

Indigenous Women and the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children

Indigenous women are 35 times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be hospitalised as a result of family violence. In some communities this statistic may be much higher.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PLAN TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN (THE NATIONAL PLAN)?

The *National Plan* is an agreement by all Australian governments to work together to reduce violence against women and their children.

The *National Plan's* vision is for Australian women and their children to live free from violence in safe communities.

HOW WILL THE NATIONAL PLAN ASSIST INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND CHILDREN?

The *National Plan* recognises the high incidence of violence experienced by Indigenous women and their children, and focuses on ways to strengthen Indigenous communities to prevent violence.

Every Indigenous person: woman, man or child, has the right to safety in their own home and community. Indigenous people have the same rights as other Australians and deserve good services and adequate protection.

The *National Plan* recognises the diverse experiences of Indigenous women and children and the need to ensure solutions are right for specific local circumstances.

The *National Plan* supports Indigenous communities to create and build on their own solutions to prevent violence. This includes encouraging women to have a stronger voice as community leaders, providing leadership opportunities for Indigenous women, supporting Indigenous men to reject violence as well as improving employment, education and business opportunities in Indigenous communities.

HOW IS THE NATIONAL PLAN DIFFERENT TO OTHER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES?

For the first time, all Australian governments will work together to reduce violence against women and their children. Governments have agreed to do the following:

- **Develop and trial new ways to improve police responses and community planning** in Indigenous communities so families are safe. This includes the development of community safety plans in remote areas.
- **Funding a national telephone counselling service** for any Australian who has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence and/or sexual assault. **1800 RESPECT** (1800 737 732) is a free and confidential counselling service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, that will give Indigenous women and children access to immediate and ongoing support.

- **Implement *The Line – Respect Each Other***, a campaign aimed at young Indigenous people to encourage and promote respectful relationships.
- **Fund the Indigenous Women’s Program** and the **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women’s Alliance** to strengthen Indigenous women's leadership, representation, safety, wellbeing and economic status. Indigenous women will be supported to identify issues that affect them and to develop their own solutions.
- **Fund work to *Close the Gap*** in Indigenous housing, health, early childhood, economic participation and remote service delivery.
- **Support the establishment of the National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples**, with half the members being Indigenous women.
- **Fund the Healing Foundation** to address trauma and aid healing in Indigenous communities, particularly for members of the Stolen Generations.
- **Provide a funding pool** for quick and flexible responses to the high priority needs identified by Indigenous communities in 29 remote service delivery communities.
- **Continuation of training which targets nurses and Aboriginal health workers** in rural and remote areas. This training assists workers to recognise and respond effectively to women and children experiencing family violence.
- **Provide 22 safe houses** (in 15 remote communities and in Darwin and Alice Springs), **a mobile protection team** and **Remote Family Support workers** in the Northern Territory.
- **Support victims** of family violence through the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services program.
- **Funding Community Action Grants** to support communities in reducing violence against women by working with community organisations and sporting codes to engage the community in a range of primary preventions activities.

HOW WILL THE NATIONAL PLAN MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE?

The *National Plan* aims to make a significant and lasting reduction in violence against Indigenous women and children. This will be achieved by drawing on research and experience, identifying and promoting what measures work well in Indigenous communities, improving how we work with perpetrators and enhancing the way services respond to victims of violence.

WOULD YOU LIKE A COPY OF THE NATIONAL PLAN?

The *National Plan* is available online at:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/women/progserv/violence/nationalplan/Pages/default.aspx>

Or you can order hard copies by calling 1800 050 009

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE CALL:

- 1800 RESPECT -1800 737 732
- Local services in your state or territory
- Relationships Australia – 1300 364 277
- Mensline - 1300 789 978

If you require urgent assistance contact the police on 000.

