



Australian Government  
Department of Social Services

# National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children

## Our Plan for 2022–2032

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### Part 1 – What is our Plan about?



**Easy Read version**



## How to use this Plan



The Australian Government worked with the state and territory governments to write this Plan.

When you see the word 'we', it means all of these governments.



We wrote our Plan in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



This Easy Read document is a summary of our Plan.

This means it includes the most important ideas.

**Bold**  
Not bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 36.



You can ask for help to read our Plan.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of our land – Australia.



They were the first people to live on and use the:

- land
- rivers
- seas.



We recognise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who helped us write our Plan.

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We split our Plan into different parts.

This is Part 1 – What our Plan is about.



You can find the rest of our Plan on our website.

This includes where you can get help and support.

[www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence](http://www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence)

## What's in Part 1?

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## What is our Plan about?



This is Part 1 of our National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032.

We call it our Plan.



Many women and children experience violence at some point in their lives.



It will take a lot of work to end violence against women and children.



We need everyone in Australia to help us stop violence:

- before it starts
- from getting worse or happening again.



We also need everyone in Australia to help us support women and children:

- who experience violence
- to recover and heal after violence.



Most of the violence we want to end is the violence men use against women and children.

We use the words 'violence against women' to talk about this problem.



But other people also experience this violence.

And they experience this violence in different ways.



You can find out more about how violence affects different people in Part 2 of our Plan.

You can find it on our website.

[www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence](http://www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence)

## What is violence?

Violence includes when someone:



- hurts you
- scares you
- controls you.

It can also be called abuse.



There are different types of violence.

Every person's experience of violence is different.

For example, violence can be:



- physical
- emotional
- sexual
- financial.



Violence can happen:

- in person
- through technology.



You can find out more about the different types of violence in Part 2 of our Plan.

You can find it on our website.

[www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence](http://www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence)



You can also find out more on the 1800RESPECT website.

[www.1800respect.org.au/inclusive-practice/disability-support-toolkit](http://www.1800respect.org.au/inclusive-practice/disability-support-toolkit)

They have 3 Easy English booklets about different types of violence.

## Areas we want to focus on



There are some key areas we need to focus on to end violence against women and children.

We explain these areas on the following pages.

### Coercive control



**Coercive control** can include when someone controls:

- who you talk to
- where you go
- your money.

Someone might also:



- tell you they will hurt you
- make you feel bad
- keep you away from family and friends.



They might use the same behaviour over a long time.



Coercive control can include technology – like a mobile phone.

It can happen when someone uses technology to know:



- where you are



- who you talk to.



It can also include physical violence.

This can get worse over time.



Many women who experience violence also experience coercive control.

And the community knows a lot more about it now.

Some state and territory governments are also making laws to stop coercive control.



Governments across Australia are also making National Principles on coercive control.

These ideas will help us know what everyone must do to respond to coercive control.

And they will help governments when they make their own plans to address coercive control.

## Partner violence



Partner violence is when a person experiences violence from someone they're in a relationship with.



1 in 4 Australian women have experienced partner violence since the age of 15.



And about 1 in 13 men .



Partner violence affects people in a lot of different ways.

Partner violence makes people more likely to:

- get sick
- get a disability
- be killed.



Research shows that 1 woman is killed by their partner about every 10 days .



The risk of partner violence can get worse when someone:

- gets ready to leave their partner
- has just left their partner.

## Sexual violence and harassment



A lot of people in Australia have experienced:

- **sexual violence**
- **sexual harassment.**



Sexual violence is when someone:

- makes you do sexual things you don't want to do
- does something sexual to you that you don't want them to do.



Sexual harassment is when someone makes you feel uncomfortable when they:

- make sexual comments about you that you don't like
- act in a sexual way towards you.



23% of women in Australia have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

And 8% of men .



72% of Australians have experienced sexual harassment.



Some people are much more likely to experience sexual violence or harassment.

For example, more than 48% of **LGBTIQA+** people said they had been forced to do sexual things they didn't want to do.



The letters LGBTIQA stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning and asexual.



The '+' is for people who are part of the LGBTIQA+ community but don't talk about themselves using a word from this list.



Women with disability are also more likely to experience:

- sexual violence
- sexual harassment.

People can experience sexual violence and harassment:



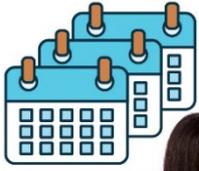
- where they live
- at work or school
- in the community
- online.

Sexual violence and harassment can:



- be very upsetting
- affect a person's health.

And it can take a long time to feel better.



Sometimes people who experience sexual violence or harassment wait a long time to report it.

Or they never report it.



People might not report sexual violence or harassment because they are afraid of what will happen.

They might think people:

- won't believe them
- will blame them.



Many people in the community have the wrong idea about sexual violence and harassment.



In 2017, research found that **Australians** thought **21% of women lie** when they report sexual violence.

But it's very rare for someone to lie about sexual violence.

## Pornography



**Pornography** is photos or videos of:

- someone's sexual body parts
- people doing sexual things.



Pornography can give people the wrong idea about relationships.



It often includes violence.

And it can make people think that it is okay to use violence against women.



Pornography can also give people the wrong idea about **consent**.

When you give consent, you tell someone you want to take part in something.



Consent is important.

But people in pornography often don't ask for consent.



Men who use a lot of pornography often believe things about sex that aren't true.

They are more likely to think women who experience sexual violence are to blame if they've had alcohol or drugs.

But you can't give consent if:



- you've had alcohol or drugs



- you are under 16 years old.



These men are also more likely to think women are only for having sex.

And not care about what women think or want.

If a young person uses pornography, it can affect their:



- mental health
- relationships
- behaviour.



They are also more likely to do sexual things the other person doesn't want to do.



Most people use pornography online or on a mobile device.

This makes it easy to find and use.

And hard to stop.

## Economic abuse

**Economic abuse** includes when someone:

- takes your money
- makes you pay for other people's things
- doesn't let you choose what you spend your money on.



It also includes when someone stops you getting a job so you don't have your own money.



This can make it hard for women who experience violence to leave their partner.



Economic abuse can keep going after a woman leaves their partner.

It can include:

- sending angry messages through the bank
- stopping someone from getting their money online.



Some women are more at risk of economic abuse because other people can make financial decisions for them.

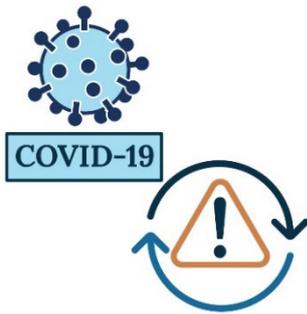
This includes:

- older women
- women with disability.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women can also experience different kinds of economic abuse.

For example, family members might expect them to share their money.



COVID-19 also affected how people experience economic abuse.

Research shows that almost 20% of women experienced economic abuse during COVID-19.

## Technology-facilitated abuse



People can also use technology as part of their violence.

We call it **technology-facilitated abuse**.



They might use a device, like a phone or computer.

Or they might use social media, like Facebook or Snapchat.



They might use technology to:

- see where someone is
- send them messages
- say mean things about them online.



They might:

- record someone without them knowing
- share photos or videos that they don't want other people to see
- control technology in their house.



When someone is using technology like this, it makes it hard for people to:

- talk to their friends and family
- get help when they need it
- be in control of their own life.



Technology-facilitated abuse can affect some people more than others.

For example, women with disability might rely on technology for day-to-day life.

Children can experience technology-facilitated abuse.



Most of the time this happens when their parents are not in a relationship anymore.

For example, a parent might use their child's devices to learn about what the other parent is doing.

People might not know when someone is using technology as part of their violence.



For example, a person might use a computer program that lets them read someone's messages without them knowing.



This can make it hard to keep women and children safe.

## What needs to change?



We need people in the community to understand different kinds of violence.



We also need to make sure people know:

- how to recognise different kinds of violence
- when someone is at risk of violence.

We all need to learn more about how to support people who are:



- at risk of violence
- experiencing violence.

This includes all kinds of violence.

## Our principles



**Principles** are important ideas we need to work on to reach our goal.



Our Plan has 6 principles.

They will help us work together to end violence against women and children.

### 1. Gender equality



We will have **gender equality** when people in Australia believe all genders are equal.

Your gender is what you feel and understand about who you are as a person.

It isn't about whether your body looks male or female.



Gender equality is a big part of ending violence against women and children.

Violence happens more often when women are not treated equally.

For example, when:



- women are forced to stay home to care for children



- not many women are leaders.

## 2. Lived experience

People with **lived experience** of violence:



- have experienced violence before



- know what life can be like for people who experience violence



- can tell their story to help others.



People with lived experience are an important part of making our Plan.



They might have used support services before.

So they know what we can do better.



We must include people with lived experience when we:

- work out how to fix problems
- set goals
- make plans to achieve these goals.

### 3. Closing the Gap



Governments must work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to end violence against women.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples know the best way to:



- support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children



- work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



They also know the best way to provide services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

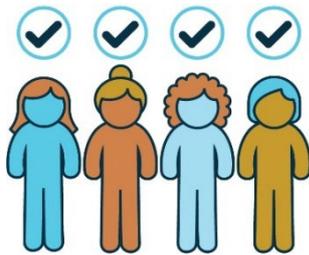
The Australian Government wrote a plan for how to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



It's called 'Closing the Gap'.

Our Plan will work to support these Closing the Gap goals.

#### 4. Focusing on what each person needs



Support services must think about what is best for each person when they experience violence.

They must focus on what each person wants.

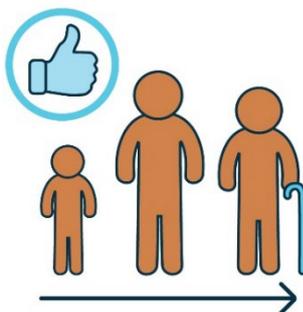


Different services must work together to support women and children who experience violence.

They must share information about what support works well.



This includes government services and community organisations.



These services must work well across a person's whole life to help them.

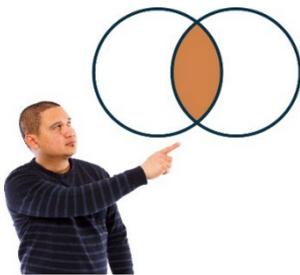
And they must not make things harder for them.

## 5. Intersectionality



Some people are treated differently because of:

- who they are attracted to
- their disability
- their age
- their background.



When people are treated differently because of more than one thing about them, we call it **intersectionality**.

For example, if they are a woman and they have a disability.



Women who experience intersectionality are more likely to experience violence.

And they're less likely to get support.



We must work with these women to understand:

- how they experience violence
- what support they need.



We explain more about intersectionality in Part 2 of our Plan.

You can find it on our website.

[www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence](http://www.dss.gov.au/ending-violence)

## 6. Making the right people responsible for their choices



Violence against women and children won't stop unless we focus on the people who use violence.



People who use violence must be responsible for their behaviour.

It's their job to stop using violence.

It's never the fault of the person who experienced violence.



Most violence against women doesn't just happen once.

It happens over a period of time.



The courts and law must work together to recognise violence that happens over a long time, like coercive control.



The courts and law must also protect people who experience violence.

## Our domains

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Our Plan has 4 areas that will help us stop violence against women and children.

We call them our domains.



Our first domain is called prevention.

Prevention is when you stop something before it happens.

To end violence against women and children, we must stop it before it starts.



Our second domain is called early intervention.

Early intervention is when we work out who:

- has experienced violence
- might be at risk of violence.

Then we make sure they get early support.

Early intervention is also about helping men and boys:

- learn how to treat women well
- ask for help to stop using violence.

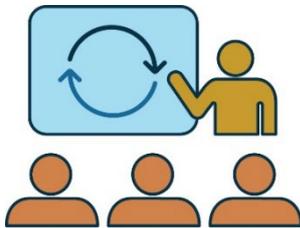




Our third domain is called response.

Our response is what we do after violence happens.

This includes how we support women and children who experience violence.

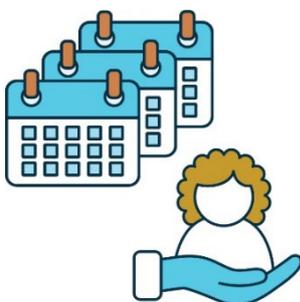


It's also about how we make sure people who use violence are responsible for their behaviour.



Our fourth domain is called recovery and healing.

Recovery and healing is how things can get better after something bad has happened.



Women and children must be able to get support for a long time after they experience violence.

It shouldn't just be for a short time.

## How will our domains work?



Our 4 domains must work together to make each other stronger.



Our domains will make our Plan work well over the next 10 years.



It's important that we work towards the goals:

- in each of our domains
- at the same time.



You can read about our domains and goals in Part 3 of our Plan.

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## Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



### **Coercive control**

Coercive control can include when someone controls:

- who you talk to
- where you go
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### **Consent**

When you give consent, you tell someone you want to take part in something.

### **Economic abuse**

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## Gender

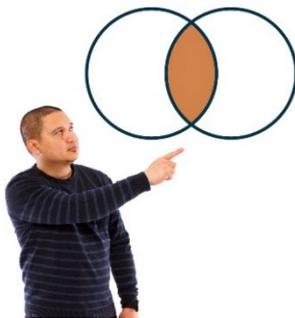
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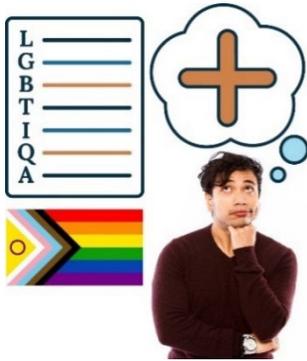
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For example, if they are both:

- a woman
- and
- have a disability.

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## Lived experience



People with lived experience of violence:

- have experienced violence before
- know what life can be like for people who experience violence
- can tell their story to help others.

## Pornography



Pornography is photos or videos of:

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## Principles

Principles are important ideas we need to work on to reach our goal.

## Sexual harassment



Sexual harassment is when someone makes you feel uncomfortable when they:

- make sexual comments about you that you don't like
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## Sexual violence



Sexual violence is when someone:

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## Technology-facilitated abuse



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