

# OUR INVESTMENT IN WOMEN'S SAFETY



Australian Government

# WE HAVE LISTENED TO SURVIVORS AND FRONTLINE SERVICES

The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (the National Plan) brings together the efforts of the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to drive a real and sustained reduction in the levels of domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia.

Creating the National Plan in 2010 was a historic moment, recognising that reducing and preventing family, domestic and sexual violence is a shared responsibility. Since then, successive governments have made significant investments and accelerated efforts to reduce violence against women and their children.

The Fourth Action Plan and the Commonwealth's contribution to it is the product of extensive consultation with hundreds of people affected by violence and the people working to stop it. In 2018, we held 30 consultations, spoke with over 600 individuals and 400 organisations from the family, domestic and sexual violence sectors, the broader community sector, academia and the health, justice, and corporate sectors.

This culminated in the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) National Summit on Reducing Violence against Women, held on 2-3 October 2018, which was attended by over 100 experts, Ministers and officials. Summit delegates provided a statement to First Ministers that called for urgent action to end violence against women and children. At the 12 December 2018 COAG meeting, First Ministers agreed the statement would inform the Fourth Action Plan.

**COAG Summit delegates called on First Ministers for specific action in the following areas:**

- We must invest in primary prevention and early intervention to stop violence at its source
- We must make reducing violence everyone's business
- We must listen to lived experience and respect cultural knowledge
- We must acknowledge and better respond to the unique experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children
- We must respond better to sexual violence, as a form of domestic and family violence and as a separate crime
- We must improve systems so women and children are safe
- We must change the behaviour of people who choose to use violence
- We must respect the needs of children and young people as individuals
- We must learn from what's working, be flexible and tailor our approaches

**First Ministers agreed the COAG statement would inform the Fourth Action Plan.**



**TOGETHER,  
WE CAN ACHIEVE  
A SAFER  
AUSTRALIA**

# FOREWORD

Our Government's first priority is to keep Australians safe and secure.

That means continuing to stand up to the scourge of domestic violence.

We are proud to be making the single largest ever Commonwealth investment in the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, with \$328 million for prevention measures and frontline services. This brings the total invested by our Government to more than \$840 million since 2013.

Our investments are the product of extensive consultations with frontline workers, experts and survivors ahead of the release of the Fourth Action Plan in mid-2019.

It's why a core focus of our Government's contribution is prevention — changing the attitudes to violence, and helping those who think violence is an option, to stop.

We will also make a ground breaking commitment to build new emergency accommodation for women and children escaping violence.

Women and children leaving dangerous homes should have a safe place to go. And where they are safe, women and children survivors should be helped to remain in their homes and in their communities.

We will also act against the different forms abuse can take, including preventing financial abuse and technology-facilitated abuse, with a focus on the different experiences of women with intellectual disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

We will provide ongoing funding to successful programs under the National Plan that will ensure workers on the frontline and in local communities can continue providing their vital support. This includes investment in successful Indigenous led solutions.

The Fourth Action Plan and our commitment to it represents a significant step in the journey towards an Australia free from family, domestic and sexual violence.

The National Plan came into being nearly ten years ago, when state, territory and federal governments came together with the community to develop an anti-domestic violence strategy built on the view that the more we work together, the better the outcome for victims and survivors.

Ahead of the release of the Fourth Action Plan in mid-2019, the Australian Government will continue to work closely with state and territory governments to ensure that all levels of government are aligned in their approach to eliminating domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

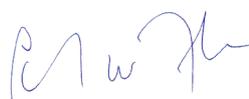
Together, we can achieve a safer Australia.



**SCOTT MORRISON**  
Prime Minister



**KELLY O'DWYER**  
Minister for Women



**PAUL FLETCHER**  
Minister for Families  
and Social Services

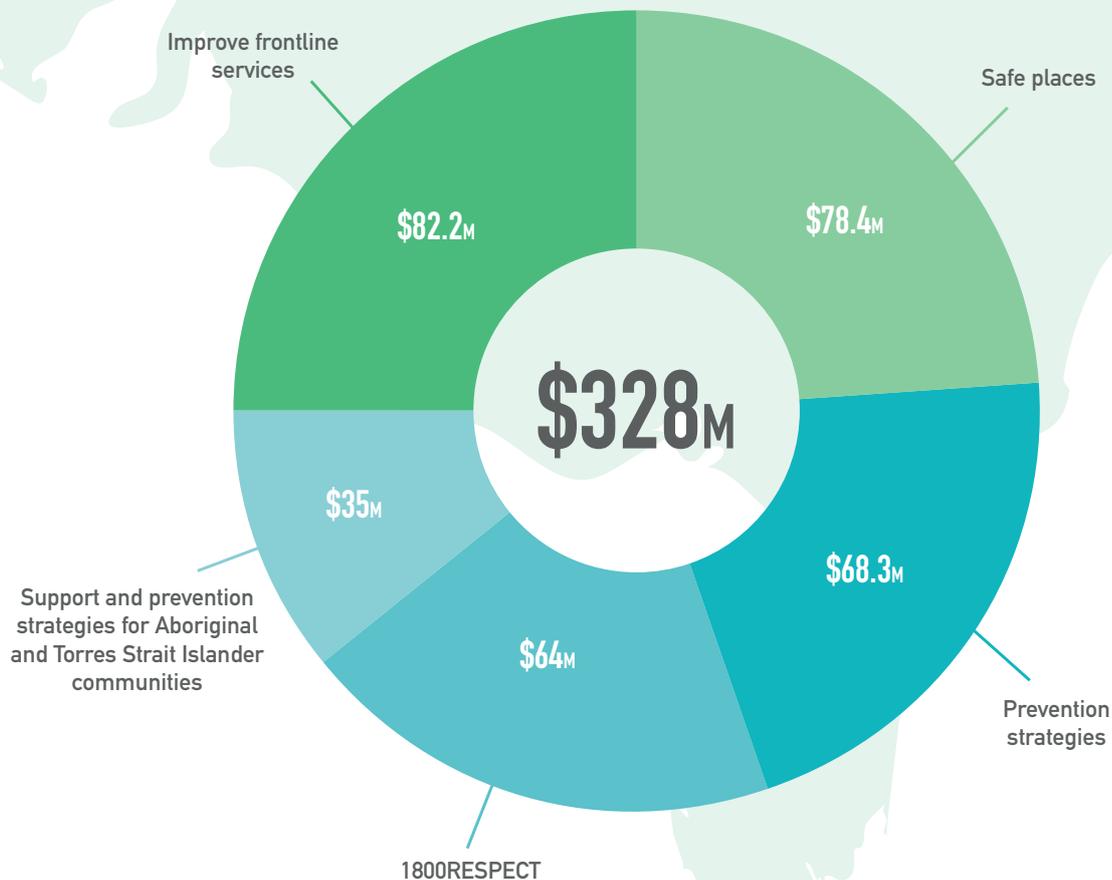
# BUILDING ON PREVIOUS INVESTMENT

## **The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 was agreed in 2010 by COAG and is being implemented through four, three-year action plans**

- The First Action Plan: Building a Strong Foundation 2010-2013 laid a strong foundation for long-term change. This included the establishment of national-level infrastructure to inform future policy and service delivery and to engage the community in reducing violence against women and their children.
- Under the Second Action Plan: Moving Ahead 2013-2016, all jurisdictions committed to the national prevention campaign, Stop it at the Start, the development of a primary prevention framework to share understanding of preventing violence, an expanded research agenda and National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions.
- The \$100 million Third Action Plan: Promising Results 2016-2019 further strengthened the evidence base and national data collections, providing the basis for the trials of new and innovative approaches in early intervention, tertiary and crisis responses.

## **In addition, Australian Government has made several strong commitments in recent years which support women and children at risk of violence:**

- \$101.2 million under the Women's Safety Package to provide a safety net for women and children at high risk of experiencing violence.
- \$67 million under the Women's Economic Security Package for measures to support women experiencing family and domestic violence.
- \$1.5 billion per annum under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, including dedicated homelessness funding, which is to be matched by states and territories, and will have a focus on women and children affected by family and domestic violence.
- Since 2013, over 7,046 women and children have been granted visas through the Women at Risk program, which supports women at risk of victimisation, harassment or serious abuse because of their gender. In 2017-18, the highest number of women and dependents were granted a woman at risk visa in our history (2,126 people in total).



## Australian Government Priorities for the Fourth Action Plan

We are committed to working with state and territory governments to address family and domestic violence and sexual assault. The \$328 million Australian Government contribution to the Fourth Action Plan focuses on key areas where the Commonwealth is best placed to contribute to creating real and lasting change to reduce violence against women and their children.

This covers the following major investment areas:

- \$68.3 million for prevention strategies to help eradicate domestic and family violence in our homes, workplaces, communities and clubs
- \$78.4 million to provide safe places for people impacted by domestic and family violence
- \$82.2 million to improve and build on frontline services to keep women and children safe
- \$64.0 million for 1800RESPECT, the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service
- \$35.0 million in support and prevention strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

## Preventing violence before it happens

Preventing violence is core to keeping Australian families strong, safe and together. Preventing violence and abuse from happening in the first place is the single most effective way to eliminate violence and that is why prevention is at the core of the Fourth Action Plan.

Our investment of \$68.3 million in prevention includes:

- \$25.4 million for a range of community programs, information campaigns, resources, and awareness-raising initiatives focused on addressing the social behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and children.
- Australia's first Prevention Hub to bring together government, experts, the community sector and corporate partners to oversee and coordinate efforts nationally towards a common goal of stopping violence. The Prevention Hub will measure and report on national impact, and share best practice and evaluation data to more effectively prevent violence.
- \$12.1 million will fund prevention programs for vulnerable or at risk groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- \$16.7 million to continue the national Stop it at the Start campaign. To date, the campaign has been delivered in partnership with states and territories contributing matched funding. The Commonwealth looks forward to state and territory governments continued investment in this flagship national prevention initiative.

The Australian Government will also support student safety and wellbeing by investing \$2.8 million in the delivery of Respect Matters resources to help schools teach children to build positive, healthy relationships based on equality and respect for one another.

Almost 90 per cent of women who have experienced another form of domestic and family violence have also experienced financial abuse. \$2.0 million will support the development of strategies for the prevention of financial abuse.

The Australian Government will continue to support the work of Our Watch, the national leader in the prevention of violence against women, including by investing \$3.4 million to continue The Line, an award winning social media approach for people aged 12-20 years to encourage respectful relationships. Our Watch will build on their existing work to develop new content, including for young women with intellectual disability. This is estimated to reach over 3.6 million young people.



While rates of partner violence have remained relatively stable since 2005, there has been an increase in women's experience of sexual violence

(ABS, 2016)

Stop it at the Start

Prevention Hub

Respect Matters

Our Watch

The Line

## Supporting frontline services to keep Australians safe

Australians experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence need to know that help is there when they seek it. That is why the Commonwealth is maintaining its investment in the services that keep Australians safe. This includes:

- \$64.0 million in 1800RESPECT until 2021, to ensure this service can continue to meet the significant demand for support. Since 2010, 1800RESPECT has grown into an integral part of the service system supporting Australians impacted by, or at risk of, domestic and family violence and sexual assault. Calls to the service have continued to rise significantly, with more than 98,000 telephone and online contacts answered in 2017-18 and double this expected to be answered in 2018-19.
- \$10.0 million to deliver Specialised Family Violence Services in up to 16 additional sites, providing for up to 20,000 additional support sessions per year. This critical service provides specialised counselling and support for families affected by violence, including help for children who witness and/or experience violence.
- \$2.6 million to develop new national standards for sexual assault responses including victim and perpetrator programs, and a framework for reporting against the standards.

## Providing safe places for people experiencing domestic and family violence

Women and children cannot leave if they have no place to go. And where it is safe, women and children survivors should be helped to remain in their homes and in their communities. That is why we are investing \$78.4 million to provide safe places for those escaping family and domestic violence.

This investment includes a \$60.4 million grants program to provide new or expanded emergency accommodation facilities for those escaping family and domestic violence. This will provide up to 450 safe places for people affected by violence, assisting up to 6,500 people a year.

A further \$18.0 million to continue the Commonwealth's investment in the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program, which has assisted over 5,200 women since 2015-16, providing security upgrades and safety planning so women and children can remain in their own homes, if it is safe to do so, with access to their support networks, workplaces and schools.

# FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

remains the single largest driver of homelessness for women with children

(AIHW, 2018)



A 2016 study by KPMG  
estimated the overall  
economic cost of violence  
against women and  
their children was

**\$26 BILLION  
A YEAR**

## Targeting support to the diverse needs of women from all backgrounds

We will extend the existing Support for Trafficked People Program to ensure the program can support approximately 166 highly vulnerable people in 2019-20. \$3.8 million will deliver critical support for identified victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices, including forced labour and forced marriage.

Research indicates that women with an intellectual disability are more vulnerable to technology-facilitated abuse. We will invest \$1.5 million for the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to provide accessible and targeted advice to help women with an intellectual disability and/or communication difficulties to identify and report online abuse, and to enable the safety features on their devices and online accounts. The program will also include training for domestic and family violence frontline workers.

## Action Plan to prevent and reduce violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children

The Commonwealth will invest \$35.0 million to continue to tackle the drivers of family and domestic violence and address the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by violence. This support includes:

- Building on the success of Indigenous-led solutions funded under the Third Action Plan to continue and expand Indigenous specific projects to keep women and their children safe from violence.
- Greater support for Indigenous women and children in remote areas and areas of high need so they are able to access services that work with the whole family to address the impacts of violence.
- Support for practical intervention programs to work with Indigenous young people and adults at risk of experiencing or using violence to address past trauma and equip them with the practical tools and skills to develop positive and violence-free relationships.
- Building on the success of the Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) national conversation, the Commonwealth will invest \$1.7 million to continue this important work in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO.

The Australian Government will also provide up to \$2.5 million for the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to work with and assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in communities across Australia to identify, report and protect themselves and their children from technology-facilitated abuse. The program will develop a range of culturally appropriate resources for frontline workers to help them identify, understand and report technology-facilitated abuse, and ultimately empower the women they support to be safe online.



## ONE IN FOUR WOMEN

has experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or former partner, boyfriend, girlfriend or date since the age of 15

(ABS, 2016)

A teal circle containing the text 'x32' in white. The circle is positioned to the left of the text 'In 2014–15, Indigenous women were 32 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than non-Indigenous women'.

x32

In 2014–15, Indigenous women were 32 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence than non-Indigenous women

(ABS, 2016)

## Developing workforce capability

Responding to violence against women is everyone's business. From health and other service providers, to police and justice, to workplaces, and friends and family, we all need to play our part.

To support this, we will invest \$31.2 million in national training for frontline workers including:

- Continuing the well-known DV-alert accredited training program, which will support an estimated 18,500 frontline workers to identify and respond appropriately to domestic, family and sexual violence.
- Developing a university module to train university students in key disciplines, such as health, education and training, and social work, to better recognise and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence.
- Establishing accredited training across the community to improve worker responses to victims of sexual violence, focusing on specific forms of sexual violence, including technology-facilitated sexual violence, non-consensual image-based abuse and stalking, and on the most vulnerable cohorts including young people and women with disability.



**EVERY TWO  
MINUTES IN  
AUSTRALIA,**

police attend a  
domestic violence  
incident

As adults, children who are exposed to domestic violence are between two and four times more likely than non-exposed children to be in violent relationships

(ABS 2016)





# INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

contributes to more  
illness, disability and  
premature death than any  
other risk factor for  
women aged 18-44

(ANROWS, 2016).

## Increasing information sharing and collaboration

The Australian Government will provide \$11.0 million to strengthen information sharing between the federal family law system and state and territory family violence and child protection systems, which will improve the ability of those systems to promptly identify and respond to risks, and prioritise the safety of domestic violence victims.

The Department of Human Services will also build upon the support it provides to people affected by family and domestic violence, including reviewing options for a more integrated family and domestic violence victim service and expanding the communication of available support.

## Improving health system responses to family and domestic violence

The primary health care system is one of the main entry points through which victims of family violence access support services. That is why the Australian Government will invest \$2.1 million to train the primary care workforce, including GPs, to better respond and support victims.

We will also invest \$7.5 million to trial the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' program in five Primary Health Network (PHN) regions. The trial will:

- develop local care and referral pathways for people experiencing or at risk of family violence so general practices can make appropriate referrals
- deliver whole-of-practice training to teach general practice staff
- provide post-training support to participating practices
- develop models to integrate primary health care into the domestic and family violence system in the local region, including clear roles for GPs within this system



**ON AVERAGE,  
8 WOMEN**

are hospitalised  
each day due to family  
and domestic violence

## Evaluating what works and looking to an evidence informed future

The National Plan has benefited from a growing evidence base. Under the First Action Plan, all Australian governments partnered to establish the Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety as a national research body to bring together research on domestic and family violence and sexual assault across the country. But the evidence is not complete and the evidence about 'what works' is not widely shared. That is why we are investing \$9.2 million to expand the national evidence base, including targeted research on the experiences of women with disability in institutional settings.

\* Figures are subject to rounding and may include departmental implementation costs.

# NEXT STEPS

The Fourth Action Plan will be finalised mid-2019, following endorsement by COAG. Over the coming months, the Australian Government will continue to work closely and collaboratively with states and territories to develop the plan and finalise their contributions to make a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children.

For more information please see  
[www.plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au](http://www.plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au)

Opportunities for funding will be advertised at  
[communitygrants.gov.au](http://communitygrants.gov.au)



**Australian Government**