# Transcript

KEVIN ANDREWS: By now, we’re all too aware of the shocking statistics associated with violence against women in Australia. One in three Australian women have experienced physical violence and approximately one in five have experienced sexual violence. Disturbingly, one in six Australian women has experienced violence directly by a partner and an estimated 25 per cent of women have experienced emotional abuse by a partner. Approximately 36 per cent of children have borne witness to an act of violence in their home. These statistics are unacceptable. Tragically, violence affects every single culture, every race, every religion, every socio-economic background, and happens in every suburb in Australia.

The Australian Government has a zero tolerance approach to violence against women and children. Violence against women and children is wrong. Violence against women and children must not be tolerated, and violence against women and children must be stopped.

MICHAELIA CASH: I’m proud to announce the launch of the Second Action Plan under the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. The National Plan is a 12 year commitment between the Commonwealth, state, and territory governments to make a significant and sustained reduction in the levels of violence against women and their children. The National Plan has been built from an evidence base of research and extensive consultation with experts and the community. It brings together the efforts of the Commonwealth Government in conjunction with all state and territory governments as well as the community, which maximises the work we’re all doing to make our communities safer for women and children.

The National Plan has a strong focus on stopping violence before it occurs in the first place. It focuses on ensuring services meet the needs of women and their children who have experienced violence, holding perpetrators to account and improving the evidence base. Importantly, it aims to change community attitudes regarding violence against women and advance gender equality, which is absolutely critical for affecting long-term change.

KEVIN ANDREWS: We need to teach our young boys to respect women, not to harm them, and to speak out when their friends do or say something that perpetrates violence and abuse towards women. Every single person in society – men, women, boys, and girls – need to be part of the solution to this problem.

MICHAELIA CASH: None of this change will happen overnight, and that is why the National Plan is a long-term endeavour. The Second Action Plan drives the implementation of the National Plan from 2013 until 2016 and will see governments and the community sector continue to work together. The Second Action Plan not only builds on the work achieved through the First Action Plan, it takes a giant leap forward in relation to primary prevention, developing public awareness, research, education, the improvement of systems and services, and a better understanding about how we can prevent violence against Indigenous women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, and women with disability.

KEVIN ANDREWS: Through the Second Action Plan, we as a nation are drawing a line in the sand and taking a stand against family or sexual violence.

MICHAELIA CASH: We hope that throughout the Second Action Plan, we will see cultural change advance, women feeling more comfortable in reporting their experiences of domestic and family violence and sexual assault, and that more members of the Australian community actively reject violence. If you’d like to find out more about the National Plan, the First and Second Action Plans, and progress towards reducing violence against women and their children, visit the Department of Social Services website at www.dss.gov.au.

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