



Playing our part

Workplace Responses to
Domestic and Family Violence

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM TOOLKIT

November 2016

MALE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

Dear colleague,

Domestic and family violence is a gender and workplace issue. We now know that we cannot champion gender-balanced leadership without acting on domestic and family violence. We describe our learning journey in our 2015 Report, [Playing Our Part](#).

It's important you know we're at the beginning of our own journey, but that we realise urgent responses are required. We believe every Australian can act to reduce the prevalence and impact of domestic and family violence.

We have recently been asked about our decision to participate in the 16 Days of Activism.

In essence, we have decided to:

- 1 Integrate** 25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, into our corporate calendar, as many leaders have already done in Australia.
- 2** Take part in the **16 Days of Activism** by integrating messages about domestic and family violence into our meetings, speeches and communications.

Most importantly, what underpins all of this, is an acceleration of our efforts to ensure our workplace's culture, policies and processes support those impacted by violence and deal with perpetrators of violence.

We hope you'll join us, and look forward to you feedback and suggestions.

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The purpose of these materials is to support leaders' participation in the 16 Days of Activism from 25 November to 10 December.

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Factsheet

Domestic and family violence

The global picture

- Violence against women is one of the world's most prevalent human rights abuses.
- One in three women globally will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.¹
- Gender-based violence is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality.²

The Australian story

- It is estimated that 60 women have been murdered so far in 2016. Most of these women were killed by an intimate partner or someone known to them. These intimate partner homicides account for one fifth of all homicides in Australia.³
- One in 50 women in Australia have experienced violence at the hands of an intimate partner in the past 12 months.⁴
- One in four women in Australia have experienced at least one incident of violence by an intimate partner.⁵

The workplace

- Two out of three Australian women who reported violence by a current partner are in paid employment.⁶
- Women were unlikely to have taken time off work in the 12 months after their most recent incident of physical assault by a male. Only 14% of women had taken time off work in the 12 months after their most recent incident of physical assault.⁷
- As of 2013, more than one million Australian workers are able to avail themselves of leave and other protections made available through domestic violence clauses in their agreement or award conditions.⁸

Costs of violence

- In 2009, the cost of violence against women and their children to the Australian economy was estimated at \$13.6 billion.⁹
- Almost half of this figure (48 per cent) was attributed to the pain, suffering and premature mortality rates experienced by victims and survivors of violence.¹⁰
- The cost to the Australian economy is expected to rise to \$15.6 billion by 2021.¹¹



2 out of 3 Australian women who reported violence by a current partner are in paid employment



Economic factors are the most significant predictor of whether a woman experiencing domestic violence remains, escapes or returns to an abusive relationship

Practical actions

Domestic and family violence

Provided by OurWatch (www.ourwatch.org.au)

We all have a major role to play in challenging gender stereotypes and championing gender equality. Practical everyday actions that anyone (particularly men) can take include:



Never letting anyone blame a victim because of what they were wearing, how much they'd had to drink, were behaving in a 'suggestive' manner, or for any other reason.



Speaking out if someone makes a sexist joke or catcalls a woman on the street. These things might seem unimportant but they are based in disrespect for women, and chances are you're not the only one who thinks this kind of behaviour is wrong.



Never letting anyone make excuses for a perpetrator (because he was angry, drunk or had money problems, for example) because this contributes to a society that excuses violence against women.



Considering whether your own attitudes and behaviours towards women and men, girls and boys, might be reinforcing gender stereotypes or unconsciously condoning disrespect for women.



Checking in with a woman and asking her if she's OK if you think she is being treated in a controlling manner.

Summary

16 Days of Activism

Context

- The worldwide 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute, co-ordinate by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership
- Symbolically, the 16 Days of Activism run from International Day For the Elimination of Violence Against Women (also sometimes known as White Ribbon Day in Australia) on 25 November to International Human Rights Day on 10 December
- More information can be found at www.16dayscswgl.rutger.edu

What leaders can do to join the campaign

Participating in the 16 Days of Activism can act as a powerful statement of support for those experiencing violence. There are a number of suggestions as to how leaders can participate in the campaign from 25 November-10 December.

These include:

- 1** Beginning speeches sharing information about domestic and family violence as a workplace and gender issue
- 2** Adding the topic to the beginning of each meeting's agenda – with five to ten minutes dedicated to the topic
- 3** Leveraging external and internal communications to raise awareness (e.g., enterprise-wide newsletters, social media etc)

Please note, publically shared materials should include information about referral pathways.

Case studies

Communicate domestic and family violence as a workplace issue

Male Champions of Change

CONTEXT	ACTION	RESULT
<p>Senior leaders rarely discuss domestic and family violence, or seek to shape a culture that reduces the prevalence and impact</p> <p>The MCCs agreed to deepen their understanding of the issue. In November 2014, the group met with courageous advocates – Rosie Batty and Kristy McKellar</p> <p>From this dialogue, the men learned that domestic and family violence is a hidden issue that attracts significant stigma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MCCs integrated International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women into their corporate calendars including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal messages about their learnings from the meeting Acknowledgement that domestic and family violence is a workplace issue Confirmation of support available and referral pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 400,000 employees reached, across 17 organisations; with further extension to suppliers and customers Responses received indicated support for the MCCs engagement with the issue – many experiences shared
		LESSONS LEARNED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearing the lived experience of survivors can shape and influence change A first step to active engagement with the issue is leadership communication There is interest from employees in hearing from leaders on this topic

Communicate support available

Rio Tinto

CONTEXT	ACTION	RESULT
<p>Rio Tinto committed in 2014 to using 'Violence Against Women' as a safety share globally to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured buy-in with 20 senior leaders and endorsement of the safety share message and approach Employed an existing system of safety shares (a business-wide practice which reaches all employees) to raise awareness Prepared a slide of the hard facts, talking points and a reference to the employee assistance program to ensure a consistent discussion across geographies, functions, product groups and sites Promoted continued use as a relevant safety share at other times throughout the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reached a large proportion of Rio Tinto's >50,000 workforce across 40 countries Led to some employees candidly sharing their experiences and insights
		LESSONS LEARNED
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication about domestic and family violence will have the most impact when it follows cultural norms It is critical that those leading communication activities are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipped with facts Understand the issue Aware of referral pathways

Examples

Speeches/comments

The most effective comments reflect our personal experiences, and create a dialogue with our people. The comments below are intended as thoughtstarters and can be used in conjunction with the factsheet and practical actions provided in the previous pages.

“ *I want to start by acknowledging those impacted by domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence is a significant issue in our nation, one that we cannot ignore. So far this year, there have been more than 60 women murdered, most of whom have been murdered by an intimate partner or someone known to them. More than 800,000 women in paid work have been impacted by family violence. We have perpetrators too. I believe that domestic and family violence is a workplace issue, and that we need to do something about it. That's why I decided to participate in what's called the 16 Days of Activism. It's a way for me to learn about the topic and to start a conversation with you about what we might do together to ensure our workplace supports those impacted.*

“ *Today, I want to start by asking you about what you know about domestic and family violence. I am keen to understand what we can be doing to support those impacted and to deal with perpetrators. I've got a factsheet here, which I thought might be worth discussing. I would like to know, what you know about the topic and your ideas about how we might take action together.*

“ *Today, I want to talk about domestic and family violence, which impacts more than 800,000 women in the workforce. I want to acknowledge the strength and courage of those who bear that violence, who are disproportionately women. The prevalence of violence across our nation means that in our company, there are people impacted. We know that violence is a gender equality issue, and that's where many of the solutions to this complex challenge lie. That's why it's so important for us to work together to ensure that our workplaces are inclusive, promote gender equality and can support those impacted by violence.*

Example

Email to staff

The best emails are of course based on personal experience, and highlight specific practical actions that leaders are taking, and employees can take to play their part in decreasing the impact and prevalence of domestic and family violence. To get you started, here are a few words that might assist. Attaching a video can be particularly effective.

Colleagues,

Today marks the start of the 16 Days of Activism – a global campaign to end violence against women. I am proud to support this campaign which runs from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day.)

Domestic and family violence is one of the most prevalent human rights abuses in our nation. 1.4 million Australian women are living in an abusive relationship, or have done so in the past. Most of these women are in paid employment. This impacts on our community, individuals and the workplace.

I am still early in my own journey of learning about domestic and family violence. However, one thing I know is that it will take every single one of us to create a more gender equal world that is free from such violence. Over the next few weeks, you may notice that I will be sharing information at key forums and in meetings about what I am learning about domestic and family violence. I hope you might take the opportunity to do the same.

We want (INSERT ORG NAME) to be a workplace where all our employees feel safe, supported and able to bring their whole selves to work. We are committed to supporting employees impacted by domestic and family violence.

If you or someone you know needs support, please call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or visit www.1800RESPECT.org.au. Our employee assistance program (EAP) is also available.

Together, we can make a real difference. I welcome your thoughts and feedback.

Videos

A useful alternative

We have found videos can be a useful alternative compared with written comments. Here are a few videos that you might find useful:

Step Up Together: Domestic and Family Violence, Male Champions of Change
<http://malechampionsofchange.com/domestic-violence-is-a-workplace-issue/>

Change the Story: Our Watch
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b62CU28ArPo>

White Ribbon
http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/day?gclid=CjwKEAiAmqayBRDLgsfGiMmkxT0SJADHFUhPPnt1qSPqqZEpbhlc3xBQ9ymbQDCHBII0ho-xD9C0hxoCSsPw_wcB

Vic Health Community Attitudes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8E7RGjk69T4>

Frequently asked questions on domestic and family violence

An extract from Our Watch's *Change the Story* (Questions & Answers 10/2015). For more information, please visit www.ourwatch.org.au

1 What causes violence against women?

There is no single cause of violence against women. But current international evidence tells us that it is more likely to happen where gender inequality is ingrained in social, cultural and organisational structures and practices.

According to this evidence, the particular expressions of gender inequality associated with higher levels of violence against women are:

- Social norms (attitudes, beliefs) and institutional practices that excuse, justify or tolerate violence against women.
- Men's control of decision making in relationships and public life, and limits to women's economic and social independence.
- Rigid and stereotypical gender roles and identities.
- Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

Gender inequality is always influential as a driver of violence against women, but it is not experienced in the same way by every woman. Other forms of social, political and economic inequalities can affect how gender inequality is expressed.

In some cases, the severity or frequency of violence can be increased by other factors that reinforce gender inequality, although none of these factors predict or drive violence against women on their own.

2 What is the evidence proving gender inequality causes violence against women?

There is a strong and consistent association in the international evidence between gender inequality and levels of violence against women.

Most recently, a 2015 study in medical journal *The Lancet* found factors relating to gender inequality predict the prevalence of intimate partner violence across 44 countries.¹¹ A United Nations review found significantly and consistently higher rates of violence against women in countries where women's economic, social and political rights are poorly protected, and where power and resources are unequally distributed between men and women.¹³ This is true on the broad social scale, but also within intimate relationships, where male dominance and control of wealth is a significant predictor of higher levels of violence against women.¹⁴

Gender inequality isn't only expressed through imbalances in economic or political power and rights – it's also found in individual and community beliefs about what men and women are like, and how they are 'supposed' to behave.

World Health Organisation research has found individuals (both men and women) who don't believe men and women are equal, and/or see them as having specific roles or characteristics, were also more likely to condone, tolerate or excuse violence against women.

Australian research has confirmed the most consistent predictor for support of violence against women by men is their agreement with sexist, patriarchal and/or sexually hostile attitudes.¹⁵

3 What role does alcohol/socio-economic status/mental health/drugs play?

These are a number of reinforcing factors that don't predict or drive violence on their own, however they may increase the likelihood of violence against women among people who already hold low support for gender equality, and have violence-supportive attitudes.

Harmful use of alcohol is one reinforcing factor, but alcohol itself does not drive violence against women. Not all people who drink are violent, and many people who do not drink are violent. However, in conjunction with social and cultural norms based on harmful gender stereotypes – such as male conquest and aggression – alcohol can contribute to the increased occurrence or severity of violence.

Research is limited on the impact of other drugs on violence against women, however it's possible certain drugs could have a similar effect to alcohol.

Socio-economic factors themselves do not drive violence against women. However if these factors reinforce or worsen existing gender inequalities, they can increase the probability of violence against women. For example, women who have particularly limited access to wealth and resources may find themselves financially dependent on their partner and therefore restricted when making choices about if or when to leave an abusive partner.

4 What about violence against men?

All violence is wrong, regardless of the sex of the victim or perpetrator.

However violence has very clearly gendered dynamics. Most notably, both sexes are more likely to experience violence at the hands of men.¹⁷ In fact, about 95% of all victims of violence in Australia – whether women or men – experience violence from a male perpetrator.¹⁸

Men are more likely to experience violence by other men in public places, women are more likely to experience violence from men they know, often in the home.¹⁹

Women are far more likely than men to experience sexual violence and violence from an intimate partner, and with more severe impacts. Women are more likely to be afraid of, hospitalised by, or killed by an intimate partner than men.²⁰

This doesn't negate the experiences of male victims. But it identifies the need for a prevention approach that addresses the gendered dynamics of violence.

5 What role can men play in this change?

Men have a major role to play in challenging gender stereotypes and championing gender equality to prevent violence against women. As individuals, our everyday words and actions matter – they are what help to build a society where women are respected as equals and violence against women is not tolerated.

Practical everyday actions men can take include:

- Never letting anyone blame a victim because of what they were wearing, how much they'd had to drink, were behaving in a 'suggestive' manner, or for any other reason.
- Never letting anyone make excuses for a perpetrator (because he was angry, drunk or had money problems, for example) because this contributes to a society that excuses violence against women.
- Speaking out if someone makes a sexist joke or catcalls a woman on the street. These things might seem unimportant but they are based in disrespect for women, and chances are you're not the only one who thinks this kind of behaviour is wrong.
- Checking in with a woman and asking her if she's OK if you think she is being treated in a controlling manner.
- Considering whether your own attitudes and behaviours towards women and men, girls and boys, might be reinforcing gender stereotypes or unconsciously condoning disrespect for women.

Men in positions of leadership can also use their role and influence to drive change by:

- Role modelling respect for women.
- Ensuring that women are part of decision-making processes.
- Implementing initiatives, policies and practices that promote gender equality.

Resources

General resources

Our Watch, Understanding Violence Against Women: Facts and Figures
www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Facts-and-figures

Our Watch, Understanding Violence Against Women: Myths about violence
www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Myths-about-violence

Our Watch, Understanding Violence Against Women: FAQs about the issue
www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/FAQs-about-the-issue

Our Watch, Preventing Violence: Men
www.ourwatch.org.au/Preventing-Violence/Men

Resources on domestic and family violence as a workplace issue

Australian Human Rights Commission, Factsheet on 'Domestic and Family Violence: a workplace Issue, a discrimination issue'
www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/family-and-domestic-violence/publications/fact-sheet-domestic-and-family-violence-workplace

Gendered Violence & Work program, University of New South Wales
www.arts.unsw.edu.au/gvandwork

The VicHealth violence against women Action in workplaces
www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/programs-and-projects/action-in-workplaces

White Ribbon
www.whiteribbon.org.au

Organisations who can help

ORGANISATION	ABOUT	CAN HELP WITH
<p>FULL STOP FOUNDATION</p> <p>www.fullstopfoundation.org.au</p> <p>Contact: Susan Johnston Relationships Manager T: +61 (2) 8585 0346 E: susanj@rape-dvservices.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initiative of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia, the Full Stop Foundation leads in the prevention of sexual, domestic and family violence in Australia through innovative and results-driven programs. • The Full Stop Foundation offers several programs, including the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ethical Leadership Initiative, which aims to foster workplace cultures where gender based violence, including sexual harassment and homophobia, are not tolerated. The program works with organisations to embed an ethical decision-making framework targeting gender-based violence in the workplace. This is done through the provision of confidential, tailored, customised, evidence-based, tools and training for building ethical leadership, culture and practices. – Responding with Compassion course, which helps participants understand the societal and individual impact of sexual assault and how to support someone who has experienced sexual violence. – Men’s Behaviour Change Program, a secondary prevention program which makes counselling available for any man who fears he may use, or who has used, violence in his relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an environment where employees feel comfortable disclosing violence (Ethical Leadership Initiative) • Referrals to 1800 RESPECT and the Men’s Behaviour Change Program • Equipping managers to implement policies (Responding with Compassion)
<p>LIFELINE</p> <p>www.lifeline.org.au</p> <p>Contact: Mary Lee DV Alert Quality Assurance Officer T: +61 (2) 6215 9400 E: training@lifeline.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. Lifeline is also a Registered Training Organisation with nationally accredited training, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Accidental Counsellor which aims to equip individuals with the ability to recognise a crisis, respond in an appropriate manner and refer to a suitable service. – DV Aware where participants learn how to recognise domestic and family violence and engage with someone who may be experiencing this in their life. – DV Alert where participants obtain the knowledge and skills to recognise signs of domestic and family violence; respond with appropriate care; and refer to appropriate support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to 13 11 14 • Equipping managers to implement policies

Organisations who can help continued

ORGANISATION	ABOUT	CAN HELP WITH
<p>UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES www.arts.unsw.edu.au/gvandwork</p> <p>Contact: Marion Brown, Senior Associate, Gendered Violence & Work program T: +61 (2) 9385 4886 E: mp.brown@unsw.edu.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through its Gendered Violence & Work program, the University of New South Wales (UNSW) continues to play a pioneering role in Australia and internationally in efforts to address the effects of domestic/family and sexual violence on the workplace. • UNSW's Gendered Violence & Work program provides research, advisory and training services to support the development and implementation of effective gender-neutral workplace responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Good practice' reviews of policies and procedures • Tailored skills-development training for first responders/ key staff • Customised general awareness training/e-learning • Monitoring and evaluation
<p>VICHEALTH www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/equal-footing-toolkit</p> <p>www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/courses-and-events/vichealth-short-courses</p> <p>Contact: Liz Murphy Senior Project Officer, Preventing Violence Against Women T: +61 3 9667 1335 E: lmurphy@vichealth.vic.gov.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VicHealth has developed and implements workplace programs to promote non-violent, equitable and respectful relationships between men and women. • These programs are designed to help organisations to create workplace environments that promote non-violent, equitable and respectful relationships between men and women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace training and resources to equip organisations to prevent violence against women • Leadership training equipping managers to plan the implementation of a whole of organisation strategy including policies, gender audits and training
<p>WHITE RIBBON FOUNDATION www.whiteribbon.org.au</p> <p>Contact: Jessica Luter National Executive, Programs Portfolio T: +61 (2) 9045 8417 E: jessica.luter@whiteribbon.org.au</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Ribbon Australia is a national organisation working to change attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate men's violence against women by engaging men and boys to lead social change. • In May 2011, White Ribbon initiated the White Ribbon Australia Workplace Accreditation Program. • The objectives of the Workplace Accreditation Program are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase the knowledge and skills of managers and staff to address issues of men's VAW; – Enhance the capacity of workplaces to respond to the issue of men's VAW; – Change the attitudes and behaviours that allow men's VAW to happen; – Accredite workplaces taking active and effective steps to stop men's VAW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial design of workplace response to domestic and family violence • External review and evaluation of policies and initiatives

Thank you

We are grateful to all those who contributed to this work, particularly:

Inspiration and Expertise

- Kristy McKellar and Rosie Batty, who so courageously shared their experience with the Male Champions of Change. The work within our organisations has started or accelerated because of you.

Expertise

- Fiona McCormack, Chief Executive Officer, Domestic Violence Victoria
- Jan Breckenridge, Associate Professor and Co-convenor, Gendered Violence Research Network; Marion Brown, Senior Associate, Gendered Violence & Work program; Paula Bennett, Manager, Gendered Violence Research Network, UNSW
- Julie McKay, Executive Director, Australian National Committee for UN Women
- Karen Willis, Executive Officer, and Susan Johnston, Relationships Manager, Full Stop Foundation
- Libby Davies, Chief Executive Officer, White Ribbon Australia
- Liz Murphy, Senior Project Officer, Preventing Violence Against Women, VicHealth
- Ludo McFerran, UNSW School of Social Sciences and former Director of Safe at Home, Safe at Work
- Michaela Healey, Group Executive, People, Communications & Governance, National Australia Bank
- Patty Kinnersly, Director Practice Leadership, Our Watch
- Robert Wood, Head of Sustainability, Virgin Australia

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