from discrete initiatives to population-level change, to maximise system change through policy, legislative and regulatory levers, and to connect the efforts of all levels of government.

Primary prevention is a distinct approach that works at the population level to shift the underlying drivers of violence across the whole of society. It is one part of a broader system that also includes early intervention, response and recovery, with all four working together to prevent violence, respond effectively when it occurs, and support people affected by it. Each part requires dedicated attention and investment, and each supports the effectiveness of the others. An intersectional approach is also a key principle that must be embedded across all prevention actions, recognising the diversity of experience across the Australian population.

The most significant opportunity to prevent and ultimately end gender-based violence is to scale primary prevention nationally, as a universal, whole-of-population approach. This requires deliberate action across three dimensions — scaling out to reach more people, scaling up to shift structural and institutional drivers, and scaling deep to shift cultural norms — always balanced with, and grounded in, community leadership.

Achieving this depends on strengthening the foundations for prevention at scale: sustained and increased investment; maintaining Australia's national prevention infrastructure and its flagship organisations – Our Watch, ANROWS and 1800RESPECT – stronger coordination within and between jurisdictions; a nationally coordinated prevention workforce strategy; and improved monitoring, evaluation and evidence.

This submission identifies the prevention priorities most strongly supported through our consultation. These include:

- engaging men and boys and transforming masculinities

- investing in the early years, children and young people through a life-course approach spanning early childhood education and care, Respectful Relationships Education and tertiary settings
- greater investment in and coordination of sexual violence prevention
- activating workplaces, sport and education as settings for prevention
- community-led and place-based approaches, including the under-recognised role of local government
- addressing digital and technology-facilitated abuse
- dedicated prevention activities with and for priority communities, including LGBTIQA+ people, women and girls with disabilities, migrant and refugee women, and older women

Finally, the submission situates primary prevention within the National Plan as a whole, recognising its reinforcing relationship with responses for victim-survivors, work with children and young people, engagement with people who use violence, and system integration and workforce.

Together, the 60 recommendations set out in this submission provide a clear, evidence-based agenda for how the Second Action Plan can deliver prevention at the scale and pace required to make measurable progress toward a future free from gender-based violence.

About this submission

Our Watch is Australia's leader in the primary prevention of gender-based violence. We work to embed gender equality and prevent violence where Australians live, learn, work and play. Primary prevention aims to stop gender-based violence before it starts by addressing the underlying drivers and the social context in which violence occurs.

Our Watch offers unique capabilities that enable prevention at scale: translating evidence into action, coordinating across governments and sectors, delivering national initiatives and ensuring Australia's prevention system continues to evolve to meet emerging challenges.

We do not do this work alone. We work in partnership with governments, workplaces, sport, media, and community organisations to create the institutional and systems reform that removes the social conditions that give rise to violence.

Our role as a national prevention organisation is to connect, align and strengthen the efforts of individuals, organisations and sectors across Australia working to address all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence. This includes those leading primary prevention, as well as those working to address the reinforcing factors of violence and other related harm-reduction efforts. By bringing these diverse contributions together, we help build a coordinated national approach that strengthens and advances primary prevention outcomes.

Prevention work is already happening across Australian communities through education, workplaces, sport, media, local government and community organisations. This submission identifies ways to build on that work and accelerate progress. It addresses the key questions in the consultation paper and sets out action-based recommendations for how prevention should be centred in the Second Action Plan.

Scope

As Australia's national organisation leading the prevention of gender-based violence, Our Watch's submission focuses primarily on *Priority Area 2: Prevention and Early Intervention*, with a specific focus on primary prevention, in line with our expertise.

Our definition of violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that causes, or is likely to cause, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, social, cultural, spiritual or economic harm or suffering. It includes sexual violence, coercive control, threats, coercion and technology-facilitated abuse. Violence against women can occur in public or private settings and may involve a single incident or a pattern of behaviour over time.

Throughout this submission, we use the term gender-based violence. While Our Watch's core focus, consistent with our Strategic Plan and the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*, is the primary prevention of violence against women, we recognise

that violence against women is part of a broader landscape of gender-based violence. This includes violence against LGBTIQA+ people and communities, which shares many of the same underlying drivers, including gender inequality, rigid gender norms and intersecting forms of discrimination. We use this terminology to reflect the interconnected nature of these forms of violence and the need for coordinated, evidence-based prevention approaches.

Evidence base

This submission draws on four key sources:

- **Our national frameworks and resources**, including *Change the story*[1], *Changing the picture*[2], *Changing the landscape*[3], *Counting on change*[4], *Men in focus*[5], *Changing with pride* (forthcoming), the *Respectful Relationships Education Blueprint*[6] and our settings-based resources[7].
- **The evidence and opportunities identified in the consultation paper**, *Evidence to action*, prepared by ANROWS.
- **A formal, structured consultation** undertaken by Our Watch to inform this submission. We engaged 62 participants from 55 organisations, representing business, sport, media, TAFEs, universities, government, education, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, community organisations and the prevention sector.
- **Our experience** supporting governments, organisations and communities to implement prevention initiatives across Australia over the past 13 years.

What success looks like for the Second Action Plan

This submission provides advice to help move Australia to the future envisaged by the National Plan. For the Second Action Plan to set us on the path to this future over the next five years, it must increase the level of ambition and significantly scale investment and effort.

The opportunity under the Second Action Plan is not to create new systems. It is to build on the foundations already established – strengthening implementation, accelerating scale, and embedding prevention across the everyday settings that shape people's lives.

This means moving from fragmented programs to coordinated, large-scale action. It means maximising system change by using policy, legislative and regulatory levers. And it means joining up the efforts of all levels of government with those of the community and other stakeholders.

If we work together to do this, by 2032, Australia will have a mature prevention system, where prevention is embedded, both in systems and in consistent, evidence-based actions implemented at scale, across all the settings where people live, learn, work and play.

In short, Australia needs more people doing prevention work, in more places, more of the time. This is the kind of ambitious five-year plan we need to set Australia on the path to ending gender-based violence.

Our Watch recommendations summary

No.	Recommendation
1.1 How prevention works	
1.	Maintain a clear distinction between primary prevention and early intervention across policy, implementation, evaluation and workforce development, recognising the different purposes, outcomes and skills required for each. Ensure these efforts are coordinated and mutually reinforcing, with shared objectives and alignment towards the long-term goal of ending violence against women and children.
2.	Clarify the relationship and differences between prevention and early intervention, and roles and responsibilities of early intervention stakeholders in the Second Action Plan.
2.1 Scaling prevention	
3.	Establish a new partnership to build, and where relevant, scale prevention at the local government level. This would fund state and territory local government associations and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) to coordinate and lead on local government prevention work (learning from the experience of the Municipal Association of Victoria, in coordinating, connecting and building capacity for primary prevention across Victorian local governments).
4.	Invest in approaches to support individuals, organisations and communities to mobilise and lead on prevention, ground their local work in established evidence and best practice, promote lateral connections, and allow for reciprocal and continual learning. This will help create the conditions for prevention activity to be adopted, adapted and sustained in communities and organisations across Australia.
5.	Support state and territory governments to use their respective policy, regulatory funding, and partnership levers that enable employers, sporting organisations and other setting leaders to adopt and sustain evidence-based prevention approaches.
6.	Commonwealth and state/territory governments to work in partnership to scale up Respectful Relationships Education in education systems across the country.
7.	Accelerate systemic change by progressing the implementation of policy, legislative, regulatory and system-reform recommendations from previous commissions and inquiries relevant to ending gender-based violence.
2.2 Sustained and increased investment	
8.	Commonwealth Government commits to a National Primary Prevention Investment Framework that guides funding across systems, sectors and jurisdictions.
9.	All governments invest in prevention infrastructure, also known as the foundations for prevention (Figure 2 below) to ensure efforts are coordinated, mutually reinforcing, sustainable, and at the scale of change required.

10.	Continue investment in the flagship national organisations - Our Watch, ANROWS and 1800RESPECT to provide the stability, expertise and national coordination needed to deliver the National Plan effectively.
11.	Adopt principles to inform prevention investment including: • Long-term funding commitments of at least five years that enable sustained engagement, workforce stability and population-level change. • Self-determined and equitable – sustained long-term funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and other specialist groups • Collaborative – recognising partnerships as core infrastructure and funding the full costs of collaboration, co-design and participation. • Centres lived expertise – partnering with, resourcing and remunerating lived expertise and participation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQA+, disability and other specialist organisations. • Builds capability – investing in the workforce and infrastructure that moves beyond project funding to enable systems change. • Innovative – supports innovation, testing and scaling of emerging prevention approaches. • Outcomes-focused – funding progress towards long-term changes in attitudes, behaviours, relationships and systems, while allowing flexibility to respond to local contexts.
2.3 Coordination within and between jurisdictions	
12.	Establish a whole-of-government coordinating mechanism dedicated to government prevention efforts across states and territories and the Commonwealth. This would require input from relevant agencies across all jurisdictions such as education, health, settlement services, justice, treasury, housing, community services and women's policy portfolios to identify state/ territory and Commonwealth funded and led prevention initiatives and activity. For example, inter-departmental working groups to coordinate effort, identify opportunities and levers, and streamline monitoring and reporting.
13.	States and territories work to strengthen and support collaboration within specific contexts (e.g. tailored communities of practice for stakeholders in the Northern Territory and other rural and remote areas). This approach can be tailored to incorporate specific community-led or shared governance arrangements.
14.	Ensure actions within the Second Action Plan align with strategy and approach in other relevant national strategies.
2.4 Workforce	
15.	Develop and implement a National Workforce Development approach that encompasses national and localised investment and action on workforce planning, workforce preparation and pathways, sector governance, working conditions and professional development.

16.	Invest in sustained workforce capability development across the primary prevention workforce, including professional development, implementation support and communities of practice to strengthen understanding of the gendered drivers of violence and the intersecting impacts of ableism, racism, discrimination and exclusion. This should include partnership with specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, disability, multicultural and LGBTIQA+ organisations to lead and co-deliver workforce development and capacity-building initiatives.
17.	Invest in long-term primary prevention programs and services.
2.5 Monitoring, evaluation and evidence	
18.	Improve consistency in primary prevention monitoring at a state, territory and national level by strengthening the *National Plan PMP* to include sufficient and appropriate measures for primary prevention.
19.	Strengthen the *National Plan PMP* by addressing population-level data gaps related to men and masculinities, reinforcing factors, data disaggregation for priority cohorts (including but not limited to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and LGBTIQA+ people), a national perpetration dataset and system-level indicators and measures.
20.	Ensure the development of the monitoring and evaluation framework for *Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our* Voices is led by *Our Ways Strong Together*, with any data collected according to the principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, Indigenous Data Governance and Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property.
21.	Invest in data collection and reporting systems for states and territory National Plan funded programs to build continuous improvement into and scale effective prevention practice, knowledge translation and communication.
22.	Invest in research and evidence development to address data gaps, including qualitative studies and the continuation of key survey data collections.
23.	Invest in research and evaluation on pathways into and out of violence that will inform effective prevention approaches for diverse communities to strengthen the evidence base for effective early intervention.
3.1 Men and boys, and transforming masculinities	
24.	Commonwealth investment to build capability and capacity in workforces across diverse settings to effectively engage men and boys.
25.	Provide long-term, needs-based funding to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to strengthen and scale community-led, strengths-based work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and boys, to ensure best outcomes.
26.	Scale effective prevention strategies to engage men and boys. Opportunities for governments (and other stakeholders) include: • funding evidence-based social marketing campaigns to engage men and boys, encourage community mobilisation and help shift social norms

	• working with influencers, role models and allies, to challenge harmful stereotypes and normalise healthy, respectful forms of masculinity • implementing community-based education and participation programs tailored to men and boys in specific contexts and communities such as culturally responsive approaches for multicultural and refugee communities • implementing approaches that shift from risk management to proactive culture change in male-dominated settings, such as sports, TAFEs and certain workplaces and industries • scaling Respectful Relationships Education • health and community sector programs to engage men as fathers and build capacity for equal and respectful parenting and relationship practices • investing in the development and implementation of quality assurance mechanisms for work with men and boys, including national prevention standards • reforms to paid parental leave provisions • governments working with prevention experts to develop quality assurance measures (such as national standards or principles) for work to address masculinities and engage men and boys, which could then inform government investment • establish a national consortium to convene leading organisations working on prevention, early intervention and response initiatives for men and boys • Commonwealth investment to support further Man Box studies • Commonwealth Government enacting existing policy recommendations to address harmful online cultures and reduce exposure to extreme and misogynistic content
3.2 Children and young people: a life-course approach	
27.	Investment in a nationally coordinated approach to primary prevention in ECEC settings, including workforce development for educators, parent and carer engagement, implementation support and evaluation, co-designed and delivered in partnership with the ECEC sector, peak bodies (incl. Early Childhood Australia and SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisations.
28.	Commonwealth Department of Education to work with states and territories, extending existing investment to strengthen primary prevention of gender-based violence in the early childhood education and care sector across the country.
29.	Develop and implement a national parent and carer engagement strategy that supports understanding of Respectful Relationships Education and strengthens the capacity of parents and carers to reinforce prevention messages with children and young people in their lives.
30.	Commonwealth Department of Social Services to continue investing in best practice prevention campaigns for young people, prioritising ongoing investment for targeted

	campaigns co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and organisations working with young people to enable sustained impact and greater reach
31.	Commonwealth Department of Education to enable the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence to realise its potential for system and organisational change. This would include supporting universities and student accommodation providers to build leadership/staff capacity to align with the Code (e.g. training, technical support, tools and resources, communities of practice).
32.	Invest in the adaptation and implementation of the Baby Makes 3 program for first-time parents engaging in antenatal and post-natal services in jurisdictions across Australia.
3.3 Sexual violence	
33.	Establish a dedicated funding stream for sexual violence prevention, including funding for specialist sexual violence services to design, lead and deliver prevention initiatives.
34.	Strengthen national coordination of sexual violence prevention and response including through investment in the National Association of Services Against Sexual Assault (NASASV).
35.	Scope the establishment of a national prevention practice collaborative between the specialist sexual violence sector, ANROWS and Our Watch, La Trobe University (Partners in Prevention), NASASV and Our Ways Strong Together, to strengthen conceptual clarity, align evidence and specialist expertise, and develop practical guidance on the application of sexual violence prevention evidence across different settings and populations.
36.	Invest in strengthening the evidence base on sexual violence through nationally consistent data collection, reporting and analysis of sexual violence perpetration and victimisation, alongside improved evaluation, evidence sharing and dedicated support for smaller organisations to participate in research and evaluation.
3.4 Settings where people live, learn, work, rest and play	
37.	Expand evidence-informed frameworks, tools and implementation support that help workplaces and sporting organisations embed gender equality, safety and respect through an intersectional lens.
38.	Fund training, learning activities, communities of practice and implementation support that build prevention capability and enable organisations to embed and sustain evidence-based, intersectional practice.
39.	Leverage Positive Duty, National Higher Education Code, WHS frameworks, workplace gender equality reporting, sporting governance standards and accreditation systems to drive consistent, intersectional prevention action at scale.
40.	Work with employer groups, unions, professional associations, sporting bodies and peak organisations to promote shared standards, coordinated action and leadership informed by diverse voices and lived expertise.
3.5 Community-led and place-based prevention	

41.	Support community-led approaches that address intersecting forms of inequality and build local leadership, capability and ownership of prevention efforts.
42.	Invest in dedicated, community-led gender-based violence prevention programs for migrant and refugee communities to ensure cultural responsiveness, relevance and impact.
43.	Resource faith-based organisations as prevention partners, supporting faith-led action with strengthened links to national prevention frameworks, evidence and evaluation.
3.6 Digital environments and technology-facilitated abuse	
44.	Strengthen existing regulatory frameworks to increase compliance and accountability and incentivise sector leadership across the technology industry to prevent TFGBV.
45.	Expand the evidence base to prevent TFGBV, by continuing and expanding the eSafety Commission's Preventing Tech-based Abuse of Women Grants Program.
46.	Make greater use of online and digital technologies in prevention strategies to engage audiences more effectively, while integrating the prevention of TFGBV into existing prevention models, settings-based approaches and practice frameworks. This will help ensure prevention efforts remain relevant and responsive to the digital environments in which people increasingly live, work, learn and play.
3.7 Addressing the reinforcing factors of gender-based violence	
47.	Increase investment in programs, initiatives and services that mitigate the harmful impacts of alcohol, gambling, childhood experiences of violence, disasters and crises, and effectively counter backlash to gender equality. Investment includes initiatives that span the spectrum of prevention, early intervention, response, recovery and healing, recognising that many interventions will have multiple beneficial impacts across this spectrum.
48.	Strengthen partnerships between the prevention sector and organisations with specialist expertise in addressing reinforcing factors, including public health, alcohol and other drugs, gambling harm prevention and children's safety sectors.
49.	Work with states and territories to identify and progress legislative, regulatory and policy reforms that address reinforcing factors associated with violence against women, informed by the evidence base and aligned with Australia's broader primary prevention efforts. Include reforms to reduce alcohol and gambling related harms and to strengthen protective factors across communities.
3.8 Prevention with and for priority communities: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	
50.	Fund the implementation of *Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices*. This includes sustained, needs-based investment for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, particularly in priority and remote areas where inequity and violence are higher and services are under-resourced.
51.	Ensure Second Action Plan initiatives and guidance—including theme-specific work such as prevention with men and boys—reflect and are aligned with the principles, evidence and actions outlined in *Changing the picture*.

3.8 Prevention with and for priority communities: LGBTIQA+ people	
52.	Provide sustained funding for the implementation of *Changing with pride*, including investment in LGBTIQA+ organisations to provide advice, leadership and delivery of primary prevention initiatives across a range of settings.
53.	State and territory commitment and endorsement to implement *Changing with pride*, including investment in workforce capability through tailored training for LGBTIQA+ specialist and mainstream organisations.
54.	Investment in the enabling foundations for *Changing with pride* including governance mechanisms (for example, an LGBTIQA+ working group), coordination, workforce capability and establishing a monitoring and evaluation strategy.
55.	Ensure Second Action Plan initiatives and guidance—including theme-specific work such as prevention with men and boys—reflect and are aligned with the principles, evidence and actions outlined in *Changing with pride*.
3.8 Prevention with and for priority communities: women and girls with disabilities	
56.	Embed disability inclusion as a core component of prevention policy, practice and investment under the National Plan.
57.	Continue to fund disability advocacy pathways including by providing long-term resourcing and accountability mechanisms for disability peaks, disability support services, and organisations led by and for women and girls with disabilities.
58.	Progress implementation of the actions outlined in the *Changing the landscape* framework for action to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities.
3.8 Prevention with and for priority communities: migrant and refugee communities	
59.	Provide greater investment to support prevention in the settlement sector and enable settlement services and organisations to play a stronger role in prevention.
3.8 Prevention with and for priority communities: older women	
60.	Work with governments implementing the National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2026–2036 to embed a gendered approach to preventing elder abuse and strengthen recognition of older women's experiences of violence across the life course.

Alignment to consultation questions

Consultation paper question	Where it is answered
2.1 What would make the biggest difference in preventing and ultimately ending violence?	Part 2 (all sections)
2.2 How can existing efforts be strengthened or built upon?	Part 2 and Part 3
2.3 What prevention approaches appear most promising or effective?	Part 3, and Appendix 1
2.4 How can governments, communities, schools, workplaces, online platforms and others better support people to recognise and respond to harmful attitudes and behaviours?	Part 3.1 – 3.7
2.5 What emerging issues should the Second Action Plan address?	Part 1 and Part 3.7
Priority Area 5: What workforce capabilities, supports or conditions are most needed?	Part 2.5
Priority Areas 1, 3 and 4	Part 4

1. How prevention works

1.1. Primary prevention is a distinct approach

The consultation paper treats prevention and early intervention as a combined area. Our Watch emphasises that primary prevention should be recognised and addressed as a distinct approach, connected to but separate from the others. This is consistent with the National Plan itself, where prevention is a standalone pillar. It was also raised extensively through our stakeholder consultation.

Unlike other approaches, primary prevention works at the population level to shift the underlying drivers of violence across the whole of society. It involves coordinated action through policy, legislative, institutional and organisational levers, to drive structural change across a range of systems.

Early intervention differs from primary prevention in both purpose and method. It works in targeted contexts with individuals at higher-than-average risk of using or experiencing violence, and seeks to stop early signs of violence from escalating.

Both approaches are essential and complementary, and in practice are often delivered seamlessly in ways that are aligned and mutually reinforcing. In many settings, and particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations adopt integrated approaches, because community needs do not fit neatly into separate categories. Respectful Relationships Education is primarily a prevention strategy, but it also creates opportunities for early intervention and can generate disclosures requiring immediate support. Practitioners working with men often operate across the continuum from prevention through to response and healing.

Nevertheless, the two approaches remain distinct, and each requires dedicated investment. It is critical that the Second Action Plan addresses primary prevention and early intervention separately. They draw on different evidence bases, pursue different objectives, target different audiences, and require different skills and workforce capabilities.

This distinction is an underlying principle throughout this submission.

1.2. Early intervention as a distinct and dedicated focus

Early intervention remains the least well-developed of the National Plan domains. The consultation paper notes that early intervention is constrained by system-level barriers limiting availability, effectiveness and longevity.[8] Significant gaps remain in Australia's approach to early intervention.

These include the absence of a guiding framework to support an evidence-based national approach, no national early intervention peak body or expert organisation, and significant funding, service and workforce gaps.

Our Watch agrees that there is a need to dedicate more attention, effort and investment to early intervention. Consultation findings highlighted the need for clearer system definitions, sustained funding, and alignment with prevention and response services.

Our Watch recommendations

1. Maintain a clear distinction between primary prevention and early intervention across policy, implementation, evaluation and workforce development, recognising the different purposes, outcomes and skills required for each. Ensure these efforts are coordinated and mutually reinforcing, with shared objectives and alignment towards the long-term goal of ending violence against women and children.
2. Clarify the relationship and differences between prevention and early intervention, and roles and responsibilities of early intervention stakeholders in the Second Action Plan.

1.3. The importance of an intersectional approach

While prevention must work at the population level, it must also respond to the diversity of experience across the Australian population, and to the intersecting drivers of violence.

The Second Action Plan should embed an intersectional approach across all actions. This is consistent with our national prevention frameworks and evidence base. It means recognising that racism, ableism, colonisation, discrimination, ageism and other forms of structural disadvantage shape experiences of violence, and that prevention must address them.

It should also support work that directly involves the communities and population cohorts that specific initiatives aim to engage, to ensure work is culturally led and relevant to specific community contexts. Embedding this evidence-based and community-led approach across the Second Action Plan will help make prevention initiatives more inclusive, equitable and effective.

2. The foundations for prevention at scale

2.1. Scaling prevention

Scaling prevention nationally

The most significant opportunity to prevent and ultimately end gender-based violence is to scale primary prevention nationally, as a universal, whole-of-population approach.

Consultation findings highlighted that jurisdictions are at different stages of prevention maturity. Stakeholders expect the Second Action Plan to focus on scaling work in lower-maturity jurisdictions, so that national impact increases and no jurisdiction is left behind. This includes scaling prevention at the local government level.

Primary prevention succeeds when all governments use the full range of policy, legislative, regulatory, funding and governance levers available to them. Across jurisdictions, Victoria shows one of the more consistent patterns of improvement on national Personal Safety Survey prevalence measures.[9] This population-level data should be interpreted cautiously. But it is consistent with the value of sustained, coordinated investment, and it points to the potential of prevention applied at scale.

Stakeholders across all jurisdictions identified the same top priority for the Second Action Plan: scaling prevention activity to reach more people, across more settings, wherever they live, learn, work, rest and play. The greatest opportunity now is less about developing new approaches and more about scaling what we know works.

Achieving population-level impact requires a deliberate strategy across three dimensions:

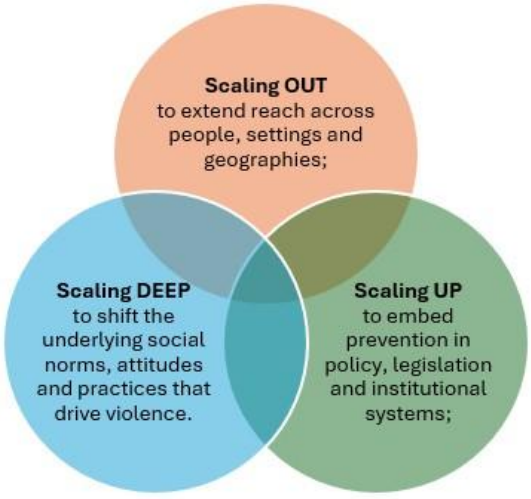

Figure 1. Three dimensions of scaling prevention

- **Scaling out** reaches more people. It replicates and spreads successful and promising initiatives to new audiences, sectors and communities. This means moving beyond localised delivery in selected jurisdictions, towards consistent and coordinated national implementation.
- **Scaling up** shifts the structural and institutional drivers of violence. Governments hold many policy, legislative, regulatory and funding levers. Used together, these create mutually reinforcing change across systems and settings.
- **Scaling deep** shifts the cultural roots of violence. It spreads new ideas, beliefs, values and norms by engaging people and communities in participatory and transformative learning that changes hearts and minds.

The importance of community leadership

While scaling is essential, it must not come at the expense of community leadership. Effective scaling out and scaling deep both depend on prevention efforts being led by communities and informed by local expertise.

The Second Action Plan should recognise community-led prevention as critical to achieving both scale and impact. Community members, primary prevention practitioners and local organisations are best placed to understand local contexts, identify emerging issues and tailor responses to community needs and opportunities. Investing in local capability, leadership and networks creates the conditions for evidence-based prevention approaches to be adopted, adapted and sustained across diverse settings.

While scaling up may require national or jurisdiction-wide approaches, scaling out must be tailored to different communities and population groups. For example, expanding a successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiative to new communities should be led by those communities to ensure it is culturally responsive, locally relevant and informed by lived experience.

Progress across these dimensions requires:

- A strong national approach, supported by greater cross-jurisdictional collaboration and knowledge sharing, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evidence.
- A stronger whole-of-government approach within each jurisdiction that activates prevention levers across multiple portfolios, including areas such as primary and preventive health.
- Moving beyond individual initiatives to focus on systemic change, embedding prevention principles across policy, legislation, institutions and funding systems. Like current work underway to stop systems abuse, prevention also requires coordinated action across portfolios and levels of government.

Our Watch recommendations

3. Establish a new partnership to build, and where relevant, scale prevention at the local government level. This would fund state and territory local government associations and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) to coordinate and lead on local government prevention work (learning from the experience of the Municipal Association of Victoria, in coordinating, connecting and building capacity for primary prevention across Victorian local governments).
4. Invest in approaches to support individuals, organisations and communities to mobilise and lead on prevention, ground their local work in established evidence and best practice, promote lateral connections, and allow for reciprocal and continual learning. This will help create the conditions for prevention activity to be adopted, adapted and sustained in communities and organisations across Australia.
5. Support state and territory governments to use their respective policy, regulatory funding, and partnership levers that enable employers, sporting organisations and other setting leaders to adopt and sustain evidence-based prevention approaches.
6. Commonwealth and state/territory governments to work in partnership to scale up Respectful Relationships Education in education systems across the country.
7. Accelerate systemic change by progressing the implementation of policy, legislative, regulatory and system-reform recommendations from previous commissions and inquiries relevant to ending gender-based violence.

2.2. Sustained investment in primary prevention

Sustained and increased funding

Gender-based violence continues to have a devastating impact across Australia. This reinforces the need for a strong and sustained national prevention effort.

Under the Second Action Plan, investment in prevention should be maintained and strengthened, not reduced. Australia needs an overall increase in prevention investment, alongside continued support for the national organisations that provide leadership, evidence and coordination.

The Commonwealth has invested over many years in building Australia's national prevention capability. Continued investment allows government to use that established infrastructure, those trusted relationships and that expertise, rather than recreating capability elsewhere.

This approach delivers greater efficiency, stronger national coordination and better outcomes for communities, and avoids the additional cost of rebuilding capability that has already been established.

Preventing violence at scale also requires increased investment. While maintaining current funding is essential, greater investment is needed to expand self-determined, trauma-informed and culturally responsive solutions.[10]

The Second Action Plan provides an opportunity to strengthen the foundations for prevention (Figure 2) through increased and sustained investment. Consultation findings highlighted the importance of multi-year funding that supports workforce development, evaluation and long-term system capacity. These are critical enablers of scaling prevention effectively.

Maintaining national prevention infrastructure

Australia's existing national prevention infrastructure should be maintained and developed. The National Plan has benefited from sustained investment in national institutions with complementary roles.

Continued investment in the National Plan's flagship national organisations — Our Watch, ANROWS and 1800RESPECT — provides the stability, expertise and national coordination needed to deliver the Plan. Maintaining this infrastructure protects more than a decade of public investment. It also enables continuous improvement rather than rebuilding capability.

Figure 2. The essential foundations for prevention[11]

Our Watch recommendations

8. Commonwealth Government commits to a National Primary Prevention Investment Framework that guides funding across systems, sectors and jurisdictions.[12]
9. All governments invest in prevention infrastructure, also known as the *foundations for prevention* (Figure 2 below) to ensure efforts are coordinated, mutually reinforcing, sustainable, and at the scale of change required.[13]
10. Continue investment in the flagship national organisations - Our Watch, ANROWS and 1800RESPECT to provide the stability, expertise and national coordination needed to deliver the National Plan effectively.
11. Adopt principles to inform prevention investment including:
    - Long-term funding – commitments of at least five years that enable sustained engagement, workforce stability and population-level change.
    - Self-determined and equitable – sustained long-term funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and other specialist groups.
    - Collaborative – recognising partnerships as core infrastructure and funding the full costs of collaboration, co-design and participation.
    - Centres lived expertise – partnering with, resourcing and remunerating lived expertise and participation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQA+, disability and other specialist organisations.
    - Builds capability – investing in the workforce and infrastructure that moves beyond project funding to enable systems change.
    - Innovative – supports innovation, testing and scaling of emerging prevention approaches.
    - Outcomes-focused – funding progress towards long-term changes in attitudes, behaviours, relationships and systems, while allowing flexibility to respond to local contexts.

2.3. Coordination within and between jurisdictions

Strengthening national coordination

Preventing violence requires coordinated national leadership alongside local implementation. Such coordination reduces duplication, accelerates learning and supports more effective investment across the system. National infrastructure enables jurisdictions, sectors and organisations to work from a shared evidence base, using a common language and consistent approaches.

Our consultation identified clear limitations in current arrangements, with stakeholders describing fragmented systems and limited connections across portfolios within jurisdictions. The result is gaps, inefficiency and missed opportunities to build more impactful initiatives.

Stakeholders consistently called for stronger national coordination, clearer system architecture, more collaboration across jurisdictions and greater involvement of local government. Consultation feedback also emphasised that the Second Action Plan needs to

move beyond listing activities, and should instead provide a strategic, coordinated approach focused on evidence-based scaling and national alignment.

Change the story emphasises coordinated action across settings – schools, workplaces, media, sporting clubs, online environments and government – to address the underlying drivers of violence. The Second Action Plan can strengthen primary prevention principles and action, consistent with the *Foundations for Primary Prevention,*[14] by embedding prevention across government systems in two directions:

1. ***Within each jurisdiction***, a stronger whole-of-government approach, guided by a dedicated prevention strategy, can optimise the prevention levers that exist across health, justice, settlement services, housing, community services and local government.

2. ***Nationally,*** stronger cross-jurisdictional collaboration will enable states and territories to share and scale effective approaches.

Our Watch recommendations

12. Establish a whole-of-government coordinating mechanism dedicated to government prevention efforts across states and territories and the Commonwealth. This would require input from relevant agencies across all jurisdictions such as education, health, settlement services, justice, treasury, housing, community services and women's policy portfolios to identify state/territory and Commonwealth funded and led prevention initiatives and activity. For example, inter-departmental working groups to coordinate effort, identify opportunities and levers, and streamline monitoring and reporting.
13. States and territories work to strengthen and support collaboration within specific contexts (e.g. tailored communities of practice for stakeholders in the Northern Territory and other rural and remote areas). This approach can be tailored to incorporate specific community-led or shared governance arrangements.
14. Ensure actions within the Second Action Plan align with strategy and approach in other relevant national strategies.[15]

2.4. Workforce

A national prevention workforce approach

The First Action Plan (Action 3) commits to working toward developing and sustaining a strong national workforce by addressing five core elements of workforce development[16] - workforce planning, workforce preparation and pathways, sector governance and coordination, working conditions and professional development. These elements mirror those outlined in Our Watch's *Growing with change*[17].

A capable and connected workforce is foundational to achieving consistent, population-level prevention outcomes and meeting the ambition of the National Plan to end violence in a generation.

However, current approaches remain fragmented, with gaps in capability, coordination, resourcing, evidence sharing and national alignment. States and territories are at different stages of establishing and resourcing a dedicated prevention workforce and of building prevention capability into existing workforces. The prevention workforce needs to be multidisciplinary and diverse, and while connected to other workforces addressing gender-based violence, it remains distinct from them. Developing it will require a strategic and coordinated approach across the five core elements.

Other workforce gaps include specialist capability in gender-transformative and intersectional practice, insufficient resourcing for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to sustain culturally led workforce development and address the gender pay gaps, and a lack of coordinated national workforce data and planning. Consultation feedback also highlighted the importance of recognising the broader tiered nature of the workforce, embedding prevention into education and professional systems, and equipping practitioners to respond to emerging challenges.[18]

Workforce insecurity, underpinned by short-term funding, also limits the sector's ability to attract, retain and sustain skilled prevention practitioners. This results in the loss of skilled practitioners, even where capability-building efforts have been successful, and requires ongoing reinvestment in training and development.

The core message from our stakeholders was that Australia requires a nationally coordinated prevention workforce approach, rather than the short-term programs and isolated initiatives that produce only short-term employment outcomes. Stakeholders regard workforce development as a system-level responsibility requiring long-term investment, standards, training and coordination.

Our Watch recommendations

15. Develop and implement a National Workforce Development approach that encompasses national and localised investment and action on workforce planning, workforce preparation and pathways, sector governance, working conditions and professional development.
16. Invest in sustained workforce capability development across the primary prevention workforce, including professional development, implementation support and communities of practice to strengthen understanding of the gendered drivers of violence and the intersecting impacts of ableism, racism, discrimination and exclusion. This should include partnership with specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, disability, multicultural and LGBTIQA+ organisations to lead and co-deliver workforce development and capacity-building initiatives.
17. Invest in long-term primary prevention programs and services.

2.5. Monitoring, evaluation and evidence

Improving prevention monitoring, reporting and evidence

National monitoring and reporting are critical components of primary prevention. While the National Plan Outcomes Framework[19], the Performance Measurement Plan[20] and Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality[21] have established promising foundations, there are clear opportunities to strengthen how progress is measured, coordinated and communicated.

This was reinforced through our consultation, where stakeholders emphasised the need for sustained investment in evaluation, stronger data systems, shared learning and national coordination, so that evidence meaningfully informs policy, funding and scaling decisions.

Key gaps also remain in the availability, consistency and use of evidence. These include limited national data on perpetration patterns and drivers, which constrains the ability to target prevention effectively; persistent evidence gaps in priority areas such as engaging men and boys and addressing masculinities; and the need to strengthen evaluation and improve the sharing of practice-based evidence across the system.

There is a clear opportunity for the Department of Social Services, ANROWS and the Domestic, Sexual and Family Violence Commission to work with Our Watch to strengthen national monitoring, reporting and evidence for primary prevention.

Our Watch recommendations

18. Improve consistency in primary prevention monitoring at a state, territory and national level by strengthening the *National Plan PMP* to include sufficient and appropriate measures for primary prevention.
19. Strengthen the *National Plan PMP* by addressing population-level data gaps related to men and masculinities, reinforcing factors, data disaggregation for priority cohorts (including *but not limited to* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and LGBTIQA+ people), a national perpetration dataset and system-level indicators and measures.
20. Ensure the development of the monitoring and evaluation framework for *Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices* is led by Our Ways Strong Together, with any data collected according to the principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, Indigenous Data Governance and Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property.
21. Invest in data collection and reporting systems for states and territory National Plan funded programs to build continuous improvement into and scale effective prevention practice, knowledge translation and communication.
22. Invest in research and evidence development to address data gaps, including qualitative studies and the continuation of key survey data collections.
23. Invest in research and evaluation on pathways into and out of violence that will inform effective prevention approaches for diverse communities to strengthen the evidence base for effective early intervention.

3. Priorities for the Second Action Plan

Our consultation captured perspectives on national prevention priorities, examples of prevention impact, and views on where effort should be concentrated. While some themes confirmed Our Watch's existing positions, others emerged as new findings. Together with our evidence base, these inform the response below.

Australia already has many effective, evidence-based approaches to preventing gender-based violence. The opportunity now is to deliver them at the scale, consistency and duration needed to achieve population-level change.

A range of promising practice and examples of prevention impact captured through the Our Watch consultation are outlined in *Appendix 1: Promising practice examples.* Examples relating to the settings specified in question 2.4 are also discussed below.

3.1. Engaging men and boys in positive masculinity

The Our Watch consultation[22] found strong support for increasing work with men and boys as one of the most important prevention priorities for the Second Action Plan. Engagement with men and boys is essential for achieving population-level change, because prevention cannot rely on women carrying the burden of change alone.

Engaging men and boys should not be treated as a standalone stream of activity. Rather, it should be embedded across the full spectrum of prevention, including community engagement, organisational and systems change, workforce development, communications, education and leadership programs.[23] It should also connect to broader efforts to challenge rigid gender norms and promote inclusion, recognising the shared drivers of gender-based violence and of discrimination against LGBTIQA+ people, as set out in *Changing with pride*.

Stakeholders consistently identified a gap in engagement with multicultural men. They emphasised the need for culturally responsive approaches that engage diverse groups of men and boys.

The consultation paper provides evidence that supportive relationships, positive role models and emotional literacy can help boys and young men disengage from manosphere content.[24] While such initiatives exist, they remain small in scale and variable in quality. Other approaches focus on men's health and wellbeing, which does not consistently align with the prevention evidence base and principles, and does not always work in ways that are accountable to women and gender-diverse people.

Engaging men and boys to counter misogynist narratives and promote healthy masculinities, male peer relationships and gender-equitable norms is perhaps the most critical work needed in prevention. Australia requires a significant increase in quality work designed specifically for

this purpose — work that addresses power, control, entitlement and gender relations, that is gender transformative, intersectional and accountable, and that operates at both the individual and the policy level.

Our Watch recommendations

24. Commonwealth investment to build capability and capacity in workforces across diverse settings to effectively engage men and boys.
25. Provide long-term, needs-based funding to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to strengthen and scale community-led, strengths-based work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and boys, to ensure best outcomes.
26. Scale effective prevention strategies to engage men and boys.[25] Opportunities for governments (and other stakeholders)[26] include:
    - funding evidence-based social marketing campaigns to engage men and boys, encourage community mobilisation and help shift social norms
    - working with influencers, role models and allies, to challenge harmful stereotypes and normalise healthy, respectful forms of masculinity
    - implementing community-based education and participation programs tailored to men and boys in specific contexts and communities such as culturally responsive approaches for multicultural and refugee communities
    - implementing approaches that shift from risk management to proactive culture change in male-dominated settings, such as sports, TAFEs and certain workplaces and industries
    - scaling Respectful Relationships Education
    - health and community sector programs to engage men as fathers and build capacity for equal and respectful parenting and relationship practices
    - investing in the development and implementation of quality assurance mechanisms for work with men and boys, including national prevention standards
    - reforms to paid parental leave provisions[27]
    - governments working with prevention experts to develop quality assurance measures (such as national standards or principles) for work to address masculinities and engage men and boys, which could then inform government investment
    - establish a national consortium to convene leading organisations working on prevention, early intervention and response initiatives for men and boys
    - Commonwealth investment to support further *Man Box* studies
    - Commonwealth Government enacting existing policy recommendations[28] to address harmful online cultures and reduce exposure to extreme and misogynistic content

3.2. Investing in the early years, children and young people

Our consultation positioned children and young people as one of the highest prevention priorities. Stakeholders consistently indicated that the greatest opportunity for long-term

reduction in gendered violence is to work with children before harmful attitudes and behaviours become entrenched.

This is consistent with the evidence. From birth, children are exposed to expectations about gender, including rigid gender norms and stereotypes, and to relationship behaviours that influence and shape their ideas, beliefs and relationships into adulthood.[29]

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings present an important opportunity for primary prevention. Supporting children to challenge rigid gender stereotypes and develop positive, equal and respectful relationships contributes to long-term social change. ECEC settings, alongside maternal and child health services, also provide important opportunities to engage parents and carers in shaping children's early understandings of gender, respect and relationships.

For children and young people in school, Respectful Relationships Education (RRE) is one of the most established and evidence-based forms of primary prevention.[30] Stakeholders strongly reinforced the critical role Respectful Relationships Education plays in primary prevention. It supports young people to critically analyse harmful gender norms, build respectful behaviours and challenge attitudes that contribute to violence. It also has potential to address technology-facilitated abuse, gendered bullying and exposure to misogynistic online content. Whole-school approaches extend prevention into school culture, policy and leadership, and engage parents and carers so that messages are reinforced across home, school and community.

Stakeholders emphasised the need for nationally coordinated, system-wide implementation, embedded across school sectors and supported by workforce capability, quality assurance and evaluation.

The evidence also shows that preventing gender-based violence requires interventions across the life-course. Rather than disconnected initiatives, a life-course approach connects those investments into a single prevention pathway, so children and young people receive developmentally appropriate, mutually reinforcing prevention messages from early childhood through to young adulthood.

National prevention campaigns also play an important role during adolescence and young adulthood. Stakeholders highlighted the value of *The Line* initiative in particular, as a trusted source of evidence-based, youth-led content that reaches young people while they are forming attitudes to gender roles, sex and consent, and having their first relationship experiences. It is also a key means of countering online misogyny and manosphere narratives, particularly for young men.

Tertiary education settings provide a critical prevention opportunity as young people navigate increased independence, and new relationships and environments. The National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to GBV is a strong lever for sector-wide change, supporting universities to create safe, respectful and equitable learning and working environments.

Our Watch recommendations

27. Investment in a nationally coordinated approach to primary prevention in ECEC settings, including workforce development for educators, parent and carer engagement, implementation support and evaluation, co-designed and delivered in partnership with the ECEC sector, peak bodies (incl. Early Childhood Australia and SNAICC – National Voice for Our Children) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisations.
28. Commonwealth Department of Education to work with states and territories, extending existing investment to strengthen primary prevention of gender-based violence in the early childhood education and care sector across the country.
29. Develop and implement a national parent and carer engagement strategy that supports understanding of Respectful Relationships Education and strengthens the capacity of parents and carers to reinforce prevention messages with children and young people in their lives.
30. Commonwealth Department of Social Services to continue investing in best practice prevention campaigns for young people, prioritising ongoing investment for targeted campaigns co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and organisations working with young people to enable sustained impact and greater reach.
31. Commonwealth Department of Education to enable the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence to realise its potential for system and organisational change. This would include supporting universities and student accommodation providers to build leadership/staff capacity to align with the Code (e.g. training, technical support, tools and resources, communities of practice).
32. Invest in the adaptation and implementation of the *Baby Makes 3* initiative[31] for first-time parents engaging in antenatal and post-natal services in jurisdictions across Australia.

3.3. Sexual violence requires greater investment and coordination

Data shows that the incidence of sexual violence increased between 2012 and 2016 and did not change significantly from 2016 to 2021-22.[32] While sexual violence is within scope of the National Plan, it continues to receive less attention than other forms of gender-based violence, despite persistent rates of victimisation.

Our consultation found a strong view that sexual violence prevention must be a priority for the Second Action Plan, building more actively on the commitment outlined in Action 6 of the First Action Plan. Stakeholders maintained that sexual violence requires greater visibility as a distinct issue. They called for dedicated prevention investment, stronger evidence and data systems, early intervention with children and young people, and responses to emerging online and technology-facilitated harms.

Stakeholders also indicated that sexual violence prevention is currently lagging and needs more explicit prioritisation, funding, system architecture and measurement within the Second Action Plan.

Our Watch notes that specialist sexual violence services are especially well placed to advise on effective responses to sexual violence. However, the Second Action Plan should recognise the critical role of specialist sexual violence services across the spectrum, from prevention to response and recovery.

The Second Action Plan should also recognise the disproportionate impact of sexual violence on trans and gender-diverse people. Consistent with actions outlined in section 3.1 on engaging men and boys, there are opportunities to strengthen the prevention of sexual violence through evidence-based work that challenges the specific drivers of men's use of sexual violence.

Our Watch recommendations

33 Establish a dedicated funding stream for sexual violence prevention, including funding for specialist sexual violence services to design, lead and deliver prevention initiatives.

34 Strengthen national coordination of sexual violence prevention and response including through investment in the National Association of Services Against Sexual Assault (NASASV)

35 Scope the establishment of a national prevention practice collaborative between the specialist sexual violence sector, ANROWS and Our Watch, La Trobe University (Partners in Prevention), NASAV and Our Ways Strong Together, to strengthen conceptual clarity, align evidence and specialist expertise, and develop practical guidance on the application of sexual violence prevention evidence across different settings and populations.

36 Invest in strengthening the evidence base on sexual violence through nationally consistent data collection, reporting and analysis of sexual violence perpetration and victimisation, alongside improved evaluation, evidence sharing and dedicated support for smaller organisations to participate in research and evaluation.

3.4. Sport, education and workplaces as settings for prevention

43% of stakeholders consulted indicated that whole-of-population prevention in settings where people live, work, learn and play is their highest priority for inclusion in the Second Action Plan. This was the highest-ranked priority identified by stakeholders. Workplaces, sporting organisations and other community settings are powerful vehicles for scaling out prevention and represent a significant opportunity for the Second Action Plan.

The Second Action Plan presents an opportunity to invest in upskilling and supporting leaders, organisations and practitioners within these settings to embed evidence-informed approaches into their policies, practices, culture and day-to-day operations. This will enable prevention efforts to reach far more people than through standalone programs alone, creating a multiplier effect that extends well beyond the individual who engaged with a training or resource.

Stakeholders acknowledged recent progress in workplace settings, including Positive Duty reforms, growing attention to psychosocial safety and increased workplace awareness of

gendered violence. At the same time, many felt current workplace approaches are often compliance-driven, tokenistic, often focused on one-off training activities and insufficient to create lasting cultural change.

Consultation findings point to a need to shift away from this approach towards sustained, organisation-wide cultural change led by capable leadership. This should be supported and incentivised through the National Plan, and should increasingly be recognised as a normal workplace responsibility to fund evidence-based prevention.

Our Watch's Workplace Equality and Respect[33] model, alongside Equality and Respect in Sport[34] and Educating for Equality[35], demonstrates that gender inequality — whether expressed through pay gaps, underrepresentation in leadership, exclusionary cultures, rigid gender norms or everyday disrespect — creates the conditions in which harassment, discrimination and violence occur and persist. These frameworks give workplaces, universities and sporting organisations practical guidance to embed equality and respect through leadership, governance, culture and everyday practice.

Combined with workforce development and reforms such as the National Higher Education Code, the Workplace Gender Equality Act and Respect@Work, there is a substantial opportunity to deliver change at scale.

Our Watch recommendations

37 Expand evidence-informed frameworks, tools and implementation support that help workplaces and sporting organisations embed gender equality, safety and respect through an intersectional lens.

38 Fund training, learning activities, communities of practice and implementation support that build prevention capability and enable organisations to embed and sustain evidence-based, intersectional practice.

39 Leverage Positive Duty, National Higher Education Code, WHS frameworks, workplace gender equality reporting, sporting governance standards and accreditation systems to drive consistent, intersectional prevention action at scale.

40 Work with employer groups, unions, professional associations, sporting bodies and peak organisations to promote shared standards, coordinated action and leadership informed by diverse voices and lived expertise.

3.5. Community-led and place-based approaches

Community-led prevention was one of the top priorities identified by stakeholders. A recurring message was that prevention needs to be embedded in the community spaces and organisations where people spend most of their time. This can occur through a range of approaches, including community level action and mobilisation, or setting-based activity in

schools, workplaces, community organisations, health systems, sporting clubs, faith-based settings, universities, and TAFE and VET institutions.

Stakeholders consistently expressed support for prevention that is led, designed and delivered by communities, utilising existing organisations and networks and formal and informal leaders. Community-based, feminist and women-led organisations play an essential role in designing and delivering prevention initiatives that are culturally relevant, trusted and responsive to community needs. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of evidence-based tools, resources and learning that can be adapted locally, rather than reliance on centralised government programs or outside providers.

Government representatives also highlighted the importance of investing in prevention across a range of settings and communities alongside long-term, sustained investment in place-based prevention. This means translating national strategies into locally relevant action, with communities playing an active role in shaping implementation and solutions.

Community-led and place-based approaches need to be underpinned by investment in local workforces and organisations. They also need support to strengthen learning, evaluation, scaling and the sharing of insights across jurisdictions.

One of the strongest findings of our consultation concerned local government. Stakeholders repeatedly argued that local governments are under-recognised in prevention policy, notwithstanding their role as critical local connectors across sectors and organisations. Local governments design, build and maintain public spaces and infrastructure, and through their services are closely connected to communities across different life stages. With appropriate investment and support, local governments and their peak bodies can coordinate prevention activity locally.

Community-led approaches are particularly important in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, regional, rural and remote communities and multicultural and refugee communities. In these contexts, community organisations, cultural leaders and local networks need to have a much greater role in prevention delivery. Governments can provide funding, standards, and accountability for ensuring investments are sustained and responsive to community priorities.

Our Watch recommendations

41 Support community-led approaches that address intersecting forms of inequality and build local leadership, capability and ownership of prevention efforts.
42 Invest in dedicated, community-led gender-based violence prevention programs for migrant and refugee communities to ensure cultural responsiveness, relevance and impact.
43 Resource faith-based organisations as prevention partners, supporting faith-led action with strengthened links to national prevention frameworks, evidence and evaluation.

3.6. Addressing digital and online technology-facilitated abuse

Digital and online technologies are increasingly used to perpetrate gender-based violence. Evidence in the consultation paper demonstrates that in 2022, 50% of Australian adults had experienced technology-facilitated abuse during their lives.[36]

At the same time, these technologies also present promising new opportunities for prevention. There is scope to increase the focus on online and digital technologies through evidence-based prevention approaches that recognise and respond to emerging trends and harms. Those harms include violent pornography, AI, the manosphere, predatory technologies and social media platforms using algorithms to promote harmful content.

From a prevention perspective Australia must look beyond the online safety paradigm and use online and digital settings to address the factors that drive violence that occurs both online and offline. Consultation findings echoed this, stressing the need to combine education, regulation, and innovation.

Our Watch recommendations

44 Strengthen existing regulatory frameworks to increase compliance and accountability and incentivise sector leadership across the technology industry to prevent TFGBV
45 Expand the evidence base to prevent TFGBV, by continuing and expanding the eSafety Commission's Preventing Tech-based Abuse of Women Grants Program
46 Make greater use of online and digital technologies in prevention strategies to engage audiences more effectively, while integrating the prevention of TFGBV into existing prevention models, settings-based approaches and practice frameworks. This will help ensure prevention efforts remain relevant and responsive to the digital environments in which people increasingly live, work, learn and play.[37]

3.7. Addressing the reinforcing factors of gender-based violence

While gender inequality is the primary driver of gender-based violence, a comprehensive prevention approach must also address a range of reinforcing factors that influence the prevalence and dynamics of violence. These include the condoning of violence more broadly, experiences of and exposure to violence, factors that weaken prosocial behaviour, and backlash and resistance to prevention and gender equality. While distinct from the gendered drivers, these factors interact with and reinforce them, contributing to the likelihood, severity and frequency of violence.[38]

The Second Action Plan provides an opportunity to strengthen national action on reinforcing factors while maintaining a clear focus on gender inequality as the primary driver of gender-based violence.

This will require coordinated action across governments, sectors and specialist organisations with expertise in areas such as public health, alcohol and other drugs, gambling harm prevention, child wellbeing and community safety, recognising that lasting reductions in violence require action on both the gendered drivers and the reinforcing factors that shape violence across the population.

Our Watch recommendations

47 Increase investment in programs, initiatives and services that mitigate the harmful impacts of alcohol, gambling, childhood experiences of violence, disasters and crises, and effectively counter backlash to gender equality. Investment to include initiatives that span the spectrum of prevention, early intervention, response, recovery and healing, recognising that many interventions will have multiple beneficial impacts across this spectrum.

48 Strengthen partnerships between the prevention sector and organisations with specialist expertise in addressing reinforcing factors, including public health, alcohol and other drugs, gambling harm prevention and children's safety sectors.

49 Work with states and territories to identify and progress legislative, regulatory and policy reforms that address reinforcing factors associated with violence against women, informed by the evidence base and aligned with Australia's broader primary prevention efforts. Include reforms to reduce alcohol[39] and gambling related harms and to strengthen protective factors across communities.

3.8. Prevention with and for priority communities

Preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices recognises that ending family, domestic and sexual violence requires Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination, leadership and community-led action, and centres Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions that are strengths-based, preventative and healing-focused.

Consultation findings reinforced the importance of sustained investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, particularly in regional, remote and very remote communities, and highlighted the need for prevention efforts to be informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evidence, expertise and ways of knowing, being and doing.

Stakeholders also emphasised the value of culturally grounded prevention approaches that address the intersecting impacts of racism, colonialism and gender inequality, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led work with men and boys.

The Second Action Plan presents an important opportunity to strengthen implementation of *Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices* and ensure prevention initiatives across the National Plan are aligned with the evidence, principles and actions outlined in *Changing the picture*.

Our Watch recommendations

50 Fund the implementation of *Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices*. This includes sustained, needs-based investment for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, particularly in priority and remote areas where inequity and violence are higher and services are under-resourced.[40]

51 Ensure Second Action Plan initiatives and guidance—including theme-specific work such as prevention with men and boys—reflect and are aligned with the principles, evidence and actions outlined in *Changing the picture*.

Preventing violence against LGBTIQA+ people

Violence against LGBTIQA+ people is a prevalent, serious and preventable abuse of human rights. LGBTIQA+ people in Australia are significantly more likely to report experiencing violence because of their sexuality or gender identity than the general population is to report experiencing violence *at all*.[41] LGBTIQA+ people also experience higher rates of sexual harassment.[42] Like violence against women, the majority of violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people is perpetrated by cisgender men.[43]

A recurring theme in Our Watch's consultations was the significant gap in prevention efforts for LGBTIQA+ communities. Stakeholders called for more inclusive data, targeted strategies, and investment in community-led organisations. While consultation findings support embedding LGBTIQA+ inclusion across all prevention work, stakeholders also stressed the need for specific, funded actions — particularly for trans and gender diverse people — alongside stronger workforce capability and a shift toward gender transformative, intersectional approaches.

The Second Action Plan is a critical opportunity for Commonwealth, state and territory governments to enable and deliver a coordinated, long-term and effective approach to LGBTIQA+ primary prevention. Actions and investment to implement *Changing with pride* should be integrated across the Action Plan.

To support this, Our Watch and Rainbow Health Australia are developing a dedicated resource translating *Changing with pride* for governments and policymakers. We urge all governments to consider the actions outlined in this resource once published.

Our Watch recommendations

52 Provide sustained funding for the implementation of *Changing with pride*, including investment in LGBTIQA+ organisations to provide advice, leadership and delivery of primary prevention initiatives across a range of settings.

53 State and territory commitment and endorsement to implement *Changing with pride,* including investment in workforce capability through tailored training for LGBTIQA+ specialist and mainstream organisations.

54 Investment in the enabling foundations for *Changing with pride* including governance mechanisms (for example, an LGBTIQA+ working group), coordination, workforce capability and establishing a monitoring and evaluation strategy.

55 Ensure Second Action Plan initiatives and guidance—including theme-specific work such as prevention with men and boys—reflect and are aligned with the principles, evidence and actions outlined in *Changing with pride*.

Preventing violence against women with disabilities

Women and girls with disabilities experience violence, abuse and neglect at much higher rates, over longer periods of time and perpetrated by more people.

Changing the landscape, co-authored by Our Watch and Women with Disabilities Victoria*,* shows how gender inequality and ableism intersect to drive these higher rates of violence. The *Changing the landscape* companion resource for policymakers outlines practical actions governments can take across policy, legislation, systems reform and community settings, including making disability-specific violence visible in law, policy, data, service design and accountability mechanisms.

Preventing violence against women and girls with disabilities requires explicitly addressing these gendered and ableist drivers. Governments, including disability and NDIS-related portfolios, have an important role in ensuring systems and structures actively challenge them.

Women with disabilities must also be meaningfully involved in prevention efforts, leadership, governance and decision-making. This includes sustained investment in disability-led advocacy, implementation and accountability mechanisms, including disability-led approaches to the design, implementation and monitoring of the Second Action Plan.

More broadly, disability inclusion should be embedded across prevention policy, practice and investment rather than treated as a standalone issue. Prevention initiatives and the workforce must be inclusive, accessible and designed to avoid causing further harm, disadvantage or discrimination.

Our Watch recommendations

56 Embed disability inclusion as a core component of prevention policy, practice and investment under the National Plan.

57 Continue to fund disability advocacy pathways including by providing long-term resourcing and accountability mechanisms for disability peaks, disability support services, and organisations led by and for women and girls with disabilities.

58 Progress implementation of the actions outlined in the *Changing the landscape framework for action to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*.

Preventing violence against migrant and refugee women

The settlement sector offers a key opportunity for primary prevention. As trusted first points of contact for newly arrived migrant and refugee communities, settlement providers are well placed to promote gender equality and prevention messaging. This sector should be understood broadly to include multicultural organisations, community groups, education and employment services, migrant worker support services, and other community-based programs.

Many multicultural and settlement organisations are already delivering prevention activities through their everyday work, often without dedicated funding or recognition. There is an opportunity to better understand, recognise and invest in this work, particularly through organisations trusted by and connected to diverse communities, including women who may not engage with mainstream services.

Prevention efforts should reflect the realities of migration and settlement, including settlement stress, racism and discrimination, while building on community strengths. They must also recognise the diversity of migrant and refugee women's experiences, including those on temporary visas, migrant workers with restricted work rights, and women ineligible for universal services, who may face additional barriers and vulnerabilities.

Strong social networks developed during settlement can be an important protective factor against gender-based violence. The new national guide being developed by Our Watch and the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health will provide practical support to embed prevention approaches within migrant and refugee communities.

Our Watch recommendations

59 Provide greater investment to support prevention in the settlement sector and enable settlement services and organisations to play a stronger role in prevention

Preventing violence against older women

Older women and elder abuse must also be considered within the life-course approach to prevention discussed above. A gendered understanding of elder abuse recognises that older women are disproportionately affected by forms of abuse such as financial abuse, sexual violence – particularly in care settings – and coercive control, driven by both gender inequality and ageism, which also reduce access to support.

Our Watch recommendation

60 Work with governments implementing the National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2026–2036 to embed a gendered approach to preventing elder abuse and strengthen recognition of older women's experiences of violence across the life course.

3.9. A need for ongoing innovation to meet future challenges

The prevention sector continues to evolve in response to emerging evidence, changing patterns of violence and increasing community readiness. As new priorities emerge, convening stakeholders to support innovation at a national level will remain important.

There is an opportunity for the Second Action Plan to ensure that along with a stable core of evidence-informed prevention delivered consistently at scale, there is also a deliberate, funded capacity to detect, test and respond to emerging challenges, risks and opportunities.

Our Watch supports this through the national Violence Prevention Innovation Lab, which explores emerging prevention approaches with the capacity to scale. We will continue to test, learn and adapt, so that the prevention system remains responsive and effective.

4. Prevention across the National Plan

4.1. Priority Area 1: Victim-survivors

> ***Note:*** *Advice on victim-survivors is best provided by survivor advocates and the specialist response sector, to ensure a strong trauma informed approach to achieving all the objectives of the National Plan.*

A holistic national approach recognises that the population-level strategies of primary prevention help drive the social and cultural change that creates a safer, more supportive environment for victim-survivors.

The relationship also runs in the other direction. Improving response services for victim-survivors contributes to prevention, as do systems and institutions that hold perpetrators accountable and demonstrate that violence is unacceptable, since both challenge and shift the social norms that condone or minimise violence. Improving early intervention approaches is likewise an important form of secondary prevention that can disrupt cycles of violence.

As *Changing the picture* shows, ensuring a holistic approach is especially important in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, where healing from intergenerational trauma is foundational, culturally led and community-controlled responses are essential, and strengthening responses directly supports long-term prevention outcomes.

4.2. Priority Area 3: Children and young people

> ***Note:*** *Advice on children and young people as victim-survivors of violence is best provided by survivor advocates and support services. Priority Area 2 provides Our Watch advice and policy recommendations in this area.*

Prevention approaches for children and young people must be inclusive, culturally safe and responsive to diverse experiences. This includes First Nations children, children with disability, children from multicultural communities and LGBTIQA+ young people.

Stakeholders throughout our consultation called for children and young people to be recognised as both victim-survivors and agents of change, with meaningful opportunities to contribute to the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives that affect them.[44]

Opportunities also exist to strengthen a whole-of-school-community approach by embedding prevention efforts not only in schools but also in community programs, sporting clubs, digital environments, parent, carer and family networks.

4.3. Priority Area 4: People who use violence

> ***Note:*** *Advice on this priority area is best provided by services and stakeholders that work with people who use violence, as well as researchers and other experts on this issue. However, this Priority Area has important links with prevention.*

Building the evidence about perpetration is essential to inform more effective prevention approaches. A recurring population level perpetration survey would address a significant national data gap and complement the National Community Attitudes Survey and Personal Safety Survey. It would improve understanding of patterns, characteristics, beliefs, experiences and behaviours of people who use violence, supporting better prevention design.

Consultation findings highlighted that work with people who use violence, especially men and boys, should be a central part of overall prevention effort. Stakeholders noted that increasing accountability for violence and promoting healthy, respectful masculinities contribute to prevention objectives, by shifting the social norms and behaviours that condone, excuse and enable violence.

4.4. Priority Area 5: System integration and workforce

Our Watch's response to Priority Area 5 is set out in Part 2 — workforce at 2.4, and system integration, coordination, evidence and system gaps at 2.3 and 2.5.

Appendix 1: examples of promising practice in primary prevention

Promising practice	Setting	Evidence	Opportunity to scale
Girls Can Boys Can (NT)	Early childhood, community	Aboriginal-led primary prevention initiative developed by Tangentyere Family Violence Prevention Program and Larapinta Child and Family Centre. Evaluation found: "The 'Girls Can Boys Can' project had the greatest positive impact on changing people's views about what girls and boys can do, and what women and men can do." Evaluators concluded that project messages were having "a positive impact on changing people's understandings and possibly their attitudes as well."[45]	Expand through Aboriginal community-controlled organisations nationally. invest in local prevention workforce capability.
Baby Makes 3	New parents, maternal and child health services	Program for new parents delivered through maternal and child health services in partnership with community health. Evaluation found participation "improved parents' awareness of how traditional attitudes to gender and parenting norms were shaping their new families and relationships", "greater understanding of partners' roles and greater support for equality in their relationships" and a significant shift in parents' attitudes", with some changing how they shared caring and paid work responsibilities.[46]	Opportunity for national investment, adaptation and implementation through maternal and child health and health services, parenting education and family support programs.
U R Right Sis?	Aboriginal communities, schools, digital and online environments	Evaluation found the proportion of workshop participants who could not identify technology-facilitated abusive behaviours decreased from 43% pre-workshop to 4% post-workshop. There was a 25% increase in participants able to identify image-based abuse, and the proportion who did not know where to access support decreased from 21% to 0%.[47]	Adapt and invest in expansion through Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and digital prevention initiatives focused on technology-facilitated abuse, healthy relationships and online safety.
The Man Box-informed work with men and boys	Schools, workplaces, sport and community settings	The Man Box 2024 found that men with the strongest endorsement of harmful masculinity norms were almost 35 times more likely to report frequent verbal sexual harassment, 8 times more likely to have perpetrated sexual violence against an intimate partner, and 5 times more likely	Ensure funding to continue building the evidence base through the Man Box studies.

Promising practice	Setting	Evidence	Opportunity to scale
		to have perpetrated physical violence against an intimate partner than those with the lowest endorsement. [48]	Scale evidence-based, gender-transformative initiatives engaging men and boys across schools, workplaces, sport and community settings, supported by workforce development and national quality standards.
Our Ways, Strong Ways, Our Voices	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	Australia's first dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander plan to end family, domestic and sexual violence. The plan centres "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions that are strengths-based, preventive and healing" and focuses on "stopping family, domestic and sexual violence before it happens" through community-led prevention, healing and systems reform.	Opportunity to fully fund and implement through sustained investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, community-led prevention, healing and culturally grounded workforce development.
Changing with pride	LGBTIQA+ communities, organisations and systems	Building on the Pride in Prevention evidence base collated by Rainbow Health Australia and La Trobe University, the framework identifies that violence against LGBTIQA+ people is driven by "rigid gender norms, cisnormativity and heteronormativity" and provides an evidence-informed framework for addressing these drivers through primary prevention. Violence prevention for LGBTIQA+ communities shares common drivers with violence against women, supporting integrated prevention approaches.	National implementation through dedicated funding, workforce capability-building, policy integration and support for LGBTIQA+ organisations to lead prevention efforts.
Whole-of-school Respectful Relationships Education (RRE)	Primary and secondary schools	Our Watch identifies Respectful Relationships Education as "a holistic approach to the prevention of gender-based violence" and "a whole-of-school approach" that addresses gender stereotypes and promotes gender equality through curriculum, culture, policy and leadership. Evidence indicates whole-school approaches are more effective than stand-alone classroom programs.[49]	Universal implementation across all jurisdictions. Improve capability of workforce to implement. Opportunity for communities of practice to support learning and sharing.
Phased implementation of RRE (Blueprint model)	Education systems	The Blueprint identifies implementation elements including workforce development, curriculum integration, evaluation, communication strategies and system leadership. The model is specifically designed to support sustainable population-level change.	Significant opportunity in jurisdictions still developing system-wide RRE approaches.

Promising practice	Setting	Evidence	Opportunity to scale
Workplace Equality and Respect	Workplaces	Workplace prevention framework targeting organisational structures, norms and gender inequality. There are opportunities to strengthen prevention through legislative and policy levers including the Workplace Gender Equality Act, anti-discrimination laws, WHS laws, equal pay reforms and gender equality reporting. These mechanisms enable prevention efforts to reach large populations through workplace systems.[50]	Leverage procurement, regulation and reporting requirements. increase uptake across private sector and regional employers.
Prevention in male-dominated industries	Construction, mining, transport, trades	Our Watch identifies a "strong need and opportunity to expand settings-based work targeting male-dominated settings" because workplace cultures can reinforce harmful masculine norms, sexism and violence-supportive attitudes.[51]	Opportunity to reach large cohorts of men through workplaces.
Equality and Respect in Sport	Community sport	Settings-based prevention framework supporting sporting organisations to reject sexism, strengthen gender equality and increase women's leadership and participation. Sport provides access to large populations of men, boys and families, making it a high-reach prevention setting.[52]	Opportunity for government funding linked to be prevention and gender equality standards.
The National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence	Universities	Whole-of-institution framework addressing prevention through leadership, governance, policy, workforce capability and student engagement. The National Code makes evidence-based primary prevention a mandatory requirement across institutions reaching approximately 1.5 million students and 130,000 staff. By requiring a whole-of-organisation approach, it embeds prevention through governance, accountability, workforce capability and institutional culture change.	Opportunity to scale up by optimising desired regulatory outcomes through strong coordination and building capacity for implementation across Australian Universities.
Respect and Equality in TAFE	VET and TAFE	Prevention framework tailored to vocational education, including workforce development, leadership and organisational culture change. Particularly relevant given high concentrations of men in some trades pathways.[53]	Scale up opportunities to ensure national implementation across public and private VET systems.

Promising practice	Setting	Evidence	Opportunity to scale
The Line	Online/digital youth settings	National social marketing initiative supporting young people to navigate sex, consent, relationships and respect. The Line's 2025 *Comfort Zone* campaign reached 134.5 million impressions and 59 million video views. Young people who saw the campaign reported greater understanding of healthy boundaries (47% vs 38%), greater understanding of controlling behaviours (52% vs 43%), and 88% took at least one action after exposure, including reflecting on relationships or starting conversations about boundaries.[54]	Scale up: extend reach and integrate with school-based RRE.
Gender equity in local government	Local government	The Victorian approach uses legislative levers to embed gender equality and primary prevention across councils and public sector organisations through Gender Equality Action Plans, workplace audits and accountability mechanisms. This aligns with evidence that violence prevention is strengthened by changing the institutions, systems and structures that reinforce gender inequality.[55] Local government has been a key prevention partner through initiatives such as Leading Change and municipal public health and wellbeing planning.[56]	Scale out by supporting other jurisdictions to legislative approaches that create consistent obligations to advance gender equality and prevention. Scale through coordination approaches similar to Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) in Victoria through the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).
Primary prevention across portfolios	Health, justice, housing, community	Education has become a recognised prevention platform through Respectful Relationships Education and whole-of-system implementation. This approach can be scaled and applied to health, justice, settlement services, housing and other sectors. The public health system offers a comparable opportunity to embed gender equality and violence prevention into workforce standards, prevention planning, service delivery, community health promotion and health promotion funding.	Scale to other sectors similarly to how RRE has been embedded within education systems. Potential to scale up, out and deep through health promotion infrastructure and funding mechanisms such as Primary Health Networks.
Prevention in Early Childhood Education and Care	Early childhood	Significant potential for respectful relationships and gender equality approaches to be expanded in ECEC. Our Watch's policy guide[57] outlines that prevention can be embedded through national quality standards, workforce development and learning frameworks at a developmental stage when gender norms are being formed.	Scale up by embedding nationally through NQF, NQS and workforce reforms.

Promising practice	Setting	Evidence	Opportunity to scale
Media reform and responsible reporting on violence against women	Media	Our Watch's responsible reporting guidelines have been formally adopted by Commercial Radio Australia, whose members reach approximately 15 million Australians. This demonstrates the potential for industry-wide standards to improve public understanding of violence against women and reduce harmful narratives that excuse or minimise violence.	Expand adoption across television, radio, digital media and journalism education. Embed prevention and gender equality principles into industry standards and reporting practices.
National perpetrator data and research (complementing NCAS and PSS)	Research / policy	The ANROWS–UTS perpetration study is addressing a longstanding gap in evidence by building understanding of who uses domestic, family and sexual violence, how violence is perpetrated, and the attitudes and behaviours associated with perpetration. The project complements existing national datasets and strengthens the evidence base for prevention.[58]	Establish a recurring national perpetration survey and integrate perpetration measures into National Plan monitoring and reporting frameworks.
Place-based prevention and saturation models (e.g. Respect Ballarat)	Community / place-based	Respect Ballarat demonstrates how prevention can be implemented through coordinated action across multiple settings including local government, education, workplaces, sport and community organisations. Place-based initiatives generate valuable lessons about governance, partnership models, workforce capability, community engagement and sustaining prevention over time.	Evaluate and share lessons nationally, enabling other jurisdictions and communities to adapt successful approaches and implementation insights to their own contexts.

End notes

[1] Our Watch. (2021). *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* (2nd ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[2] Our Watch. (2018). *Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[3] Our Watch, & Women with Disabilities Victoria. (2022). *Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[4] Our Watch. (2017). *Counting on change: a guide to prevention monitoring*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[5] Our Watch. (2019). *Men in focus: unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[6] Our Watch. (2025). *Respectful relationships education: A blueprint for preventing gender-based violence through education systems*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[7] See for example Our Watch's resources for education settings, workplaces, universities and sporting settings.

[8] ANROWS (2026). *Evidence to action: informing direction for the Second Action Plan Consultation Paper in support of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032.* Australian Government Department of Social Services.

[9] ANROWS. (2026). *Evidence to action: informing direction for the Second Action Plan Consultation Paper in support of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032.* Australian Government Department of Social Services.

[10] ANROWS. (2026). *Evidence to action: informing direction for the Second Action Plan Consultation Paper in support of the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032.* Australian Government Department of Social Services.

[11] Our Watch. (2024). *Building strong foundations to support primary prevention of violence against women*.

[12] This could be similar to the framework recommended by the Productivity Commission as part of its 2025 review of the care sector.

[13] Of the 62 stakeholders interviewed by Our Watch in May-June 2026, 37% of organisations highlighted advancing innovative policy and practice as a national priority for the future of primary prevention. A quarter of these also identified that better connection across sectors, jurisdictions, governments and portfolios was a critical priority for prevention.

[14] Our Watch. (2024). *Building strong foundations to support primary prevention of violence against women*.

[15] *Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021–2031, National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031, Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality 2024–2034, National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2026–2036, Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices 2026–2036, National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement.*

[16] Our Watch. (2025). *Policy Brief: Developing a primary prevention workforce.*

[17] Our Watch. (2023). *Growing with change: Developing an expert workforce to prevent violence against women*

[18] 43% of stakeholders interviewed by Our Watch in May-June 2026 mentioned the importance of people doing prevention wherever they live, learn, work, rest and play (this requires a workforce).

[19] Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Social Services. (2023). *Outcomes Framework 2023–2032 Under the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*

[20] Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Social Services. (2024). *National Outcomes Framework Performance Measurement Plan.*

[21] Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2024). *Working for Women Strategy.*

[22] This section draws on consultation to inform this submission, as well as a recent national consultation with over 50 stakeholders from across Australia with experience and knowledge of working with men and boys and addressing masculinities in the prevention of men's violence against women, gendered violence prevention, early intervention or response (such as men's behaviour change programs), and the men's health and wellbeing sector. See Our Watch (2024) *National consultation report: men and masculinities in primary prevention project*.

[23] Our Watch. (2025) Policy brief: *Men and masculinities in the primary prevention of gender-based violence*.

[24] ANROWS. (2026). *The manosphere in Australia: A guide for understanding and responding to online misogyny.* ANROWS.

[25] Our Watch. (2019). *Men in focus evidence review*

[26] Our Watch. (2022). *Men in focus practice guide: Addressing masculinities and working with men in the prevention of men's violence against women.*

[27] Our Watch. (2025). *Men and Masculinities in the Primary Prevention of Gender-Based Violence: Policy Brief* p.17.

[28] These include the Commonwealth Government: 1) progressing its commitment to enact Recommendation 4 of the 2024 Report of the Statutory Review of the Online Safety Act, to adopt an overarching duty of care encompassing due diligence, safety by design principles, risk assessment, mitigation and measurement; and 2) working, ideally in collaboration with like-minded nations, on ways to encourage or require social media companies to give users the option to 'opt out' of algorithmic-sorted feeds; and to require social media companies to provide greater transparency about algorithm designs, in line with recommendations from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Social Media and Online Safety and the eSafety Commission.

[29] King, T. L., Meehl, A., & Priest N. (2018) *Building children's resilience through respectful and gender equitable relationships pilot project.* A literature review (p. 1). Centre for Social Research and Methods, ANU.

[30] Our Watch (2025) *Respectful relationships education: A blueprint for preventing gender-based violence through education systems.*

[31] Baby Makes 3 (BM3) is an evidence-based primary prevention initiative that provides support to new parents and shapes attitudes and social norms by challenging outdated gender expectations of becoming a parent. It builds understanding, appreciation and mutual respect among first-time parents to foster equal and healthy relationships that optimise collaborative co-parenting of infants and children. For more information see HealthAbility website: https://healthability.org.au/services/baby-makes-3

[32] Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). (2023). *Personal Safety, Australia: 2021-22, Sexual violence*, ABS

[33] Our Watch. (2022). *Workplace Equality and Respect: Standards for gender equality and preventing violence against women in Australian workplaces.*

[34] Our Watch. (2020). *Equality and Respect in Sport: Standards for gender equality and preventing violence against women in Australian sporting organisations.*

[35] Our Watch. (2026). *Educating for equality implementation Guide.*

[36] Powell, A., Flynn, A., & Hindes, S. (2022). *Technology-facilitated abuse: National survey of Australian adults' experiences* (Research report, 12/2022). ANROWS.

[37] Our Watch. (2026). *Evidence summary on digital and online technologies and primary prevention* - Our Watch provided to DSS in June 2026.

[38] Our Watch. (2024). *Evidence Brief: Reinforcing factors for gender-based violence.*

[39] Such as the specific reforms identified in the Our Watch and the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (2025) policy brief: *Opportunities to address alcohol policy as part of a holistic approach to preventing violence against women*.

[40] Specific priorities for investment within Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations include workforce development and governance supports, with priority given to remote areas. Increased resourcing to support community-led and culturally embedded approaches to prevention will enable a shift from short-term programs to more sustainable models that have greater long-term impact.

[41] Mitchell, M., Anderson, J., Amos, N., Hill, A., McNair, R., Carman, M. & Bourne, A. (2025). *Anti-Queer Violence in Australia: An Intersectional Analysis of Victimization Among LGBTQA+ Adults.* Journal of Homosexuality, 13, 1-38.

[42] Robinson, K. H., Allison, K., Jackson, E. F., Davies, C., Smith, E. K., Hawkey, A., Ussher, J., Ullman, J., Marjadi, B., & Byron, P. (2024). *#SpeakingOut@Work: Sexual harassment of LGBTQ young people in the workplace and workplace training* (Research report, 10/2024). ANROWS.

[43] Hill, A. O., Bourne, A., McNair, R., Carman, M. & Lyons, A. (2020). *Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia*. ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 122. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

[44] In line with Recommendation 19: Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (2025) Yearly Report to Parliament, Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission, Australian Government. www.dfsvc.gov.au/sites/default/ files/2025-12/DFSVC-2025-YearlyReport.pdf

[45] Brown, C., Homan, S., Simpson, C., & Leung, L. (2021). *Rante-rante ampe Marle and Urreye: "Safe, Respected and Free from Violence" projects evaluation* (Research Report No. 05/2021). Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS).

[46] Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2026). *Baby Makes 3.*

[47] U Right Sis? (2026). *What we do — U Right Sis?*

[48] Jesuit Social Services. (2024). *The Man Box 2024: Re-examining what it means to be a man in Australia*.

[49] Our Watch. (2025). *Respectful relationships education: A blueprint for preventing gender-based violence through education systems*.

[50] https://www.ourwatch.org.au/workplace

[51] Our Watch. (2025). *Strengthening national approaches to addressing masculinities and working with men and boys to prevent gender-based violence: National consultation report. Melbourne: Our Watch.*

[52] Our Watch. (2020). *Equality and Respect in Sport: The workplace Equality and Respect Standards for sport organisations.*

[53] Our Watch. (2025). *Respect and Equality: Working together to prevent violence against women (National guide)*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

[54] Our Watch (2026). *The Line: Background and Research*

[55] Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector. (2026). *About us and the Gender Equality Act 2020.*

[56] Our Watch. (2023). *Local Government Toolkit.*

[57] Our Watch. (2024). *Prevention of gender-based violence and the early years: Policy guide.*

[58] ANROWS. (2026). *Project overview: Domestic, family and sexual violence perpetration in New South Wales: Who uses violence, how, and why*.