



# Second Action Plan 2013-2016

## *Moving Ahead*

*In brief*

**Safe and free from violence**

An initiative of the Commonwealth, state and territory governments.

# What is the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children?

Domestic and family violence and sexual assault are crimes that must be stopped. In Australia, around one in three women has experienced physical violence, and almost one in five has experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

That is why the Commonwealth, state and territory governments worked with the community to develop a 12-year *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022* (the National Plan).

Released in 2011, the National Plan explains what we are doing to reduce violence against women and their children. Its vision is that:

**Australian women and their children live free from violence in safe communities.**

Over 12 years the National Plan aims to achieve:

**A significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children.**

To make this change, Commonwealth, state and territory governments have agreed to work together to achieve six National Outcomes:

1. Communities are safe and free from violence
2. Relationships are respectful
3. Indigenous communities are strengthened
4. Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence
5. Justice responses are effective
6. Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account.

The National Plan focuses on the two main types of violent crimes that have a major impact on women in Australia – domestic and family violence and sexual assault. Research shows there is a strong link between violence against women and their children and how people view the roles of women and men. The National Plan focuses on stopping violence before it happens in the first place, supporting women who have experienced

violence, stopping men from committing violence, and building the evidence base so that we learn more about ‘what works’ in reducing domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

These changes take time, which is why we need a long-term plan. Each of the four Action Plans build on each other over 12 years, and are designed so that we can look back at what has been achieved and refocus on what actions will make the most difference in the future.

## National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022

**Vision:** Australian women and their children live free from violence in safe communities

**Target:** A significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children

### National Outcomes

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communities are safe and free from violence</li> <li>2. Relationships are respectful</li> <li>3. Indigenous communities are strengthened</li> <li>4. Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Justice responses are effective</li> <li>6. Perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account</li> </ol> |
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### Foundations for Change

Strengthen the workforce | Integrate systems and share information | Improve the evidence base | Track performance

The Action Plans are supported by 'Foundations for Change' – essential elements that underpin our capacity to work together and achieve lasting change. The Foundations for Change are: strengthen the workforce; integrate systems and share information; improve the evidence base and track performance.

The National Plan was developed based on advice from the National Council to Reduce Violence against Women. This National Council heard from people all around Australia, by:

- speaking with over 2,000 people across the Australian community, from every state and territory
- interviewing victims and perpetrators of violence
- reading over 350 written submissions
- holding six roundtable meetings with experts on reducing violence against women.

## What is the Second Action Plan?

The Second Action Plan is an important next step for the National Plan. The Second Action Plan runs from 2013 to 2016 and describes how we plan to move ahead in addressing the violent crimes of domestic and family violence and sexual assault. The Second Action Plan has five national priorities and contains 26 practical actions – areas of work that all governments have agreed to focus on so that we can take the next steps towards stopping violence against women and their children. The five national priorities are:

### 1. **Driving whole of community action to prevent violence**

Community attitudes and behaviour around violence against women and their children must change. In the Second Action Plan we will build on the work we initiated in the First Action Plan to prevent violence from happening in the first place while building momentum across the Australian community to openly reject violence against women and their children.

## 2. **Understanding diverse experiences of violence**

Some groups of women can be more vulnerable to violence and face challenges in getting access to information, services and support. In the Second Action Plan we will work with women and communities to learn more about and stop violence against Indigenous women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women with disability. We will also focus on making sure diverse groups of women receive the information and support they need.

## 3. **Supporting innovative services and integrated systems**

There are a lot of systems and services responsible for reducing violence against women and their children. These include police, courts, child protection, domestic and family violence and sexual assault services, services for perpetrators and other community services. Systems need to share information so that women are safe and don't have to tell their stories over and over again, and services need to work together so that women and their children who've experienced violence receive the support they need. This is very complex, in the Second Action Plan, governments will work together to test and keep improving the way systems and services work together.

## 4. **Improving perpetrator interventions**

Domestic and family violence and sexual assault are violent crimes. Men who use violence must be held to account to the full extent of the law, and in the Second Action Plan, we will improve responses to perpetrators so that women are safe.

## 5. **Continuing to build the evidence base**

Data and research on violence against women and their children will be expanded and enhanced in the Second Action Plan, helping us to develop a strong picture of 'what works' in preventing and responding to violence against all women and their children.

## The 26 Actions of the Second Action Plan

### National Priority 1: Driving whole of community action to prevent violence

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1. Support **communities** to prevent, respond to and speak out against violence, through local government, business community and sporting groups, schools and key institutions.

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2. Improve **media** engagement on violence against women and their children, and representation of women experiencing violence, at a national and local level.

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3. Take the next step to reduce violence against women and their children by promoting **gender equality** across a range of spheres, including women's economic independence and leadership.

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4. Support **young people** through *The Line* campaign and addressing issues relating to the sexualisation of children.

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5. Build on the findings of the **respectful relationships** evaluation, to strengthen the design and delivery of respectful relationship programmes, and implement them more broadly.

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6. Incorporate **respectful relationships** education into the national curriculum.

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7. Enhance **online safety** for children and young people.

### National Priority 2: Understanding diverse experiences of violence

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8. Meet the needs of **Indigenous women** and their children through improving access to information and resources, and providing avenues for advocacy and leadership.

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9. Improve outcomes for **Indigenous Australians** through building community safety.

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10. Gain a better understanding of 'what works' in improving **Indigenous community safety**.

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11. Work with **culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities** to reduce violence and support women and their children, particularly those who can be most vulnerable.

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12. Deliver awareness raising, training and prevention activities and responses to violence that are tailored to meet the needs of **women with disability**, including based on outcomes from the Stop the Violence project, and continuing to build the evidence base.

### National Priority 3: Supporting innovative services and integrated systems

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13. Continue **building first stop support** for women and their children experiencing violence, based on 'what works,' and develop national standards for telephone and online counselling services.

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14. Strengthen **systems and service integration** to ensure that specialist responses for identifying and responding to violence against women and their children are supported and effective.

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15. Strengthen **service delivery models and systems integration**, including in remote and cross-border contexts, to meet the needs of Indigenous women and their children experiencing violence.

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16. Support for **children** who have experienced, witnessed or been exposed to violence.

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17. Improve **information sharing** across court processes.

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18. Implement a **national scheme for family and domestic violence protection orders**.

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19. Drive continuous improvement in systems through reviewing domestic and family violence-related deaths and child deaths.

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20. Continue to strengthen **pro-active policing**, highlighting and building on good practice.

### National Priority 4: Improving perpetrator interventions

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21. Improve the **evidence base on perpetrator interventions**, with a focus on reducing recidivism and a better understanding of high-risk groups.

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22. Finalise and set **national outcome standards** for best practice perpetrator interventions.

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23. **Build capacity** to implement national outcome standards for perpetrator interventions and improve the quality and quantity of perpetrator interventions.

### National Priority 5: Continuing to build the evidence base

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24. Expand the **quality and quantity of national research** on violence against women and their children through the implementation of the National Research Agenda.

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25. Measure the **prevalence** of violence against women and their children and **community attitudes** towards violence through national surveys.

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26. Build the **National Data Collection and Reporting Framework**.

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## Who is the Second Action Plan for?

Violence against women and their children is a crime that affects the whole community, and everyone is likely to know someone whose life has been changed by violence.

The Second Action Plan is for everyone.

### **It is for all women:**

- Since the age of 15,
  - around one in three women has experienced physical violence;
  - almost one in five has experienced sexual violence<sup>1</sup>; and
  - since the age of 15, 17 per cent of women had experienced violence by a partner.<sup>2</sup>
- One woman is killed in Australia every week by a current or former partner.
- Indigenous women are 31 times more likely to be hospitalised due to family violence related assaults than other women.<sup>3</sup>
- Women with disability are more likely to experience violence and the violence can be more severe and last longer than for other women. A recent survey of 367 women and girls with disability found that 22 per cent had been affected by violence in the past year.<sup>4</sup>
- Language barriers and a lack of knowledge about their rights can make women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds less likely than other women to report abuse and to seek help.

**It is for men** who want to speak out and take action against violence against women and their children:

- There are 2,000 White Ribbon Ambassadors across Australia – men who are working in the community to inspire change.

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1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, *Personal Safety Survey*, Cat. No. 4906.0, Canberra.

2. Australian Institute of Criminology, 2013, *Homicide in Australia: 2008–09 to 2009–10 National Homicide Monitoring Program annual report*, Canberra.

3. Productivity Commission, 2011, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2011*, Canberra.

4. University of New South Wales, 2013, *Stop the Violence: Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities in Australia*, Sydney.



**It is for children** growing up in families where domestic and family violence happens:

- 31 per cent of women who experienced current partner violence said that children had seen or heard the violence.
- Children's and young people's education and later employment prospects are harmed by domestic violence.

**It is for the business sector** who want to promote gender equality in their businesses and support women who have experienced violence:

- Violence against women and their children was estimated to cost the Australian economy \$13.6 billion in 2008-09. This was expected to rise to an estimated \$15.6 billion in 2021-22 if steps are not taken to address the issue.<sup>5</sup>

**It is for communities and community leaders** who want to take action to reject violence against women and their children:

- A 2009 survey found that community ideas of what domestic violence is have broadened since 1995, to include physical and sexual assault, threats of harm to family members, and psychological, verbal and economic abuse.<sup>6</sup>

**It is for governments** who want to make sure that women and their children who experience violent crime are supported, and perpetrators of violent crimes are punished.



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5. KPMG, 2009, *The Cost of Violence against Women and their children*, Safety Taskforce, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Australian Government.
  6. VicHealth, 2009, *National Survey on Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women 2009*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Carlton.

## How was the Second Action Plan developed?

To develop the Second Action Plan, we held national roundtables in February 2014, attended by around 100 experts and organisations. We also received over 50 written submissions.

In 2013, we also consulted with a range of people about particular actions under the National Plan, including: the Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children; Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety; and work that can be done to better respond to perpetrators of violence. The feedback we received from these conversations also helped to shape the Second Action Plan.

## Who's responsible for the Second Action Plan?

Ministers from all governments in Australia will work together to deliver the Second Action Plan. Because everyone is responsible for reducing violence, Ministers will do this in partnership with experts and people from the community.

## How can I help to shape the Second Action Plan?

During the first three years of the National Plan, a national panel of service providers and experts was set up to provide advice and raise awareness about the National Plan. This group played an important role in laying the groundwork for the first three years of the National Plan and setting the direction for future success.

Under the Second Action Plan, we are inviting a broader network of individuals and organisations to participate in shaping the National Plan and in reducing violence against women and their children. This includes experts and service providers as well as Australians who work in schools, doctors, sporting groups, businesses and the broader community.

We will do this through:

- National roundtables that bring together leaders from across a range of areas to develop ideas and solutions to progress work under the Second Action Plan, and to discuss what the National Plan should focus on in the future.
- Existing state and territory-based advisory groups to provide input to activities occurring under the Second Action Plan at the local level.
- Targeted consultations over the life of the Second Action Plan to help shape particular actions.
- National conferences draw together experts and community members to share information and raise awareness about 'what works' in reducing violence against women and their children.

We will also be telling you more about how we're progressing under the National Plan via:

- The National Plan Communications Strategy, which will bring together multiple elements of National Plan communications.
- Progress reports under the Second Action Plan that will monitor progress and keep the community informed.

## How can people find out more?

The Second Action Plan gives everyone an opportunity to get more involved in reducing violence against women and their children, and there will be plenty of opportunities to get involved over the coming years.

To find out more about the National Plan and the Second Action Plan, go to [www.dss.gov.au/nationalplan](http://www.dss.gov.au/nationalplan). An Easy Read version of the National Plan can be downloaded from the website.

If you are experiencing domestic and family violence, or have experienced sexual assault, seek support by calling:

- **000 if you, a child, or another person is in immediate danger**
- **1800RESPECT – the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service on 1800 737 732 or chat online at [www.1800RESPECT.org.au](http://www.1800RESPECT.org.au)**
- **Relationships Australia – 1300 364 277**
- **Mensline – 1300 789 978**

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