

# THIS IS PREVENTION

## Our Watch

Preventing violence  
against women



## SECTOR ENGAGEMENT GUIDE





# 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 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 an issue for the whole community. As highlighted in Our Watch's national resource *Changing the picture*, the evidence clearly shows the 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 suffer from violence at a significantly higher rate than non-Aboriginal women. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations who continue to lead the work of sharing knowledge with non-Indigenous people and relentlessly advocate for an equitable, violence-free future in Australia.

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# THIS IS PREVENTION

***This is Prevention* aims to bring primary prevention to life by sharing, platforming and showcasing primary prevention work happening across Australia, including in non-sector settings such as education, media, and the workplace.**

This social-media series is an opportunity for primary prevention practitioners to share their work, their impact and their vision for the future under the hashtag:

**#THISISPREVENTION**

Together, we can shift attitudes, behaviours and systems that drive gender-based violence and lead a public conversation that keeps prevention on the national agenda.

# LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

## WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS, CANDIDATES AND GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

**Ensuring that Parliamentarians, candidates and government representatives understand the role of primary prevention in ending gender-based violence is an important part of continuing to build an environment in which prevention practice can thrive in Australia and ultimately stopping violence before it starts.**

There are a range of opportunities to engage with Parliamentarians, Councillors, candidates and government representatives at local, state and territory and Commonwealth levels to showcase your prevention practice.

The period ahead of elections can provide an opportunity to showcase your primary prevention of gender-based violence initiatives. Your engagement can showcase the impactful work across our sector, highlighting the breadth and value of prevention work nationwide. Share your primary prevention work over the coming months as part of the national *This is Prevention* series.

# KEY MESSAGES

**It is important to consider your most significant message/s and emphasise these messages.**

## PREVENTION KEY MESSAGES

- Gender-based violence is a national crisis.
- There are many causes and factors that influence gender-based violence. Seeing women and gender-diverse people as less deserving of respect or as not equal is a major driver. To prevent violence, we need to make change not just within individuals, but across all levels of society.
- We know whole of community change can be achieved to prevent and end gender-based violence.
- We can work together to embed gender equality everywhere that Australians live, work, learn and socialise.

## PERSONALISED **THIS IS PREVENTION** ORGANISATION MESSAGE

- My name is x, and I work with x (org name) to stop violence before it starts.
- This is how our organisation prevents violence in *your council or shire/electorate/State/Territory* (showcase here on the gender-based violence work your organisation undertakes locally).

## STATISTICS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

- Of the **people who have experienced violence since the age of 15 years**, 95% of women and 93% of men experienced violence from a male perpetrator.<sup>1</sup>
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women** experience violence at a rate three times higher than non-Indigenous women.<sup>2</sup>
- **Women and girls with disabilities** are twice as likely to experience physical and sexual violence compared to women and girls without disabilities.<sup>3</sup>
- **Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and asexual women** are five times more likely to have experienced sexual violence in the previous two years and three times more likely to have experienced sexual harassment in the previous year compared to heterosexual women<sup>4</sup>.

## ECONOMICS STATISTICS

- Violence against women and their children is costing Australia \$21.7 billion each year (2015).<sup>5</sup>
- According to Deloitte Access Economics, gender inequality is costing the Australian economy \$128 billion each year.<sup>6</sup>

1 Our Watch calculation from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2023). Personal Safety Survey 2021-22, Table 1.1 Persons aged 18 years and over, Experiences since and before the age of 15. ABS.

2 SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2016, Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2016, Productivity Commission, Canberra.

3 AIHW (2024). People with disability in Australia, 2022 Data tables: Violence against people with disability, Table VIOL1.

4 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.

5 PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia (PwC). 2015. A high price to pay. The economic case for preventing violence against women. Melbourne, VIC: PwC.

6 Deloitte. 2022. <https://www.deloitte.com/au/en/services/economics/perspectives/breaking-norm-unleashing-australia-economic-potential.html>

# 2.

## IDENTIFY YOUR LOCAL PARLIAMENTARIANS

Wherever you live or work in Australia, you are represented by Councillors in your local government area, and Parliamentarians at the state or territory level as well as Commonwealth/Australian Parliament.

### FEDERAL/COMMONWEALTH

Find your Federal electorate on the Australian Electoral Commission website. From here you can find your current Parliamentarian (your local Member of Parliament may or may not be retiring at this election). You can locate the names of Senators for your state or territory, including the service expiry date for their term (half are due for election in 2025), on the Australian Parliament House website. Candidates will appear on the AEC website during the declared election period as their nominations are accepted.

### STATE/TERRITORY

You can identify your local Parliamentarians by searching '*your state or territory and electoral commission*'. Each electoral commission has an address search function to help find your representatives.

Once you know your electorate and upper house division or region, you can find the contact details for your Parliamentarian on your state or territory parliament website, for example, search '*WA, parliament, member*'.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Your local shire or council website will list Councillors and the avenues to contact them. Some may list phone numbers and email addresses, while others may direct you to a council customer service number or online form to pass on a message.



# CONTACT

## YOUR PARLIAMENTARIAN, CANDIDATES OR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES FOR YOUR STATE OR TERRITORY

There are many ways to showcase your work, such as writing a letter or arranging a meeting, depending upon what is right for your organisation.

You can find guidance on how to do this appropriately here:

- [Guide: Writing to your MP \(Oxfam Australia\)](#)
- [Guide: Contacting Senators and Members \(Australian Parliament House\)](#)

It's helpful to understand what issues are important to representatives or candidates. This will allow you to showcase your prevention work in a way that meets their needs and interests.

# 4.

## MEETING WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS, CANDIDATES OR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

It can be useful to take a one-to-two-page document showcasing your work to any meeting or to share it with your Parliamentarian, Councillor or relevant government representative. This should include local case studies and data supporting your prevention work.

Use the opportunity to share news about your engagement, for example by taking a photo at the meeting and posting it on your organisation's socials. You can link it to prevention work nationally by using **#ThisIsPrevention**.

Be sure to tag their official social account on whichever platform you post. To tag on social media, type the "@" symbol followed by their username in your post or comment. Most platforms will suggest relevant usernames as you type, making it easier to find the correct person.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
VISIT [OURWATCH.ORG.AU](https://ourwatch.org.au)**

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