



EVERYDAY SEXISM:

**Girls' and young women's views
on gender inequality in Australia**

October 2016

Plan International Australia and Our Watch survey



CONTENTS

1. About this report	3
2. Foreword	4
3. Executive summary	5
4. About the survey	9
4.1 Methodology	9
4.2 Profile of respondents	9
4.3 Ethical considerations	10
5. Setting the context – gender equality in Australia	11
6. Measuring progress towards gender equality	13
6.1 Measuring progress towards the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals	13
6.2 Measuring progress towards gender equality in Australia and globally	14
7. Survey findings	15
7.1 Young women’s views on gender equality in Australia	15
7.2 Experiences of gender inequality where young women live,work, and study	18
7.3 Safety in public and digital spaces	20
7.4 Relationships and sex	27
8. Summary and recommendations	31
9. Appendix 1	33

1. ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Plan International Australia and Our Watch survey on young women's experiences of inequality was conducted by IPSOS Australia with 600 girls and young women aged 15-19 between December 2015 and February 2016. Plan International and Our Watch commissioned this survey to obtain a deeper understanding of young women's gendered experiences, their most pressing desires for change, and their insights into how to address gender inequality in Australia. Similar surveys have been conducted by Plan International in Nicaragua, Ecuador, Pakistan, and Zimbabwe.

This survey explored young women's experiences, perceptions and suggestions for change in three key areas:

- Everyday experiences of gender equality, inequality and sexism;
- Girls' and young women's safety – online, at home, school and work, and in relationships;
- Sexual health and reproductive rights.

About Plan and Our Watch

Plan International is one of the world's oldest and largest child rights development agencies. Plan works in over 70 countries around the world to tackle the root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice. Plan's flagship 'Because I am a Girl' campaign is working to create a world that values girls, promotes their rights and ends injustice.

Our Watch is a national, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the primary prevention of violence against women and their children. Its mission is to drive nationwide change in the culture, behaviours and gendered power imbalances that drive this violence. The organisation works to increase gender equality and respect in all aspects of everyday life, including in schools, workplaces, the media and sporting organisations and it does this through campaigns and social marketing, by developing and influencing public policy, and by providing support and leadership to prevention practitioners across diverse contexts and settings.

2. FOREWORD

As Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls, I see the impact gender inequality has on young women in our region and around the world: on their freedom to live safely within their communities, to complete their education, and to have choices about their lives.

In 2016, young women – no matter where they are in the world – do not have equality. This is a universal challenge and one to which we must respond with determination to bring lasting change.

Across the globe, more than 63 million girls are out of school¹. In South Sudan, girls are three times more likely to die in childbirth than to reach secondary school². In Bangladesh, young women aged between 15 and 19 are twice as likely to die from pregnancy and birth complications compared to women between the ages of 20 and 24³.

As the founding Chair of Our Watch, a national independent organisation working to prevent violence against women and their children, I know Australia is far from free of gender-based violence and discrimination.

One woman is killed almost every week in this country⁴ and one in four Australian women has experienced violence from a partner or ex-partner⁵. Women make up 83 percent of all recorded sexual assault victims, and girls and young women are disproportionately affected by sexual violence, with 60 percent of these victims aged 19 or under⁶.

Our Watch and Plan International Australia initiated this report to explore what young Australian women think about sexism and gender inequality, girls' and young women's safety, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The report compares these results to similar questions asked of young women in developing countries as part of a four country survey commissioned by Plan International.

Everyday sexism: girls, and young women's views on inequality in Australia reminds us that gender inequality is an ongoing global challenge, but it also shows that girls and young women have valuable suggestions to address the negative attitudes towards women that drive gender-based violence, discrimination and inequality.

Last year, Australia was among 193 countries that adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Global Goals, as they are known, set a 15 year timeline to eliminate gender inequality and end all violence against women and girls around the world. This is an ambitious agenda. To achieve it we need to understand both the dimensions and the causes of sexism and gender inequality, here in Australia and around the world. The voices and experiences of the young Australian women detailed in this report are a welcome contribution to that process.

I encourage you to read this report and join the conversations that it will inspire.

Natasha Stott Despoja AM
Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls and Chair of Our Watch

1 UNESCO eAtlas of Gender Inequality in Education, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <http://www.tellmaps.com/uis/gender/>

2 UNICEF, 'Maternal Mortality a big challenge for the world's newest nation' on Relief Web < <http://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan-republic/maternal-mortality-big-challenge-world%E2%80%99s-newest-nation>

3 International Centre on Research for Women et al (2012), Child Marriage in Southern Asia: policy options for action, <http://www.icrw.org/files/publications/CHILDMARRIAGE-F-13.pdf>

4 Australian Institute of Criminology, Homicide in Australia: 2010–11 to 2011–12: National Homicide Monitoring Program report, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/mr/21-40/mr23.html>

5 Cox, P. (2015) Violence against women: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey 2012, Horizons Research Report, Issue 1, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), Sydney.

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014), 4510.0 Recorded Crime - Victims, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite significant gains in gender equality in Australia in recent decades, inequalities for women persist across many areas of life, gender stereotypes remain powerful, and discrimination on the basis of sex still occurs in many contexts. Together, these gendered social structures, norms and practices restrict the ability of women and girls to participate fully and equally in society and prevent them from enjoying equal rights, opportunities and privileges with men.

Plan International Australia and Our Watch are working towards a world where girls and boys, women and men, throughout their childhood, adolescence and adulthood, are treated equally and given the same opportunities regardless of their gender. In 2016, we asked 600 young Australian women (aged 15 – 19) to share with us their experiences and perceptions of safety, discrimination and inequality, in their home lives, at school, in their relationships, at their present and future work places, and in the digital environment.

In September 2015, Australia signed onto an ambitious set of global goals and targets known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are aimed at addressing inequality, injustice and sustainability around the world. Goal Five sets out ambitious targets in relation to concerns gender equality, and includes the target to ‘end all violence against women and girls in public and private spheres.’ One of the key challenges that governments the world over have in reaching such gender equality targets is measurement, both in order to understand current dimensions and experiences of inequality, and to monitor and assess progress towards change. Gathering data on experiences and perceptions of sexism and inequality, safety, relationships and rights is an important addition to official statistics such as crime rates, which will only ever provide a limited part of the picture. Furthermore, young women have traditionally been under-represented in research on this issue – particularly qualitative research – which limits the capacity of policy makers and others to understand their experiences of and perspectives on gender inequality. This report responds to some of these challenges, and contributes to the building of a richer picture of this issue. This in turn can inform both policy and programming and the development of the broader data framework that will be needed to track our progress towards gender equality.

The Plan International Australia and Our Watch survey found that while most young women and girls believe that gender equality is improving in Australia, many – like young women in other parts of the world – still experience and perceive inequality, lack of safety or security, and disrespect in many contexts, including at home, on public transport and in public spaces, online, at work, and in their relationships. Encouragingly, the place where young women felt the most equal was at school. This report presents and explores these and other key survey findings.

The findings of this survey are concerning and show many areas needing attention. They tell us that young women are well aware of gender inequality and conscious of the way it shapes and limits their current lives and future opportunities and experiences.

But the good news is that these experiences of gender inequality do not need to continue. We can make Australia a safer and more equal place for young women.

Plan International and Our Watch believe that for young women and girls to feel and be safe and equal in every aspect of their lives, we must tackle the social norms, structures, attitudes and practices that contribute to gender inequality, if we are to create a future based on gender equality and respect.

Importantly, the survey also reveals that young women themselves are keen to challenge gender inequality and to articulate their own considered solutions. This suggests that while young women may not currently experience equality and respect and may not often be consulted on their experiences, they can be effective change agents and positive contributors to and participants in the broader movement to create communities based on equality and respect.

A summary of our key findings and recommendations for how to achieve this is overleaf.

Figure 1: Key survey findings

WE INTERVIEWED 600 YOUNG WOMEN & GIRLS ACROSS AUSTRALIA ABOUT THEIR GENDERED EXPERIENCES

MODELLING GENDER EQUALITY

Only 30% said that their brothers or boys always or often did their fair share of housework.

FREEDOM TO MOVE

23% agreed with the statement that “girls should not travel alone on public transport.”

ONLINE SAFETY

Seven out of ten thought young women are often bullied online.

EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN

One third agreed with the statement “it would be easier to get their dream job if they were male.”

STARTING RELATIONSHIPS ON THE SAME FOOTING

60% agreed that girls have an equal say in their relationships.

RIGHT TO THE NIGHT

Close to one third agreed with the statement that “girls should not be out in public places after dark.”

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

More than a third want more informative and practical safe-sex and healthy relationships education at school.

CONSTRAINED FUTURES

Lack for support for working parents, such as parental leave and affordable childcare, will impact their decision to have children.

SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS

51% agreed that girls are often pressured to take “sexy” photos of themselves and share them and 62% agreed that “girls often feel pressured to take part in sexual activities with their boyfriend or husband.”

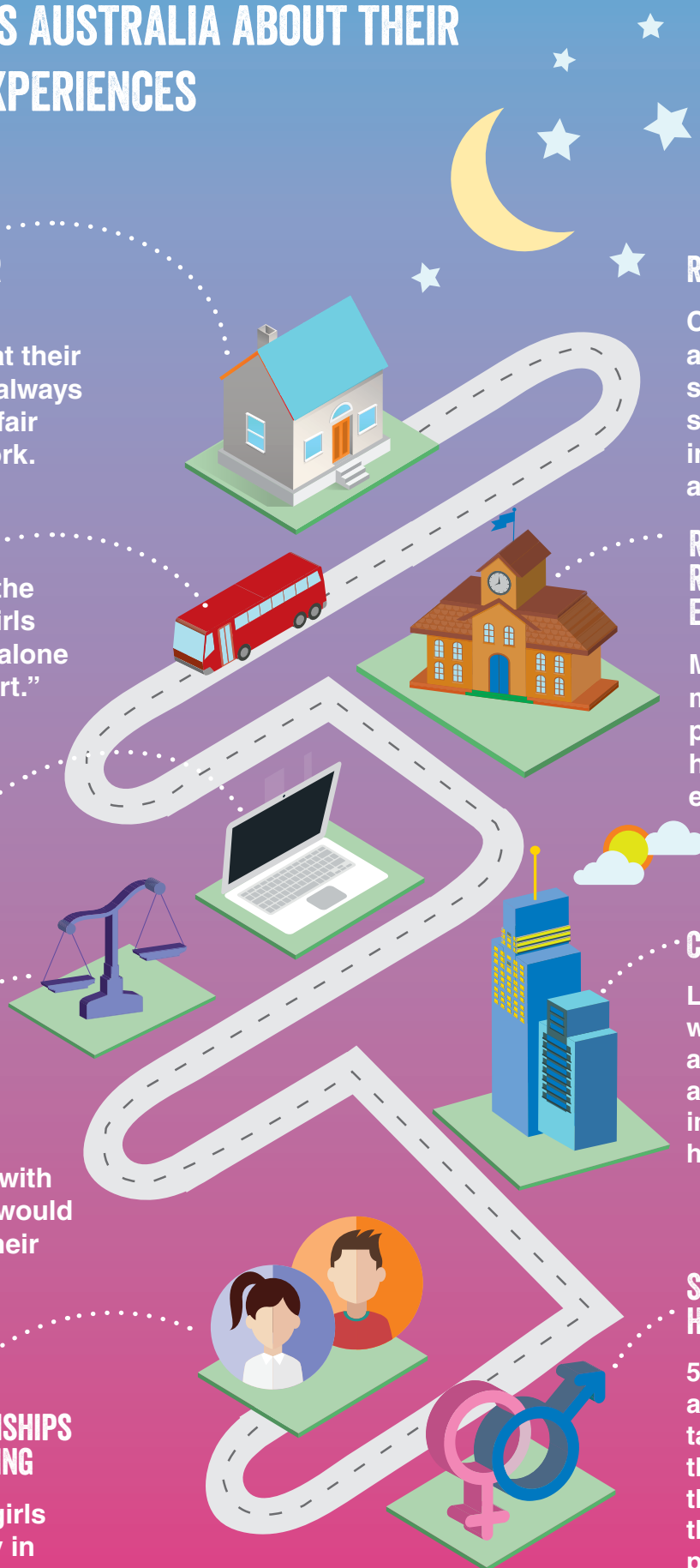


Figure 2: Summary of report recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

MODELLING GENDER EQUALITY

Support families and communities to reject sexist attitudes, challenge gender stereotypes and rigid and hierarchical gender norms, and model behaviours that promote equality.

[SDG 5.4](#), [SDG 5.1](#)

FREEDOM TO MOVE

Consult with young women to address their needs in urban and transport planning.

[SDG 11.7](#)

ONLINE SAFETY

Support schools, young people and their parents to address online bullying and harassment and promote ethical and respectful behaviours in online and digital environments.

[SDG 5.2](#)

CONSTRAINED FUTURES

Provide world-leading parental leave and accessible and affordable early childhood education and care.

[SDG 5.c](#)

STARTING RELATIONSHIPS ON THE SAME FOOTING

Through initiatives like The Line, support young women and men to have equal and respectful relationships.

[SDG 5.2](#)

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS

Invest in sexual health services and education for young women and men.

[SDG 5.6](#)

RIGHT TO THE NIGHT

Work with the media sector to ensure that reporting of violence against women – in both public and private spaces – is done in an ethical, accurate, and responsible way and challenges the culture of victim-blaming.

[SDG 5.2](#)

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

Support all education settings (from early childhood to university) to deliver 'whole school' approaches to respectful relationships education and comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education.

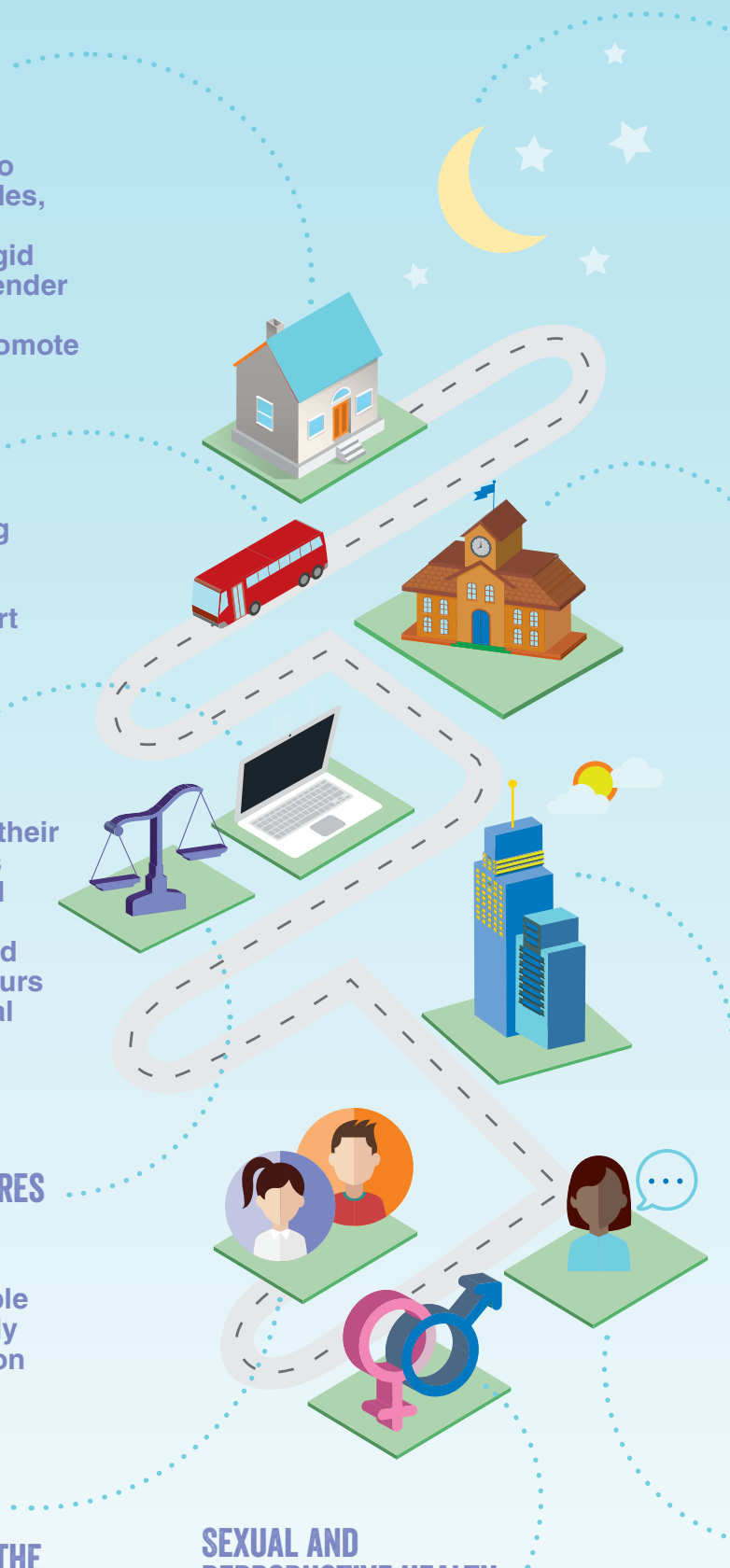
[SDG 4.7](#)

EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN

Promote gender equality in work, governance and politics through legislation, quotas or other initiatives to deliver equal representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles, mentoring and addressing unconscious bias.

LISTENING TO AND LEARNING FROM YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS

Improve data collection on the experiences and views of young women and girls including their perceptions of equality, safety, discrimination and inclusion.



4. ABOUT THE SURVEY

4.1 Methodology

This survey was commissioned by Plan International Australia and Our Watch and conducted by research company IPSOS Australia. The survey was conducted online between December 2015 and February 2016, and sought responses from 600 young women aged 15 to 19 from across Australia.

Respondents were evenly spread across all age cohorts by using an ISO 26362 and 20252 accredited online sampling system. This means that respondents were obtained from a number of different sources to make sure there was a mix of respondents. The random sample size of 600 gives a margin of error, at a 95 percent confidence level (meaning there is a 95 percent likelihood that the sample accurately reflects the attitudes of young women across Australia), of 0.04 to 4 percent.

4.2 Profile of respondents

All respondents identified as female and were aged between 15 and 19. Respondents were drawn from seven of the eight States and Territories across Australia (see Table 1).

Table 1: State/Territory of survey respondents

State /Territory	Number of respondents
New South Wales	198
Victoria	170
Queensland	110
South Australia	59
Western Australia	47
Tasmania	15
Northern Territory	1

Of the 600 respondents, 82 percent were currently in high school or university, 10 percent were employed and one percent were in apprenticeships⁷. Nine percent of respondents were born in countries other than Australia. Of the 600 surveyed, 14 respondents (two percent) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Of the 600 respondents, 217 (36 percent) were either 18 or 19 years old at the time of the survey. Respondents over the age of 18 were asked a series of questions about whether they were married, in a relationship or had children. Of these respondents, eight were married⁸ and 26 were living with a partner⁹. Of those aged 18 or over, eight had children¹⁰, with two respondents having given birth at the age of 12, one between the ages of 14 and 16 and two between the ages of 17 and 19¹¹.

4.3 Ethical considerations

Given the sensitive nature of some of the topics covered by the survey, steps were taken to ensure information was gathered ethically. Parental consent was sought from all participants aged 17 and under and the survey adhered to the ESOMAR¹² Code of Conduct for market research. The anonymity and privacy of respondents was assured and all respondents were informed that they could choose not to answer any questions that made them feel uncomfortable. Participants were also provided with the details of support organisations that they could contact if they were affected by any issues raised as part of the survey.

⁷ The remaining seven percent answered either 'don't know' or 'none of these'.

⁸ There was one 'prefer not to say' response.

⁹ There were two responses for 'prefer not to say'.

¹⁰ There were three responses for 'prefer not to say'.

¹¹ The remaining respondents 'preferred not to say'.

¹² ESOMAR is the essential organisation for encouraging, advancing and elevating market research worldwide. More information about ESOMAR and their Code of Conduct for Market Research can be found on their website: <https://www.esomar.org/about-esomar.php>

THE INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

Throughout this report, findings from our Australian survey are compared to results from similar country surveys commissioned by Plan International of young women living in Nicaragua, Ecuador, Zimbabwe, and Pakistan. This places the Australian survey findings within a global context, allowing comparisons between the gender experiences of young women and girls in Australia and those in other countries.

While these comparisons can be useful, it is important to remember that the surveys were conducted in five very different countries where the social, political, economic, historical, cultural, and religious contexts vary significantly. Numerous factors shape these different contexts, from the way issues of women's safety are reported in each country's media, to cultural and religious traditions concerning intimate relationships, through to the nature and extent of the education system in each country.

These differing contexts undoubtedly influence the way young women and girls respond to the survey questions in each country, particularly as the questions explore how respondents understand and experience their world.

For example, more Australian girls may report dissatisfaction about a given issue compared to girls in Pakistan, but this could potentially be explained by higher levels of awareness of that issue among girls in Australia or a greater sense of entitlement to their rights. Or it may relate to the different social norms and expectations about that issue in the two countries.

However, despite the different contexts in which they were undertaken, the surveys show that young women around the world have much in common. When asked to think about solutions to the challenges many young women face, similar themes emerged everywhere: education, communication, information, supportive families, communities and governments, and empowered girls.

5. SETTING THE CONTEXT – GENDER EQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA

It is easy to assume that women in Australia have achieved a high level of equality with men, given the significant gains in gender equality in Australia in recent decades. Indeed the survey findings reflect this, with the majority of respondents (68 percent) feeling they had more opportunities than their mothers' generation.

However, despite significant advances, inequalities for women and girls persist across many areas of life, gender stereotypes remain powerful, and discrimination on the basis of sex still occurs in many contexts. Together, these gendered social

norms¹³, structures and practices restrict the ability of women and girls to participate fully and equally in society and prevent them from enjoying equal rights, opportunities and privileges with men.

The impacts of inequality on Australian women over their lifetimes are wide reaching. The following statistics highlight some of the different dimensions of gender inequality that persist in Australia:

- The pay gap between women's and men's fulltime weekly earnings is 16.2 percent.¹⁴ This gap has significant impacts on women's lifetime earnings and financial security into their retirement. Men aged 55-64 have a much higher average superannuation balance than women the same age - \$321,993 compared with \$180,013 (in 2013 – 2014).¹⁵
- One in four Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner.¹⁶
- Whilst young women attain higher qualifications than young men (90.1 percent of women aged 20-24 have attained year 12 qualifications or above and 39.6 percent of women aged 25-29 have achieved a bachelor degree or above, compared to figures for men of 86.3 percent and 30.4 percent respectively), average graduate salaries for women are still 9.4 percent lower than for men.¹⁷
- Despite many women with children being in paid work, women continue to spend more than double the amount of time each day than men caring for children¹⁸. On average, men spent nearly twice as long as women on employment related activities, while women spent nearly twice as long as men on unpaid work.¹⁹
- Following the 2016 Australian election, women comprised just 32 percent of all federal parliamentarians.²⁰
- Women comprise just 23.4 percent of directors of the top 200 companies listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. Of these companies, 10 percent do not have a single woman on their board.²¹

13 Often also referred to as social norms or cultural norms, norms are the ideas, values or beliefs which are common or dominant in a society or community.

14 Workplace Gender Equality Agency (August 2016) Gender Pay Gap statistics, https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Gender_Pay_Gap_Factsheet_final.pdf

15 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Gender Indicators, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4125.0main+features6157Feb%202015>

16 Cox, P. (2015) Violence against women: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey 2012, Horizons Research Report, Issue 1, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), Sydney

17 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Gender workplace statistics at a glance (August 2016) https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats_at_a_Glance.pdf

18 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Gender Indicators, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4125.0main+features6157Feb%202015>

19 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Gender Indicators, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4125.0main+features6157Feb%202015>

20 Parliament of Australia, The gender composition of the 45th parliament, http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/FlagPost/2016/August/The_gender_composition_of_the_45th_parliament

21 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, Gender workplace statistics at a glance (August 2016) https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Stats_at_a_Glance.pdf

6. MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

This survey is distinguished from other population level studies on gender equality as it specifically captures the perceptions of girls and young women across Australia in relation to their perceptions of inequality, inclusion and safety. This data is a valuable addition to existing data. Together these diverse but complementary datasets can help provide a more comprehensive measure of whether improvements in Australia's laws, policies, practices, behaviours and norms are on track to deliver a gender equal future.

In September 2015, the Australian Government signed up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a set of internationally agreed goals and targets. The Agenda includes 17 ambitious global goals relating to ending poverty, protecting the planet, building just and inclusive societies, and promoting gender equality (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The Sustainable Development Goals



Each of these Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) includes specific targets designed to provide a useful road map for governments as they work towards the goals. For example, to work towards achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, countries must: end violence against women and girls both in public and private;

- recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through promoting shared responsibility within the household and the family;
- ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; and
- ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.²²

²² Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, A/RES/70/1 p.18.

These are just a few of the targets that need to be met to achieve gender equality and empowerment. The comprehensive list of goals and targets set out in the SDGs can be found [here](#).

The challenge for the Australian government – and indeed, all governments that have signed up to the Agenda for Sustainable Development – is to collect data that provides a comprehensive picture of the position of women and girls in Australia today and that can help chart progress towards 2030. This needs to go beyond traditional crime and health statistics and quantitative data to include qualitative information provided by women and girls themselves about their lived experiences. For example, indicators for measuring access to reproductive health should include information on women's and girls' experiences in making their own decisions about contraception and other aspects of their sexual and reproductive healthcare.²³

This kind of information can help identify barriers to achieving the global targets and goals as well as inform the kinds of solutions and changes to laws, policies and practices that will enable the kind of long-term social transformation that is needed to deliver genuine gender equality.

There is ground-breaking work being done at global, national and state levels that will assist Australia in developing a comprehensive national data collection framework in relation to gender equality. Globally, there is a joint initiative led by Plan International, the International Women's Health Coalition, KPMG, ONE Campaign and Women Deliver to create a global tracker to measure SDG implementation for girls and women. At a national level, Our Watch is developing a Guide to Prevention Monitoring that provides funders and policy-makers with a detailed account of how they might measure population-level change in eliminating violence against women and children.²⁴ Together with various data collection processes administered at the national and state/territory level, these contribute individual pieces towards the overall picture that we must develop if we are to improve our ability to accurately measure progress towards achieving equality, inclusion and safety for women and girls in Australia.

The data gathered in this report contributes to these broader processes, while also highlighting the value of collecting information directly from young women on their lived experiences of inequality. The report also enables comparisons of Australia's progress on the particular issues covered with that of other countries participating in the survey.

**“THIS REPORT
HIGHLIGHTED
THE VALUE OF
COLLECTING
INFORMATION
DIRECTLY FROM
YOUNG WOMEN
ON THEIR LIVED
EXPERIENCES
OF INEQUALITY”**

²³ The United Nations Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators have produced a global indicator framework. More information on the indicators can be found here: <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>. Suggested indicators for adolescent girls have been developed by the Girl Declaration Joint Advocacy Group, Tracking Progress for Adolescent Girls: Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. http://www.equalitynow.org/sites/default/files/Core_2_0_Adolescent_Girl_Indicators_for_the_SDGs.pdf.

²⁴ Our Watch, The Guide to Prevention Monitoring, expected late 2016.

7. SURVEY FINDINGS

7.1 Young women's views on gender equality in Australia

Many young women perceive a gender unequal Australia

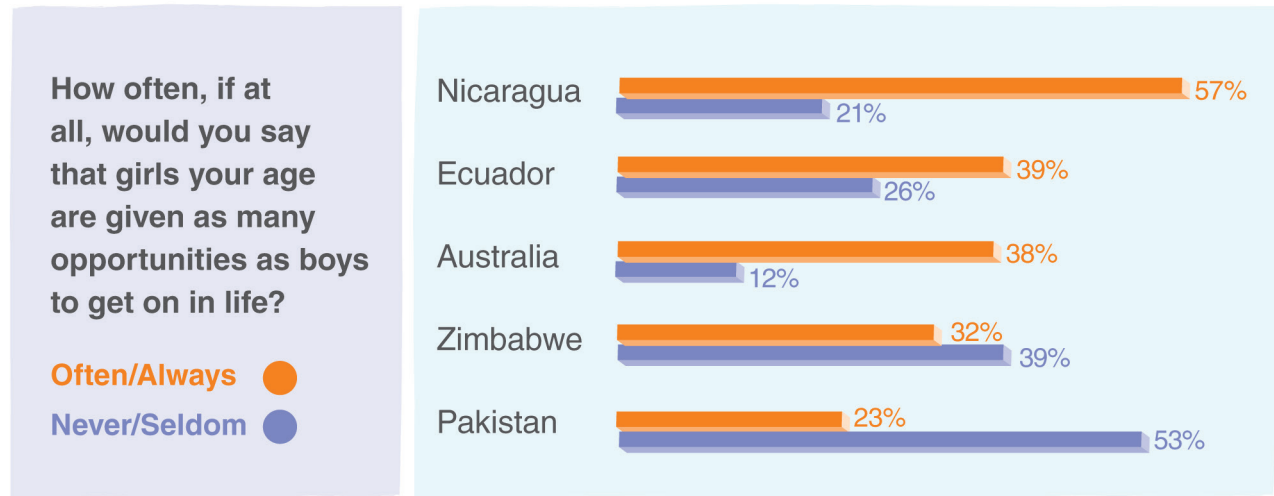
While they perceive substantial gains to have been made in the last century for gender equality in Australia, young women continue to perceive high levels of inequality in society between men and women. More than two thirds of the girls and young women surveyed (69 percent) believed “inequality between men and women (including girls and boys) is still a problem in Australia today”. Fewer than one in ten respondents (eight percent), believed that they were always treated equally to boys. Close to two thirds (61 percent), felt that they were only sometimes, seldom or never “treated as boys’ equals.” Thirty-one percent believed they were often treated as boys’ equals, and one percent were not sure.

The gendered barriers young women experience in reaching their full intellectual potential were evident, with more than half of the respondents (56 percent) agreeing with the statement that girls are sometimes, seldom or never “valued for their brains and ability more than their looks.” Only one in six (16 percent) felt they were always valued for their brains and ability. Furthermore, over half of those surveyed agreed with the statement that they seldom, sometimes, or never receive the same opportunities as boys to “get on in life,” with only 14 percent stating that they felt they always received the same opportunities.

So, how do girls’ and young women’s perceptions and experiences of inequality in Australia compare to those in other countries? According to the survey results, Australia lags behind both Nicaragua and Ecuador, where girls and young women identified higher levels of equality. For example, in Nicaragua 57 percent of respondents stated they are often or always “given as many opportunities as boys” compared to 38 percent in Australia (Figure 4). However Australia performs better on this question than some other countries – for example, only 23 percent of respondents in Pakistan believed they had the same opportunities as boys.

‘MORE THAN TWO THIRDS OF THE GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN SURVEYED BELIEVED INEQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN (INCLUDING BOYS AND GIRLS) IS STILL A PROBLEM IN AUSTRALIA TODAY’

Figure 4: The international picture: perceptions of girls' and boys' life opportunities



Young women believe there have been improvements towards gender equality

The survey revealed that most girls and young women believe that gender equality is improving in Australia. Sixty-seven percent agreed that young women and girls are “becoming more valued as equal members of the community”, with a similar proportion agreeing that young women and girls “now have more opportunities in life than their mothers.”

While the structural and societal opportunities for young women and girls may be perceived as improving, there is less optimism and more division in relation to the question of everyday sexism and sexist attitudes. Two out of five respondents (42 percent) agreed that “sexist attitudes in Australia are decreasing,” while 25 percent disagreed. A sizeable proportion were unsure about this issue, with thirty-one percent neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

The division and ambiguity in the responses to this question suggests there is some way to go in shifting everyday sexism and sexist attitudes in Australia, and a need for change at all levels of society in order to achieve genuine and lasting gender equality. While on one hand, young women perceive increasing equality at the structural level in Australian society, however, young women’s response to the survey question regarding the prevalence of ‘sexist attitudes in Australia’ suggests a notable degree of gender inequality continues to pervade attitudes and norms at the community level. The prevalence of sexist attitudes in Australia is well documented. For example, another Plan International survey from 2014 found that 75 percent of young women and girls reported being subjected to sexist comments, a 2013 national survey of community attitudes revealed that 27 percent of Australians agreed with the statement “men make better political leaders” and 19 percent agreed that “men should take control in relationships and be the head of the household.”²⁵

²⁵ VicHealth (2014) Australians’ attitudes to violence against women: Findings from the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey, Victorian Health Promotion

Young women are supportive of gender equality but many do not identify as feminists

While the majority (69 percent) of the young women surveyed identified gender inequality as an ongoing problem in Australia, fewer than half of these identified as feminists. Less than a third (30 percent) of all respondents agreed (or tended to agree) with the statement “I am a feminist”. A similar proportion (27 percent) did not identify as a feminist, while just over a third (36 percent) neither agreed nor disagreed, and seven percent did not know.

A desire for equality, combined with a reluctance to identify as a feminist, is consistent with the results of other surveys and is sometimes referred to as ‘hidden feminism’. For example, a UK study of adult men and women found that over two thirds of respondents supported equality for men and women, but resisted the label of ‘feminist’. This apparent contradiction has sometimes been attributed to ‘anti-feminist backlash’²⁶, which has dissuaded people from explicitly identifying with feminism. However, there is a suggestion that a willingness to associate with feminism is improving, as a number of high profile men and women embrace the term. In recent years, diverse celebrities including Beyoncé, Emma Watson, Chris Hemsworth, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Oprah Winfrey, as well as politicians such as Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull and US President, Barack Obama, have publicly and explicitly identified as feminists. Their influence may shape the way women and girls respond to this term in future.

Overwhelmingly, young women feel intimate partner violence is not acceptable

In Australia, one in three women aged over 15 will experience physical violence in their lifetime, one in four will experience such violence at the hands of a current or former partner and one in five will experience sexual violence²⁷. Given the prevalence of violence against women, the survey included explorations of the young women’s attitudes to this issue.

Reflecting the findings from population-level studies conducted in Australia, the overwhelming majority of respondents expressed strong opposition to all forms of intimate partner violence, with 93 percent rejecting the statement that it is “sometimes acceptable for a boy to hit or use violence against his girlfriend” as well as the suggestion that “women should put up with violence from their partner or husband in order to keep their family together”. Only four percent of respondents agreed with these statements.

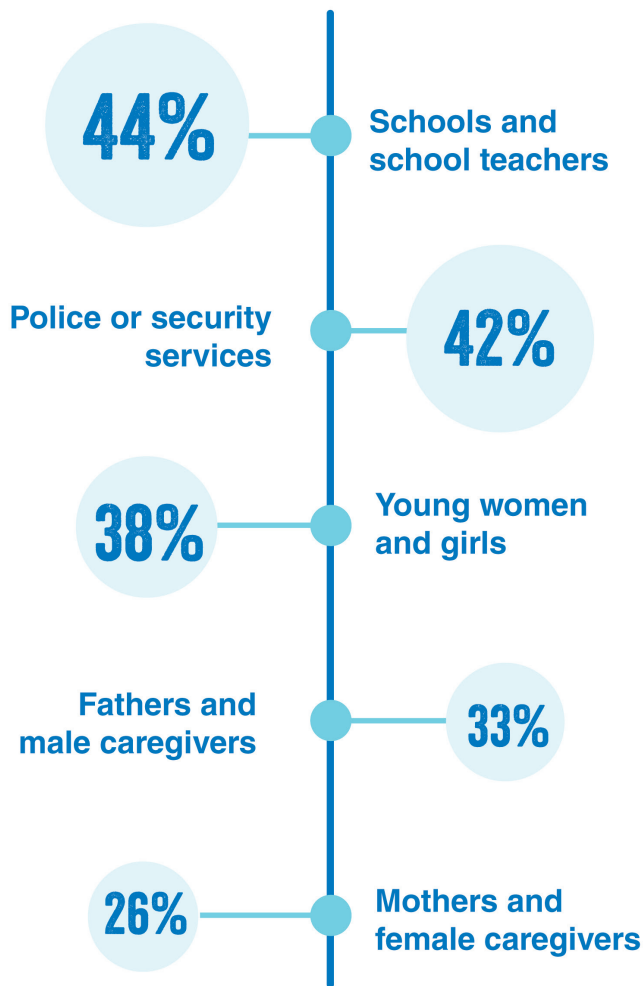
Foundation, Melbourne, Australia.

26 Fawcett Society (15 January 2016), We are a nation of ‘hidden feminists’, <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Fawcett-Press-Release-Hidden-Feminists-2016.pdf>

27 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) Personal Safety, Australia 2012, Cat. No. 4906.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

Young women recognise themselves as change agents but call for wider action

When asked who should be responsible for improving the current situation for young women in the area in which they live, young women called for action from a range of community groups, institutions, and people – including ‘girls and young women themselves’. Asked to choose up to three groups from the following list, respondents attributed responsibility widely:



MORE THAN A THIRD (36 PERCENT) SAID THEIR BROTHERS OR OTHER BOYS SELDOM OR NEVER DID THEIR EQUAL SHARE OF HOUSEWORK.

7.2 Experiences of gender inequality where young women live, work, and study

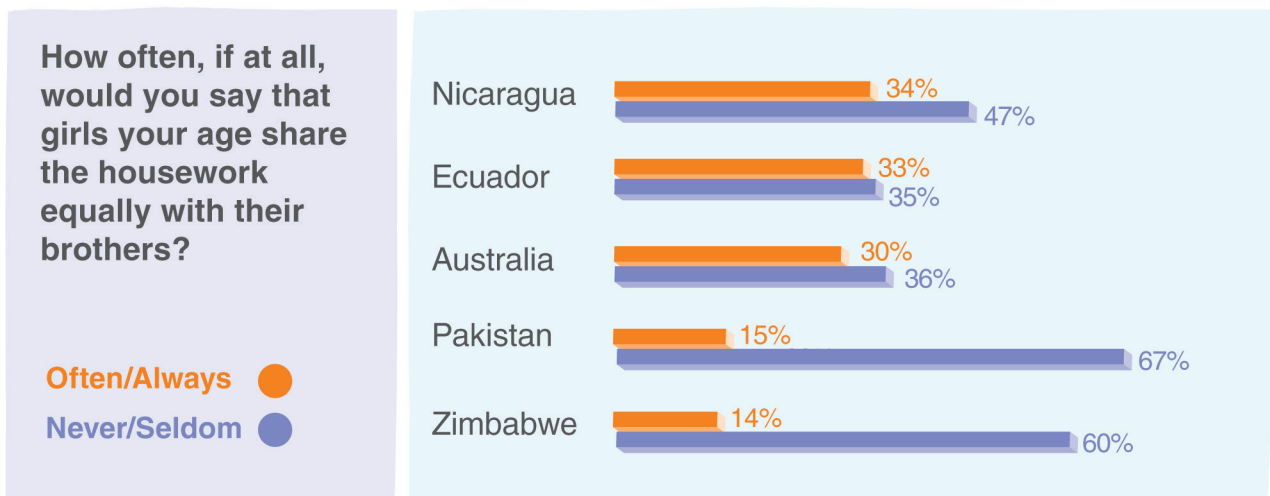
Unequal share of household chores for young women

A majority of the young women surveyed believe their male peers are not pulling their weight when it comes to housework. More than a third (36 percent) said their brothers or other boys seldom or never did their equal share of housework. Only 30 percent said that their brothers or other boys always or often did their fair share, with the other 30 percent stating they sometimes did their fair share.²⁸

²⁸ Six percent reported they ‘did not know’.

Internationally, girls and young women in Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Nicaragua rated their equality in this area lower than their Australian counterparts (Figure 5).

Figure 5: The international picture: gender equality in housework



Educating for equality

Australia has long been an international leader in gender equality in education and over the last decade has consistently ranked as the number one country in closing the gender gap in education²⁹. The gender equal nature of education in Australia was reflected in the survey, with a large proportion of young women (87 percent) stating their parents always or often encouraged them to succeed at school just as much as boys. The majority of respondents (86 percent) also agreed that young women benefit from further education (for instance university or TAFE) just as much as boys. These findings reflect the results from a 2013 Australian survey which found only five percent of those surveyed agreed that “university education is more important for boys”³⁰.

However, in our survey close to one in four young women (24 percent) disagreed that their teachers would take action if sexist name calling was taking place at their school, suggesting that schools continue to be a place where harmful acts of ‘everyday sexism’ occur.

Gender still a barrier in the workplace

Young women reported mixed perceptions of women’s experiences in the workplace. Forty-one percent of those surveyed agreed that girls and young women feel respected and valued in their workplace, while 17 percent disagreed.

²⁹ The World Economic Forum (2015), Global Gender Gap Report, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=AUS>

³⁰ VicHealth (2014) Australians’ attitudes to violence against women: Findings from the 2013 National Community Attitudes towards Violence Against Women Survey, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne, Australia.

There was also a high level of ambivalence, with 42 percent neither agreeing nor disagreeing or preferring not to say, which may reflect the limited work experience of survey respondents, given their age.

Many young women believed that their gender is (or will be) a barrier to their participation in the workforce. One-third of those surveyed (33 percent) agreed with the statement that it would be “easier to get my dream job if I were a male.”

When reflecting on their future opportunities and decisions around working and becoming parents, 41 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that “lack of supports for working parents (like parental leave and affordable child care) will impact on their decision whether or not to have children in the future,” while 23 percent disagreed.

Young women give their solutions to improve their status and wellbeing

Young women were asked what they would do to change community behaviours and attitudes so that “girls can feel safer and more valued in their families, homes and intimate relationships.” More than a third of young women said they would introduce more school-based education and public awareness campaigns that promoted gender equality, respectful relationships or women’s right to live a life free of harassment and abuse.

Many respondents also called for male perpetrators of violence to be held more accountable for their behaviour. Several suggested setting up support groups to provide a safe and confidential environment for girls and young women to discuss the challenges they face.

7.3 Safety in public and digital spaces

The right to movement in public places and on public transport

For some young women, concerns about personal safety are curbing their free movement in public spaces. Almost one third of respondents thought that “girls should not be out in public places after dark”³¹ and over one in five (23 percent) thought that “girls should not travel alone on public transport”.³²

The results suggest that many girls and young women are internalising widely-held beliefs that public places are unsafe for them, particularly after dark, and that it is their responsibility to modify their behaviour in response.

CLOSE TO ONE IN FOUR YOUNG WOMEN (24 PERCENT) DISAGREED THAT THEIR TEACHERS WOULD TAKE ACTION IF SEXIST NAME CALLING WAS TAKING PLACE AT THEIR SCHOOL, SUGGESTING THAT SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO BE A PLACE WHERE HARMFUL ACTS OF ‘EVERYDAY SEXISM’ OCCUR.

³¹ 44 percent disagreed with the statement.
³² Half of the respondents disagreed.

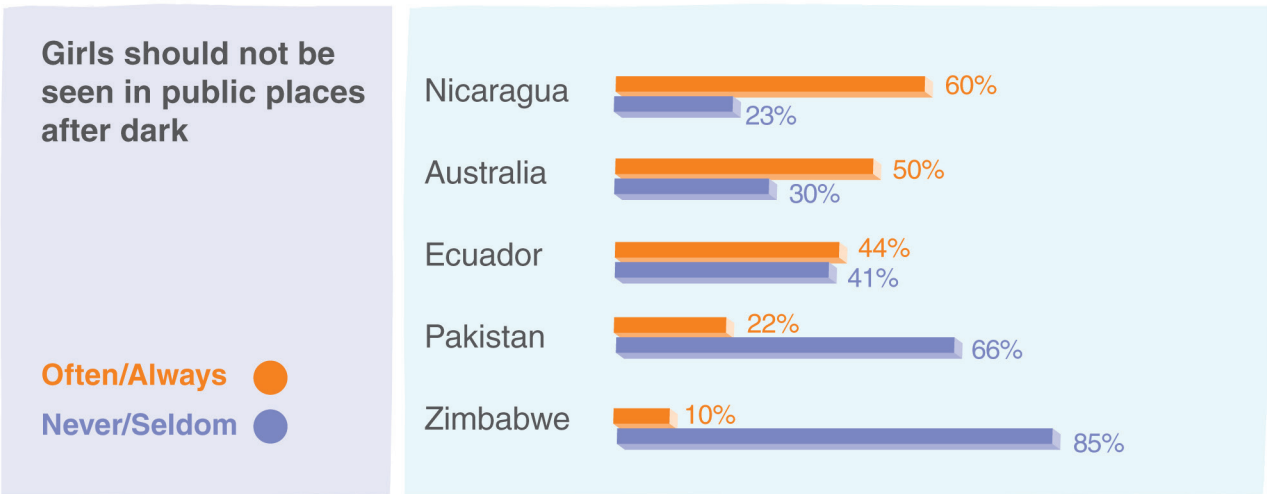
This perception, along with a pervasive culture of victim-blaming – where it is common to ask “why was she out after dark?” and “what was she wearing?” following incidents of violence or sexual harassment against women and girls in public places - is unfairly shifting attention, responsibility and blame away from the perpetrators of these crimes and onto women and girls themselves. Such perceptions are limiting the ability of girls and young women to move freely in public places and participate in activities outside the home.

Survey results confirmed that Australian young women and girls think that sexual harassment in public spaces is both a serious issue and should never be excused or justified. The majority of respondents (63 percent) disagreed with the statement “it is not a big deal if guys cat-call girls (for example, wolf-whistle or make sexual comments) on the street”, with only three out of ten respondents agreeing. The same proportion (63 percent) also disagreed with the statement “if a girl wears revealing clothing she is at least partly responsible for unwanted attention or harassment”. However, with 17 percent of respondents agreeing with this, it is evident that further work to address the culture of victim blaming is needed, with both young women and young men.

Mobility and safety in public spaces and the use of public transport to get to school was also an issue explored by the survey. Worryingly, 42 percent of young women disagreed with the statement that “girls always feel safe on the way to school,” while only 26 percent agreed.

“THIS PERCEPTION [THAT PUBLIC PLACES ARE UNSAFE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS], ALONG WITH A PERVASIVE CULTURE OF VICTIM-BLAMING UNFAIRLY SHIFTS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY IN PUBLIC PLACES AWAY FROM THE PERPETRATORS OF CRIMES AND ONTO WOMEN AND GIRLS.”

Figure 6: The international picture: Girls should not be seen in public places after dark



Young women don't experience digital equality nor feel safe online³³

The young women surveyed are one of the first generations to go through adolescence and parts of their childhood with social media and personal technology such as smart phones as a normal part of their everyday life. While this technology brings many benefits, there is an emerging understanding of its negative dimensions, particularly where it is used to perpetrate digital harassment and abuse. Further, recent research has found that the nature and impacts of such abuse differ in gendered ways. For example, women are significantly more likely to be the target of digital sexual harassment, and they are overwhelmingly targeted by male perpetrators,³⁴ and women receive twice as many death threats and threats of sexual violence as men online.

This emerging picture of gendered online harassment and abuse is further confirmed by the survey, which suggests that the discrimination, inequality and harassment experienced by young women in the physical environment extends to online and digital experiences. Seven out of ten survey respondents agreed that girls are often bullied online.³⁵

Sexual harassment in this context also appears common, with over half (51 percent) the young women surveyed agreeing that “girls are often pressured to take “sexy” photos of themselves and share them”. Such demands are almost always unwanted and uninvited; 82 percent of the young women disagreed that it is “acceptable for a boyfriend to ask for a naked photo”, while only six percent thought this acceptable. Further, over half the respondents (58 percent) agreed that girls “often receive uninvited or unwanted indecent or sexually explicit material such as texts, video clips and pornography.”

Despite these perceptions among young women that online bullying, abuse and harassment are common, a concerning 44 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that “girls feel comfortable reporting incidents of abusive online behaviour” with only 28 percent agreeing. Academic research suggests students who are cyberbullied are less likely to seek help than students who were victimised in more traditional ways.³⁶

In response to the digital discrimination and abuse experienced by young women, several respondents called for better education about online behaviour and safety and multiple strategies to combat cyberbullying through for example, better policing, monitoring, and changes to legislation.

³³ As this was a new question introduced by Plan Australia and Our Watch, and not included in the original Plan International survey, comparable data from other countries is not available.

³⁴ Powell, A., & Henry, N. (2015), Digital Harassment and Abuse of Adult Australians, RMIT University, Melbourne.

³⁵ The Guardian (8 March 2016), Online harassment of women at risk of becoming the ‘established norm’ survey finds, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/mar/08/online-harassment-of-women-at-risk-of-becoming-established-norm-study>

³⁶ Dooley, J. J., Gradinger, P., Strohmeier, D., Cross, D., & Spiel, C. (2010). Cyber-Victimisation: The Association between Help-Seeking Behaviours and Self-Reported Emotional Symptoms in Australia and Austria. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 20(02), 194-209, 196.

The survey findings suggest that the structural inequality young women experience in the physical environment is mirrored in digital and online environments, and that these strategies (and more) are a necessary response to the alarming levels of abuse and harassment that young women are experiencing online.

What young women said about building safer, equal and more respectful digital environments:

“[I want] more online and social media monitoring with the right authority and to offer protection for all girls.”

“[I want] better understanding of girls today, better communication especially with online bullying and stuff, we need to be better taught that if we are respectful and have better attitudes we can feel safer and have better relationships, and less pressure about us growing up.”

“[I want] more training at an earlier age within schools to explain the dangers of online predators ... by actually having people who have experienced it talking to [students] so they know it is real and can happen.”

Disclosing and reporting sexual assault

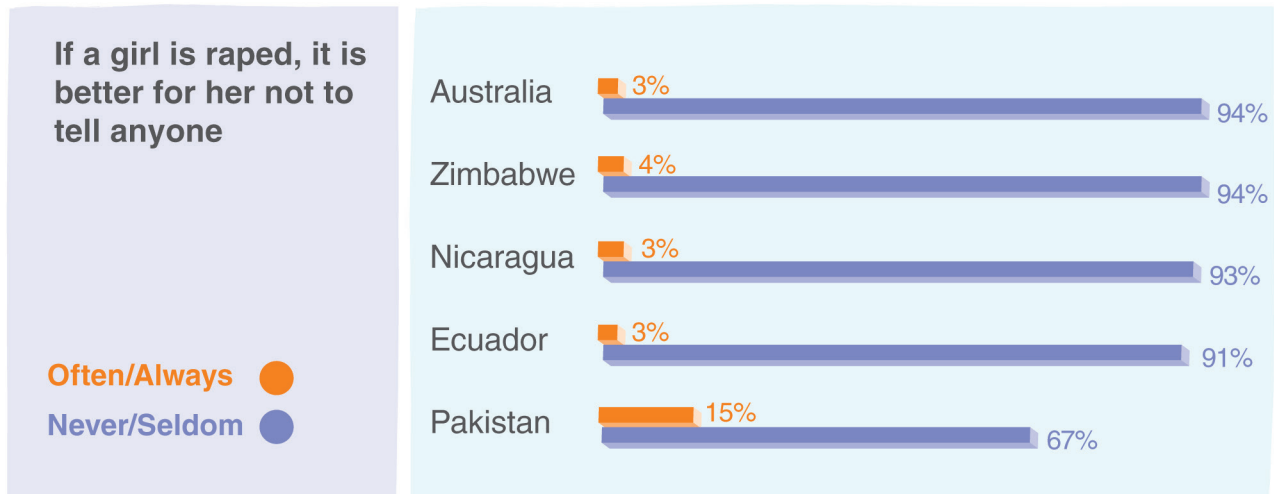
Most young Australian women surveyed see disclosing and reporting sexual assault and rape as important, with the vast majority of respondents (94 percent) disagreeing with the statement that “If a girl or woman is raped, it is better for her to not tell anyone.”

Young women’s perceptions about disclosure vary widely in different countries. The companion surveys conducted in Nicaragua, Ecuador and Zimbabwe for example, found similarly high proportions as in Australia disagreeing that a girl or woman should not tell anyone if she is raped. By contrast, in Pakistan, only 67 percent of respondents disagreed with this statement, with 15 percent agreeing that “it is better for her not to tell anyone”.

Despite a strong general belief in disclosure, or ‘telling someone’, Australian survey respondents had a low level of confidence in the quality of police responses to sexual assault, with less than half (44 percent) agreeing that “if a girl is raped, the police will do a good job helping her”.³⁷

³⁷ 14 percent disagreed while 28 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. As this was a new question introduced by Plan Australia and Our Watch, and not included in the original Plan International survey, comparable data from other countries is not available.

Figure 7: The international picture: If a girl or woman is raped, it is better for her not to tell anyone



It is heartening to see a majority of the young women viewing disclosure of sexual assault as important, which suggests a strong belief amongst this group that as a serious crime, sexual assault should be reported to someone. However, whether this implies a belief in the need for a formal report to police is less clear, given the low level of confidence respondents have in the likelihood of women receiving effective support from police.

Sexual assault and harassment have been historically under-reported and this continues to be the case in Australia.³⁸ The reasons for this are complex and can include fears of re-stigmatisation, a culture of victim-blaming in the judicial system and media/popular culture causing women to feel they may not be believed, and a perception that there will be no response from authorities making reporting seem futile. The lack of confidence in an appropriate police response that was expressed by a majority of respondents to this survey suggests there is still critical work to be done in this area to close the gap between a widespread belief in the necessity of disclosure generally, and low levels of formal reporting to police.

³⁸ Findings from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2012 Personal Safety Survey revealed that of the women who had been sexually assaulted by a man in the last 12 months, only one in five (19 percent) contacted the police about their most recent incident. Cox, P. (2015) Violence against women: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey 2012, ANROWS Horizons Research Report No 1, Sydney: ANROWS.

Young women give their solutions for improving safety

Young women’s solutions for helping prevent women and girls from experiencing violence or abuse in the area where they live were sought. Suggested solutions included better education – both of the public and for children and young people in schools – about gender equality, respect and girls’ rights to be and feel safe. When asked “What three things could help prevent women and girls from experiencing violence or abuse in the area where you live?”, respondents prioritised in order of importance:

PERCENTAGE
OF RESPONDENTS

72%

PROMPTED
SUGGESTIONS

Girls and boys all having access to information and training about what abuse and violence looks like and how to build equal and respectful relationships

PERCENTAGE
OF RESPONDENTS

58%

PROMPTED
SUGGESTIONS

Parents and people who work with young people (like teachers, coaches etc) actively promoting gender equality and challenging sexist attitudes about women and girls

PERCENTAGE
OF RESPONDENTS

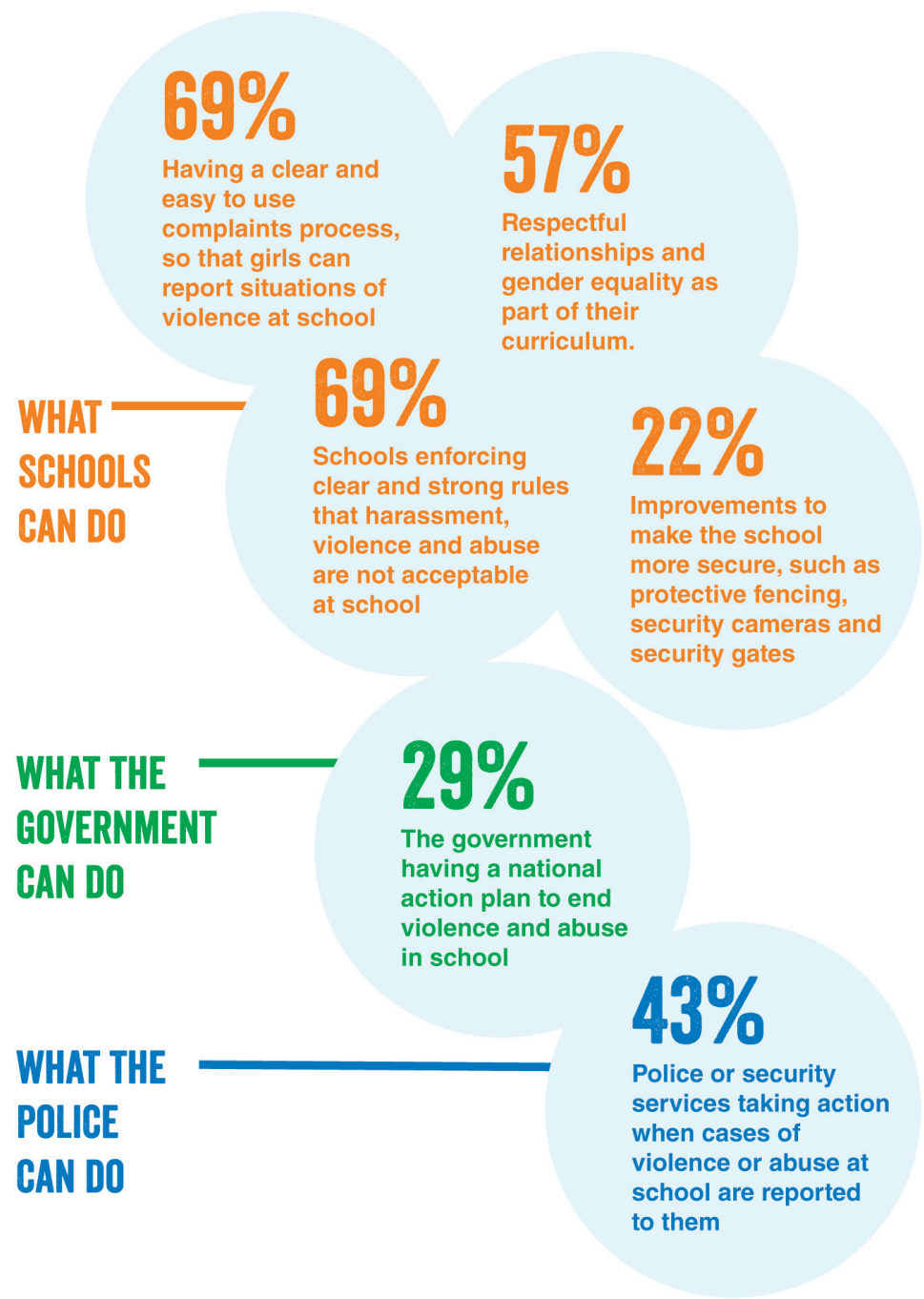
46%

PROMPTED
SUGGESTIONS

Families and communities valuing girls the same as boys and challenging sexist attitudes about women and girls

Safety at school

When asked for “suggestions of things that could protect girls from abuse or violence at school”, respondents stressed the importance of schools establishing and enforcing clear rules against harassment, violence and abuse, coupled with providing access to clear and user-friendly complaints processes.

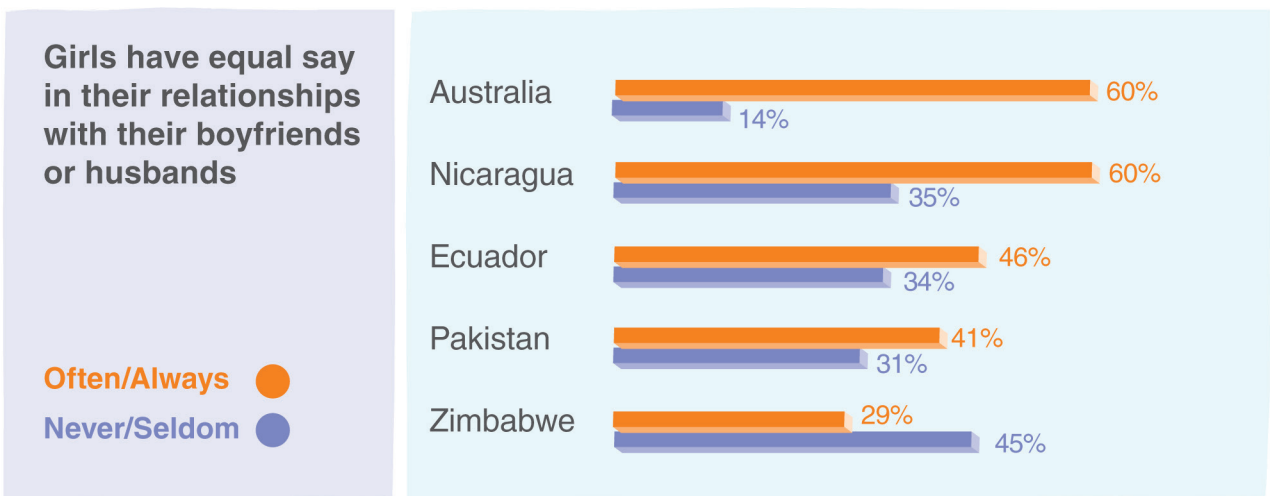


7.4 Relationships and sex

Ambiguity about equality in decision making in relationships

Compared to their counterparts in Zimbabwe, Pakistan and Ecuador, a greater proportion of Australian young women (62 percent) felt that “girls have an equal say in their relationships with their boyfriends or partners”, while 15 percent disagreed.³⁹

Figure 8: The international picture: equality in intimate relationships



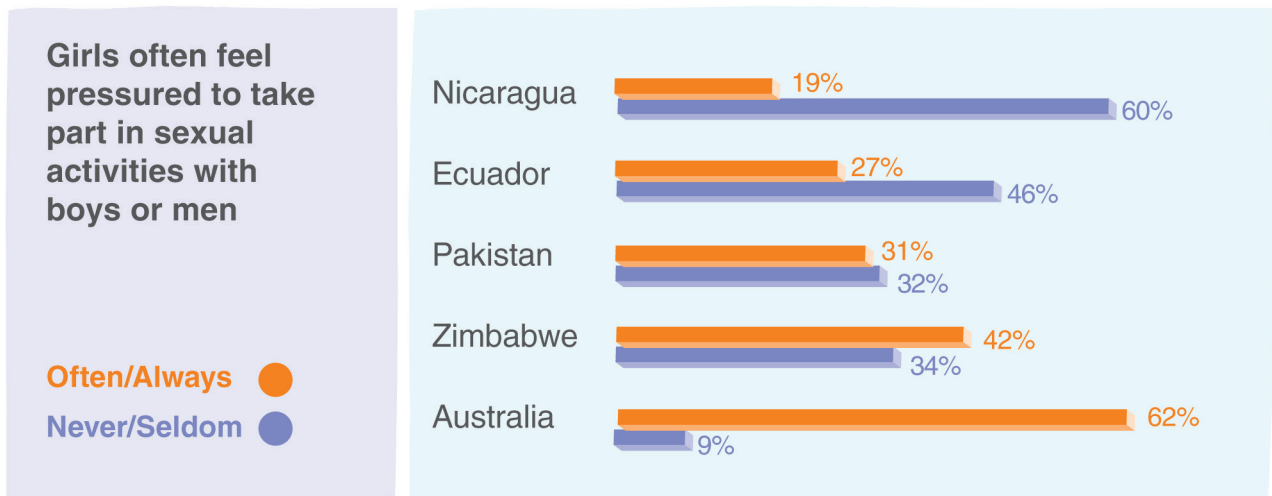
However, this general view was not entirely supported by responses regarding young women’s agency and experiences in determining sexual activity with boyfriends or partners. While over half of young women surveyed (52 percent) agreed that “girls felt confident setting limits on what they want to do sexually with their boyfriends/dates”, one in five (21 percent) disagreed, suggesting that there is still a substantial group of young women who do not feel confident to set their own sexual limits⁴⁰.

Compared to their international counterparts in the companion surveys, a greater proportion of young Australian women felt that girls have an equal say in their relationships with their boyfriends or partners. However, Australian young women were more likely to feel that “girls often feel pressure to take part in sexual activities with boys or men” (see Table 6). This may reflect the very different cultural norms associated with dating among young people and the different degrees to which sex before marriage is socially acceptable or expected in the different countries surveyed.

³⁹ 19% neither agreed nor disagreed and 4% were unsure.

⁴⁰ One limitation of this survey is that it assumed binary definitions of sex and gender and only included questions about heterosexual intimate relationships. Plan International and Our Watch recommend that any future surveys and/or research undertaken with young women, especially where these concern experiences of gender inequality, be more carefully designed to be inclusive of the experiences of young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex, those who identify with non-binary expressions of sex and/or gender, and those who have diverse relationship experiences.

Figure 9: The international picture: perceptions of pressure to take part in sexual activities with boys or men



Access to sexual health information and resources

When it came to issues of sexual health, just over half (55 percent) of respondents felt they are given good information about sex, pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections, with a smaller but still significant 15 percent disagreeing. Similarly just over half (52 percent) agreed that “girls have access to and can afford contraceptives to avoid pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections”⁴¹. A similar proportion (51 percent) agreed that they “had a professional they could talk with confidentially about their sexual health” while 18 percent of girls disagreed or strongly disagreed with this.

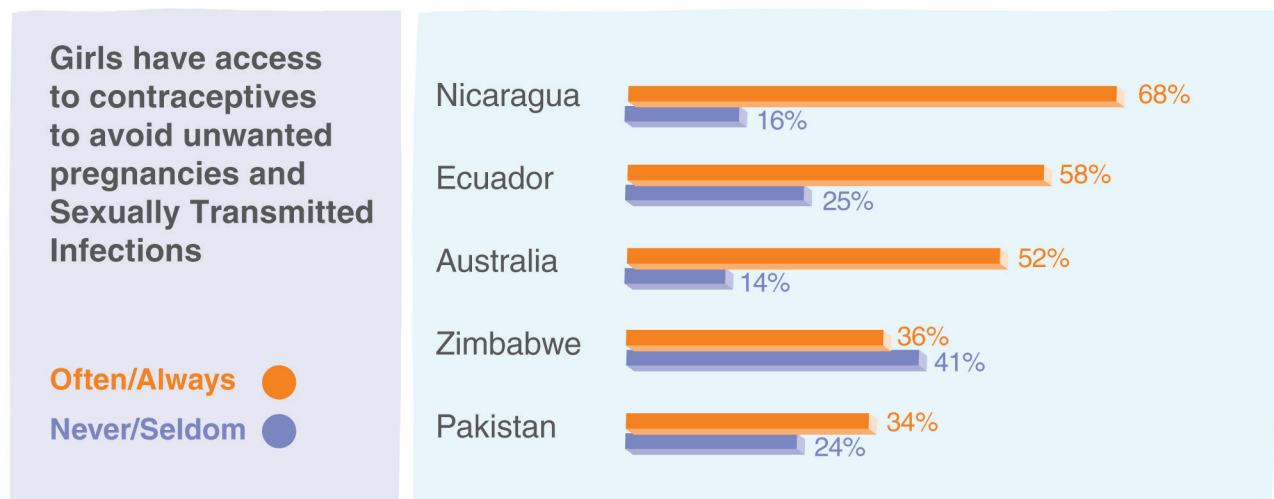
A small but significant number of respondents (10 percent) agreed that girls face social or family pressure to marry at a young age.

In terms of accessing contraception, many respondents were in favour of young women being given access to free or cheaper contraceptives, including free condoms and the contraceptive pill. Several commented that young women under 18 should not require parental consent to get the contraceptive pill. Many also suggested it should be easier for young women to access sexual health services and confidential counselling and advice about sex, contraception and healthy relationships (including 24 hour hotlines and online advice).

“HAVE 24/7 SUPPORT SERVICES WHERE GIRLS FEEL SAFE TO TALK ABOUT THESE PROBLEMS”.

41 14 percent of respondents disagreed with this.

Figure 10: The international picture: access to contraceptives



Young women give their ideas to promote healthy intimate relationships

Asked what they would do if they were tasked with improving the situation for young women their age in terms of healthy intimate relationships and sex, more than a third of respondents stated that they would make it compulsory for schools to provide more informative, comprehensive and age appropriate safe-sex and healthy relationships education.

If you were in charge of improving the situation for girls your age so that girls can enjoy healthy intimate relationships and safe sex, what would you do?

[Direct quotes]

“Teach consent and the confidence to set sexual boundaries in sex ed[ucation] classes.”

“Teach girls to have confidence to set boundaries.
Teach boys to respect girls and their boundaries.
Teach all young people about healthy relationships.”

“More education in schools, especially catholic schools, I went to a catholic school and that was far from being in our curriculum.”

“I would make it so [young people] have a better understanding of STIs and pregnancy and [are] given the correct information, not just the flouncy, rubbishy information we get now. We don’t have a good enough system, to teach boys about how to treat a woman properly and vice versa, both need to be taught boundaries and be taught that we don’t and shouldn’t have to feel pressured to have sex.”

“Classes for parents to help them on this subject.”

While a very small percentage of respondents (four percent) believed that respectful relationships and sexuality education at school should promote abstinence above all else, most respondents stated that such initiatives should:

- teach boys to respect girls' right to say no and not to pressure girls to engage in sexual activity;
- help build girls' self-esteem and confidence to say what they want and set clear boundaries in sexual relationships; and
- promote gender equality in intimate relationships.

There were also suggestions that respectful relationships and sexuality education should:

- be mandatory;
- be introduced earlier at school;
- include discussions of online pornography;
- be provided both in single sex groups and in mixed groups; and
- utilise experts external to the school (i.e. health professionals) alongside teachers.

Many young women raised the impact that pornography was having on the relationships and sexual experiences of young people. They called for respectful relationships and sexuality education to include discussions of pornography in order to address the negative impact they perceived it was having on young people's relationships and particularly on young men's attitudes towards sex.

“We need some sort of crackdown on the violent pornography that is currently accessible to boys and men. This violent pornography should be illegal to make or view in Australia as we clearly have a problem with violence and boys are watching a lot of pornography which can be very violent and submissive towards the female. This is influencing men's attitude towards women and what they think is acceptable. Violent pornography is infiltrating Australian relationships.”

“[I want] better education regarding sex for both boys and girls [and] information about pornography, and the way it influences harmful sexual practices.”

“Schools should introduce pornography as part of the education as young boys are accessing it and thinking this is normal in relationships.”

8. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst Australia has made significant progress in the journey towards gender equality, this report paints a concerning picture of the kinds of gender inequality experienced by girls and young women in Australia, as described by these young women themselves. The prevalence and diversity of these experiences of inequality, discrimination and abuse across a range of settings and contexts should be alarming to all those who assume Australia is a country defined by gender equality.

Australia's commitments through the Sustainable Development Goals provide an opportunity to focus attention on collecting data that provides a comprehensive picture of the state of women and girls in Australia today and Australia's progress towards 2030.

The experiences of the young Australian women documented in this report demand a significant and sustained response from Australian governments and all sectors of the broader community. This response must address the gendered drivers of this inequality, discrimination and violence - drivers that are so deeply entrenched and ingrained at all levels of our society and culture - that they are often invisible to many. An appropriate response must expose and challenge these social and cultural norms, and the social, political and economic structures they support, together with the individual attitudes and behaviours that they produce and justify. Its goal must be to build a society based on gender equality and respect, where girls and women enjoy equal rights and opportunities everywhere, from their homes, through to their schools, in public spaces and online, in their workplaces and in their intimate relationships.

The current experiences of gender inequality for young women in Australia do not need to continue. We can make Australia a safer and more equal place for girls and young women. If we are to change these experiences and begin creating a future that delivers genuine gender equality, we must as a country, and as a community, take decisive action to address gender inequality now.

Plan International Australia and Our Watch recommend the following as a starting point to address the issues raised by the young women in this survey -

1. Freedom to move – urban and transport planners at all levels of government should consult with girls and young women to develop solutions for safer and more inclusive public places.
2. Modelling gender equality – support families and communities to reject sexist attitudes, challenge gender stereotypes and rigid and hierarchical gender norms, and model behaviours that promote gender equality (for example through respectful relationships programs for parents and children's books that promote gender equality and challenge gender norms and stereotypes).
3. Right to the night – work with and support the media sector to ensure that reporting of violence against women occurs responsibly and accurately and challenges the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours which drive or condone violence against women.
4. Online safety – support schools, young people and their parents to address online bullying and harassment and promote ethical and respectful behaviours in online and digital environments.
5. Respectful Relationships Education – support all education settings in Australia (from early childhood education through to higher education) to be catalysts for generational and cultural change by addressing the drivers of gender-based violence, including through whole school approaches to respectful relationships education and comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education.
6. Constrained futures – provide world-leading parental leave and accessible and affordable early childhood education and care
7. Starting relationships on the same footing - through initiatives like The Line, support young women and men to have equal and respectful relationships.
8. Listen to and learn from young women and girls - improve qualitative and quantitative data collection on the experiences and views of young women and girls in Australia, including their perceptions and experiences of equality, safety, discrimination and inclusion.
9. Empowering young women – promote gender equality in work, governance and politics through legislation, quotas or other initiatives to deliver equal representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles, mentoring and examining and addressing unconscious bias.
10. Sexual and reproductive health rights – invest in comprehensive, inclusive and accessible sexual and reproductive health services and comprehensive age appropriate sexuality education for young women and men.

9. APPENDIX 1

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 4.7

Recommendations

Respectful relationships education

Goal

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development... through education for... human rights, gender equality [and] promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence...

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 5.2

Recommendations

Right to the night

Online safety

Starting relationships on the same footing

Goal

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 5.1

Recommendations

Role modelling gender equality

Goal

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 5.4

Recommendations

Role modelling

gender equality

Goal

Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 5.5

Recommendations

Empowering young women

Goal

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 5.6

Recommendations

Sexual and reproductive health rights

Goal

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conference

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 5.c

Recommendations

Empowering young women
Constrained futures

Goal

Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 11.7

Recommendations

Freedom to move

Goal

By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities