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# CHANGE THE STORY

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THREE YEARS ON

Reflections on uptake and impact, lessons learned and Our Watch's ongoing work to embed and expand the evidence on prevention



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Acknowledgement of country: Our Watch acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present, and future, and we value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and knowledge.

While *Change the story* was a joint publication by Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth, this new report is an Our Watch publication, produced by Our Watch staff. We would like to thank reviewers at ANROWS and VicHealth for their kind review of drafts of this report. While we were not able to incorporate all suggestions, these reviewers' comments greatly improved the final version.

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# Introduction

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In 2015, Our Watch, together with Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and VicHealth, published a world-first shared national framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children.

Since its publication, *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* has been widely shared and endorsed, and used in many different ways by diverse audiences, from practitioners to policymakers, across a range of settings, and among both small community groups and large organisations. In this time, Our Watch has also used *Change the story* as the evidence base that informs our own ongoing work – in policy development and advice to governments, in supporting established and emerging prevention practitioners and developing prevention models for different settings, and in the development of media content and social marketing campaigns to change social norms, attitudes and behaviours.

Three years after its release, it is an appropriate time to review the uptake of, and response to, *Change the story* by readers and users of the framework across the country, and to consider the lessons we've learned from this feedback. It is also an opportunity to reflect and report on our own subsequent and ongoing work, which aims both to promote and embed the approach outlined in *Change the story* across Australia, and to continue to develop the evidence base and expand our own thinking.

Reporting publicly on this review and reflection process is the purpose of this publication. It also delivers on the first part of a commitment made in *Change the story* itself, namely that it would be reviewed in 2018 in parallel with planning for the *Fourth Action Plan 2019-2022* of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022* (hereafter 'the *National Plan*'), and again in 2021, to align with the final stage of this *National Plan* and the anticipated development of its successor.

Given the short time since the publication of *Change the story*, this three-year review and reflection has been kept deliberately limited in scope – it does not, for example, include an updated review of the international literature and evidence on prevention that informed the original document. We envisage that the 2021 review will encompass this substantial task, as well as a comprehensive assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of *Change the story* after five years of application and a revision or expansion of the approach if warranted.

#### The purpose of this interim report is to:

- **reflect on the period** since *Change the story* was launched, and consider the external and organisational factors that may have influenced its implementation, uptake and impact.
- **provide an overview of the uptake and influence** of *Change the story* since its launch (including a summary of our evaluation data)
- **report on the various ways** in which Our Watch has been integrating *Change the story* into our own work across policy, monitoring, evaluation, practice leadership, social marketing campaigns and communications
- **reflect on what we've learned** since *Change the story* was published, and describe our evolving thinking on a number of 'frequently asked questions'
- **report on the additional evidence** we've reviewed on specific issues since *Change the story* was published, and showcase the new complementary prevention models, tools and resources we've developed as a result.

Three years after its release, it is an appropriate time to review the uptake of, and response to, *Change the story* by readers and users of the framework across the country.

# Uptake and impact of *Change the story*

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# Reflections on the environmental context since the launch of *Change the story*

There are a number of factors in the external environment that have influenced the implementation, uptake and impact of *Change the story* in the period since its launch. Many of these conditions are regularly changing, requiring Our Watch to monitor and respond to ongoing developments.

Some of these factors have created positive opportunities for influence and impact, while others have presented barriers to implementation or uptake, or reduced the potential impact that *Change the story* might otherwise have had in particular jurisdictions, settings or contexts.

## Increased levels of public awareness and engagement

The social and cultural visibility of the issue of violence against women, in the mainstream media and in public and political debate, has risen significantly in this period, as has the level of public awareness and interest. As a key example, the appointment of Rosie Batty as Australian of the Year in 2015, and the significant public advocacy work she undertook in this role, has rapidly increased the profile of this issue in Australia. The global context has also had an influence – particularly the rise of the #metoo movement, which has drawn unprecedented attention to the systemic nature of sexual violence experienced by women.

This rise in public awareness and interest in the issue of violence against women, both globally and in Australia, has created both opportunities and challenges. On the positive side, it has deepened public understanding of the issue, with National Community Attitudes Surveys revealing an increase in awareness of the different forms of violence against women between 2013 and 2017<sup>1</sup>. These surveys also reveal that Australians were more likely to support gender equality and reject violence against women in 2017 than they were in 2013 and 2009<sup>2</sup>.

Increased public awareness has also increased demand for, and expectations of, social and political action commensurate to the scale of the problem. These shifts have provided new opportunities for Our Watch and others in the field to present an evidence-based case for action – both to improve informal and formal responses to violence, and importantly, to adopt the kinds of long-term social and cultural change strategies that will help *prevent* it.

At the same time, the increased public profile of violence against women, and the mainstreaming and legitimising of calls to respond to and prevent it, has produced a noticeable public backlash<sup>3</sup> from those who seek to discredit any gendered analyses of the issue.<sup>4</sup> This kind of backlash is anticipated in *Change the story*, which points to the ‘often aggressive resistance to change that occurs in societies where existing or expected power differentials and hierarchies are challenged’. As the framework notes, this form of backlash is harmful because it is in itself a driver of violence (or further violence) against women. Responding to and addressing this backlash and mitigating its harmful impact has become an additional, and often challenging, task for Our Watch and our partners and stakeholders in this period.

This rise in public awareness and interest in the issue of violence against women, both globally and in Australia, has created both opportunities and challenges.

## Varied political contexts across jurisdictions

Other relevant contextual factors relate specifically to the Australian political landscape. In the period since *Change the story* was launched, governments in different jurisdictions across Australia have displayed varying levels of political commitment to primary prevention. All, with the exception of NSW, have joined Our Watch as members. All have committed to the *Third Action Plan*, which includes endorsing *Change the story* as the national framework for primary prevention. Some have begun developing, funding and implementing specific prevention actions.

In Victoria, in particular, the findings of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the State Government's positive response to its recommendations have created significant opportunities to improve and expand prevention policy and programming, and have delivered unprecedented levels of funding for such work.

This has resulted in the development of a ten-year prevention strategy and initial four-year action plan, the establishment of statutory authority Respect Victoria as a dedicated prevention agency, the rollout of whole-of-school respectful relationships education in all government schools (to be complete by 2021), and a statewide behaviour change communications campaign focused on raising awareness of the drivers of family violence and all forms of violence against women. In the 2017-18 State Budget, the Victorian Government committed an unprecedented \$50.8 million over four years for prevention activities.

More generally across Australia, while there are some very promising signs of political engagement and policy progress on this issue, there is much more work to be done to fully develop and implement the kinds of concrete primary prevention policies and programs that the framework calls for, and to secure long-term funding commitments that are commensurate to the scale of the problem.

## Critical need for prevention practitioner workforce development

While there is some good prevention practice being undertaken at the local level in some areas or in particular settings, for the most part, Australia has yet to develop the workforce it needs to implement primary prevention activities 'on the ground' at the scale that is required for this work to be effective at the population level.

Since the release of *Change the story*, the acute workforce shortage has become more obvious. Growing public interest in the issue of violence against women, followed by an emerging interest in increasing specific prevention efforts, has underlined the critical need to address these workforce development issues.

A greater focus on actions that help to lay the foundations for sector development will enable investments at the setting or programmatic level to be effective. This requires work to significantly expand, develop and build the capacity of the prevention workforce across the country, and to provide the coordination and quality assurance mechanisms that are part of the necessary 'infrastructure' for this workforce.

## Organisational factors

Finally, other contextual factors influencing the impact of *Change the story* are internal or organisational. Our Watch has grown in size since the launch of *Change the story*, which has enabled us to expand our activities and extend our reach, helping to promote awareness and uptake of *Change the story* across the country. In particular, increased Commonwealth Government funding for Our Watch campaigns has enabled the development or expansion of a number of groundbreaking national social marketing initiatives, from youth campaign *The Line*, to newer campaigns such as 'No Excuse for Abuse' and 'Doing Nothing Does Harm', all of which work directly to change the social norms that *Change the story* identifies as drivers of violence against women. Similarly, the presence of our media team has given us the ability to engage with national media, raising the profile of prevention in the public conversation and promoting a deeper understanding of the evidence base that *Change the story* provides on how violence against women can be prevented.

At the same time, the need and ever-growing demand for expert advice on and support for primary prevention activities – from policy development to practitioner capacity building, tools and resources, workforce development, coordination of effort and quality assurance – far outweighs our organisational capacity and resources. While this demand is a positive sign, it creates ongoing challenges as we seek to drive uptake and impact across the country.

These various factors, both external and organisational, operating at multiple levels and including social, cultural, political, economic and logistical issues, have all shaped the environment in which Our Watch has been working to promote the uptake and implementation of *Change the story*. They have created both opportunities for and barriers to the kinds of influence and impact discussed in the following section.



# How is Our Watch evaluating uptake of *Change the story*?

Our Watch has been carefully monitoring and evaluating the uptake and implementation of *Change the story* since its publication, in line with our organisational commitment to building quality evaluation into all our work.

Our evaluation has focused on assessing the extent to which *Change the story* is being:

1. taken up and reflected in **government policies** as part of a nationally consistent approach to prevention policy
2. taken up and used by **practitioners and civil society organisations** as part of a nationally consistent approach to prevention practice.

This approach is informed by Our Watch's *Emerging Theory of Change*, of which *Change the story* is a key element. This theory expects that the development of *Change the story* as a framework for a national approach to prevention, together with ongoing support for its implementation, will enable agreement on and commitment to a nationally consistent approach. Specifically, it envisages that an evidence-based framework that identifies the drivers of violence against women will enable the development of strategies that can effectively reduce these drivers of violence. It anticipates the need for many stakeholders to contribute; for governments, civil society, the private sector and communities to lead, coordinate, resource and support diverse yet mutually reinforcing kinds of prevention work, including policy, legislation, strategies, programs and advocacy. This consistent, evidence-based approach to the long-term task of cultural change is required to prevent violence against women from occurring in the first place.

To report on the extent to which *Change the story* is achieving these goals, this review draws on and updates a recent organisational-level evaluation, *Our Watch, Our Impact 2014-2017*, analysing data sources including:

- Australian government<sup>5</sup> policies related to violence against women (produced since the publication of *Change the story*)
- Our Watch's records from the delivery of *Change the story* training (2017-2018)
- Our Watch stakeholder surveys undertaken in 2017 (425 respondents) and 2018 (412 respondents)
- an independent, summative impact evaluation of our activities from 2014-2018, undertaken by external consultants.<sup>6</sup>

The findings of this review and analysis are described on the following pages. These findings provide an initial assessment of the extent to which *Change the story* is being taken up by both policymakers and practitioners across Australia and the extent to which it is helping to drive a nationally consistent approach to the prevention of violence against women.

# How has *Change the story* been received? What has its impact been to date?

## Driving the public conversation on the prevention of violence against women

The development, publication and promotion of *Change the story* has played a central and vital role in helping Our Watch drive a change in the public conversation about violence against women, contributing to the building of a shared vision for primary prevention in Australia for the first time.

An independent evaluation of our work to date<sup>7</sup> noted the ‘significant contribution’ that Our Watch has made to ‘unifying the conversation’ by providing ‘an authoritative voice’ on prevention. It found ‘an overwhelming consensus that one of the key primary contributions of Our Watch to changing attitudes, behaviours and norms is the development of an Australian evidence base [through *Change the story*], with stakeholders reporting that this has ‘made an enormous impact’.

In particular, the evaluation found that stakeholders unanimously appreciated the way in which *Change the story* has established a ‘common language’ with which to discuss the primary prevention of violence against women, which spans a wide range of contexts and audiences. It found that by providing an evidence base, and enabling stakeholders to coalesce around a set of recognised ideas, *Change the story* has created ‘a foundation from which to start a shared conversation and understanding about the drivers of violence against women and their children’. While the evaluation noted that the longer-term value and impact of this unification is yet to be seen, it reported widespread stakeholder recognition that the work undertaken by Our Watch is a hugely important first step.

While noting the difficulty of quantifying the reach of Our Watch’s work to develop the Australian evidence base, the evaluation provided some examples of the impact of *Change the story* on other organisations’ work.

For example:

- government grant programs, such as the *Free from violence* Victorian local government grants, have explicitly used the evidence set out in *Change the story* in funding criteria
- proposals to ANROWS for research grants regularly reference *Change the story* and applicants note their project’s potential impact on gendered drivers as evidence to support their case for funding
- internationally, the United Nations General Assembly 38th meeting in 2018 discussed *Change the story* through its reference in the United Nations Special Rapporteur’s report on violence against women and its causes and consequences.

These findings suggest that *Change the story* has been particularly effective at helping to drive constructive conversations among various stakeholders in the violence against women sector. For example, its value in providing an evidence base that is helping to inform a broader conversation – in the media and among the general public – is considered in the later sections of this report that discuss our ongoing work to embed *Change the story* into our media and campaigns work.

“ *Change the story* has given us a common language for the prevention of violence against women.

*Survey respondent.*

## Driving a nationally consistent policy approach to preventing violence against women: influence of *Change the story* on government policies

*Change the story* is intended as a blueprint and shared framework for the prevention of violence against women for all Australian governments. At this level, its aims were realised, with the inclusion in 2016 of a key action in the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) *Third Action Plan* (2016-2019) of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*. This saw all jurisdictions explicitly endorse and commit to implementing *Change the story* as the shared national framework for prevention.

An independent evaluation of our work to date also noted significant progress towards establishing a shared national approach, finding that stakeholders widely supported and welcomed Australia's first primary prevention framework, saw it as providing an evidence-based platform for action, and noted its utility in providing a shared language for and understanding of the drivers of violence, enabling application within their practice.<sup>9</sup>

While *Change the story* has been adopted in principle by all governments, the extent to which it has then been translated or embedded into government policies in each jurisdiction has varied. As shown in Appendix 1, this is partly because the length of policy cycles of this kind mean relevant policies, plans and strategies in some jurisdictions have not been updated since *Change the story* was released. However, it also reflects the varying levels of infrastructure, funding and political support for primary prevention across the different jurisdictions. A further challenge is that while the *Third Action Plan* endorsed *Change the story* and committed jurisdictions to implementing it, no funding was allocated to support implementation, and there has been no mechanism established to drive, coordinate or monitor its effective incorporation into policy across the country. The forthcoming *Fourth Action Plan* provides a positive ongoing opportunity for refinement of these aspects of the developing national approach.

“ *Change the Story* provides an evidence based framework to guide investment in prevention.

*Survey respondent.*

In addition to its inclusion in the COAG *Third Action Plan*, there are some notable examples of state and territory governments explicitly referencing *Change the story* within their relevant policies, namely in Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory:

- *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women* outlines an approach for preventing violence against women that uses the evidence, conceptual model and approach of *Change the story*, including replicating its descriptions of the gendered drivers of violence, reinforcing factors and key settings and messages to effect change.
- The *Queensland Violence Against Women Prevention Plan 2016-2022* cites *Change the story* as a key part of the evidence base for improving policy, includes a key action under outcome 1 (shifting community attitudes and behaviours that support or excuse violence against women) to support Our Watch in its implementation of *Change the story*, and commits to responding to this evidence base over the duration of the plan.
- The *Queensland Women's Strategy* references *Change the story* as evidence that 'the safety of women and girls in Queensland is directly related to gender equality and attitudes towards women' and that 'women are less likely to experience violence by men in a society where there is greater equality between women and men and where women's economic, social and political rights are adequately protected'. The strategy endorses *Change the story's* whole-of-community approach to prevention, based on awareness of how gender inequality contributes to violence against women, and reiterates its call to engage men and boys in prevention actions.
- The Northern Territory's *Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028* cites *Change the story* as key to understanding domestic, family and sexual violence, and directly replicates its framing of the gendered drivers and the reinforcing factors of this violence, together with its call for prevention strategies that directly address these drivers.

Appendix 1 provides basic information about whether current policy documents in each jurisdiction reference *Change the story* by name, and incorporate its key conceptual elements – such as naming the gendered drivers. It shows that some policy documents do reflect

*Change the story* at this level, and this is a positive first step. However, much more work is needed to ensure that this basic conceptual endorsement of the framework is, over time, translated into concrete prevention actions, programs and funding commitments of the kind and scale that *Change the story* calls for. Our current assessment is that – with the exception of Victoria – jurisdictions have much ongoing work to do.

While *Change the story* has been positively received by policymakers and strongly endorsed in some key documents and processes, its potential for real and lasting impact – by driving a significant expansion of government-led prevention actions – has not yet been realised. Our Watch will continue to advocate for Australian governments to provide leadership and take strong action on prevention. A key reason for this is the obligation governments have under international human rights agreements to ensure the health, safety and equality of women, and specifically to take positive steps to eliminate all forms of violence against women.<sup>9</sup> As *Change the story* itself notes, international research shows that political will is crucial in sustaining prevention approaches over the long term.<sup>10</sup>

### Building a nationally consistent approach to preventing violence against women across civil society: the development of a prevention sector and response to *Change the story* among practitioners

Since the release of *Change the story*, Our Watch has undertaken a range of ongoing work to encourage and support civil society organisations and diverse kinds of prevention practitioners to engage with and use *Change the story* in their own work. This work, which has included developing a practitioner handbook, progressing the design of sophisticated prevention models through partnerships and action-research in different settings, delivering training and other forms of capacity building, is described in a later section of this report.

“ ***Change the Story* is an invaluable resource. Aside from the content, it has helped us all sing from the same song book (in many respects), which is great.**

*Survey respondent.*

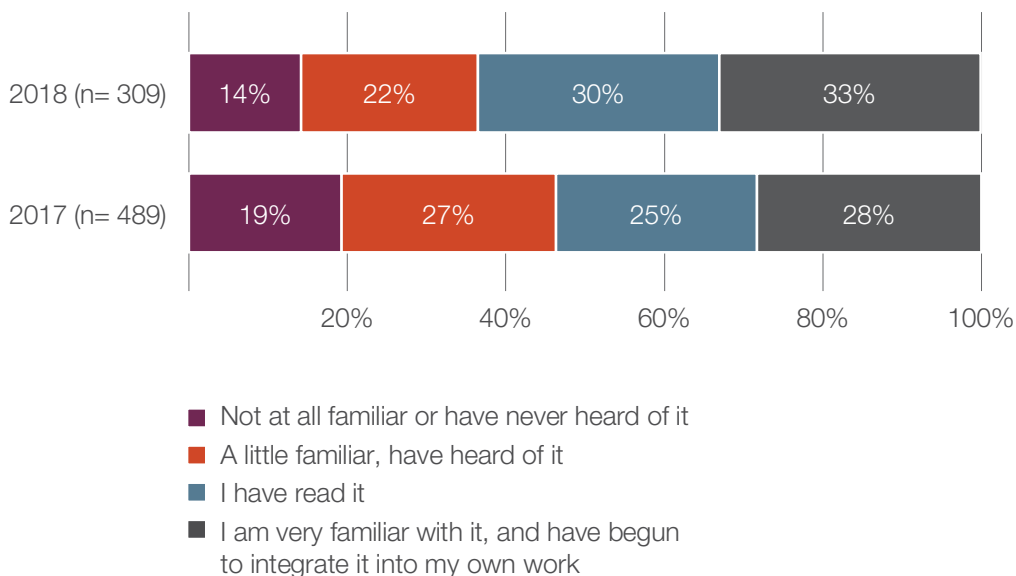
#### **An independent evaluation of Our Watch’s work to date found a very positive response to *Change the story* among practitioners, noting:**

*‘There has been overwhelming consensus from stakeholders that the development of an Australian evidence base is one of the key primary contributions of Our Watch to changing attitudes, behaviours and norms. In particular, the development of *Change the story*... has made an enormous impact. Without development of an Australian evidence base, stakeholders speculated that there would be a lack of focus across primary prevention programs and some of these programs would be ineffective. Developing *Change the story* and conducting evaluations to understand what works and what does not work in primary prevention has helped to focus the efforts of the prevention of violence against women sector on the gendered drivers of violence.*

*The difference Our Watch has made to a shared national approach largely relates to the take-up and impact of *Change the story*. This framework has led to what many stakeholders termed ‘a shared understanding’ of the drivers of violence against women and their children, without which the PVAW sector and broader society would still be arguing about the causes of violence. Across Our Watch’s priority settings, stakeholders considered the framework an invaluable reference, providing a foundation to undertake on-the-ground action’.<sup>11</sup>*

As another way of understanding the response to and influence of *Change the story* among practitioners, Our Watch has undertaken regular stakeholder surveys. In 2017 and 2018, Our Watch received a total of 1,072 survey responses<sup>12</sup> from people across Australia employed in community organisations, the media, research, government, the private sector, education and health services, who provided responses to questions about their familiarity with *Change the story* and their perceptions of its influence on their work. While these initial stakeholder surveys may not provide a representative sample of the eventual intended audience for *Change the story*, they do give an indication of the current level and type of response to the framework.

Figure 1 How familiar are you with *Change the story*?



As illustrated in figure 1, analysis of this survey data shows that awareness of *Change the story* (respondents who have at least heard of the framework) is very high (80% in 2017 rising to 85% in 2018). Furthermore, reported familiarity with the framework (ie. respondents who have read it and/or begun to integrate it into their work) is strong and increasing (from 53% in 2017 to 63% in 2018). Conversely, the proportion of respondents who report being unaware of the framework has decreased by 5% in this period.



***Change the story* is easy to read and understand for professional working outside the domestic violence sector.**

*Survey respondent.*

This survey data also suggests that *Change the story* is having a significant influence on practitioners. As shown in figures 2-4, in 2017, only two years after its release, a clear majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that *Change the story* had influenced their own understanding of and approach to the prevention of violence against women (83%), as well as the understanding and approach within their organisation (71%) and within their sector (77%). A year later, the proportion of respondents agreeing with each of these statements had increased to 90%, 77% and 83% respectively.

Figure 2 *Change the story* has influenced my understanding/approach to the prevention of violence against women

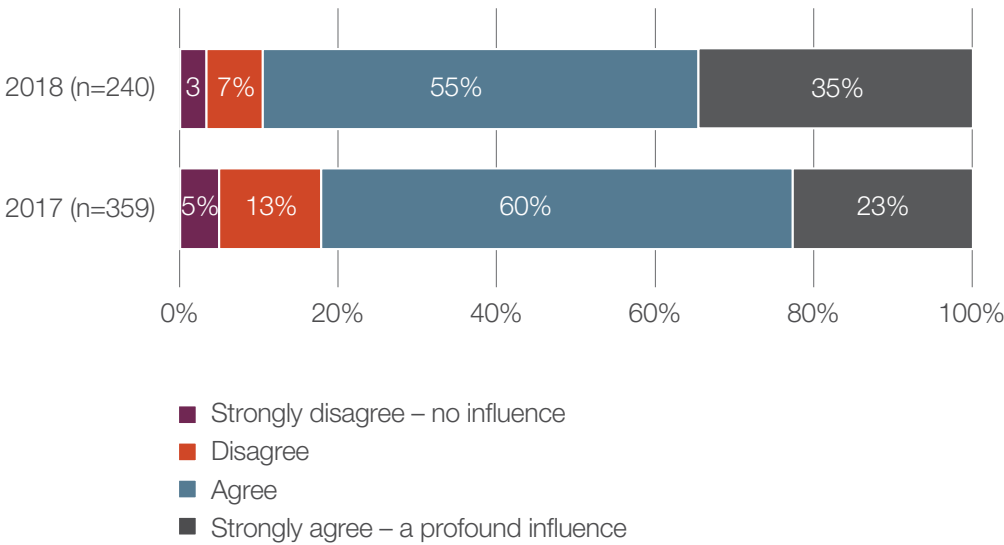


Figure 3 *Change the story* has influenced my organisation's understanding/approach to the prevention of violence against women

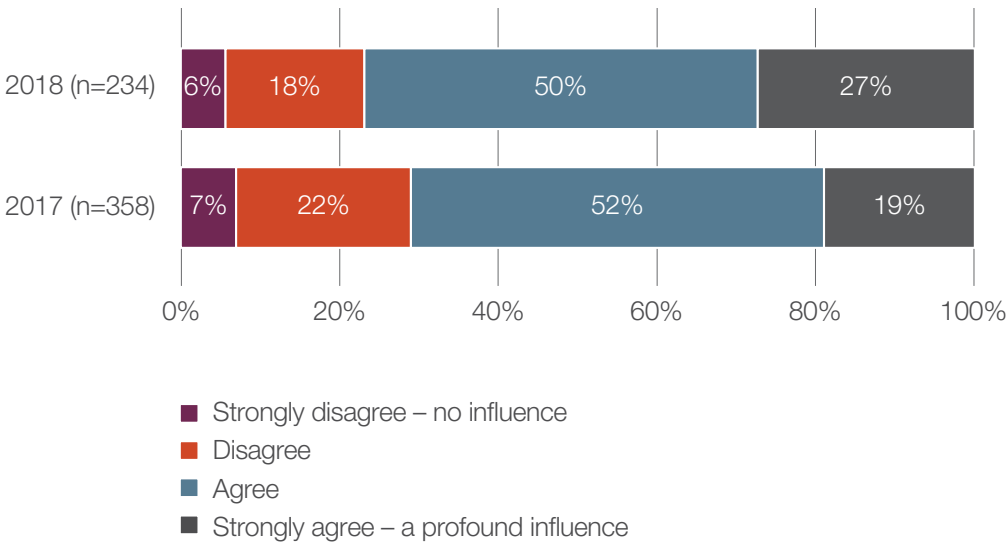
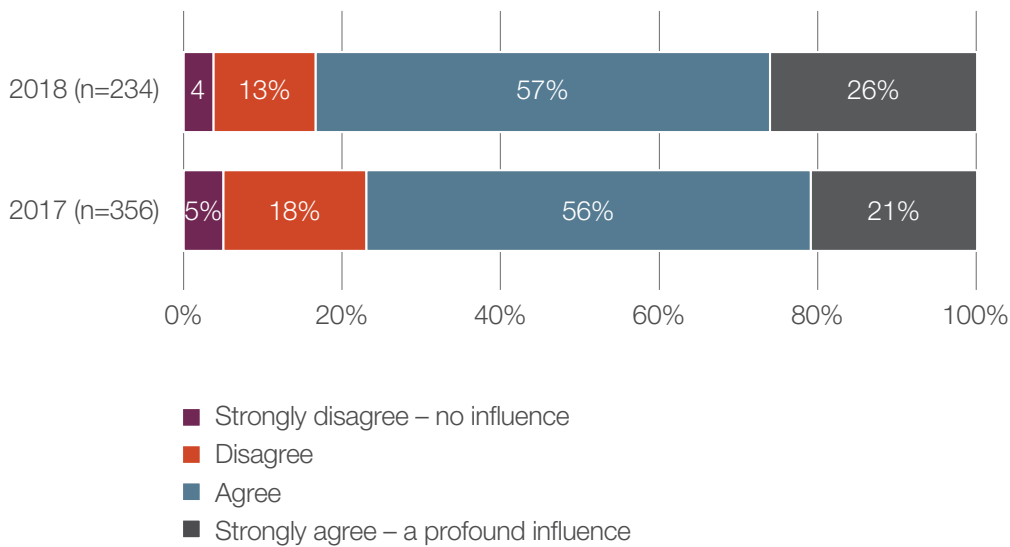
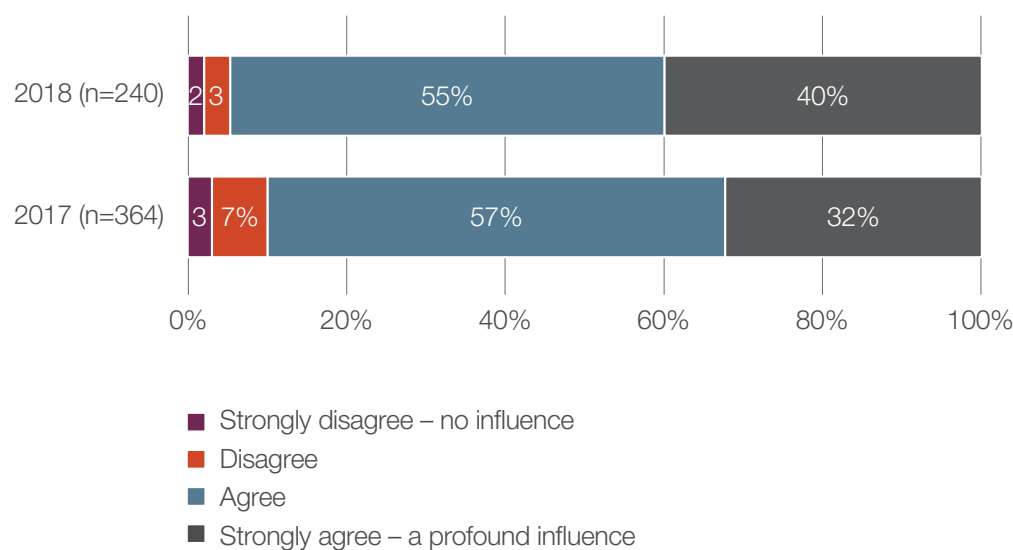


Figure 4 Change the story has influenced my sector's understanding/approach to the prevention of violence against women



As shown in Figure 5, there was also a very high proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that Change the story promotes a nationally consistent approach to prevention work, increasing from 89% in 2017 to 95% in 2018.

Figure 5 Change the story promotes a more consistent approach to the prevention of violence against women nationally





Overall, this survey data suggests that the uptake of *Change the story* among relevant civil society organisations and prevention practitioners has been extremely high, and that the framework is having a significant and positive influence on the development of a shared understanding of, and nationally consistent approach to, prevention.

While responses were overwhelmingly positive (and echo the positive findings of the independent evaluation report), the survey data also provides some insight into respondents' views on the limitations of the framework, together with suggestions on how its utility and influence could be improved, either with additional supporting materials, tools, resources and initiatives, or in future revisions. The general themes of these comments, together with illustrative quotes for each, are summarised in Appendix 2.

“ **The framework has articulated 'best practice'. Although it hasn't changed practice per se for us, it has certainly done so more broadly and it provides a clear and consistent framework for myself and the organisation where I work.**

*Survey respondent.*

“ **I think that *Change the Story* has been extremely important in making gender inequality and gender stereotypes more widely understood to be leading factors for violence against women.**

*Survey respondent.*



How Our Watch  
is integrating  
*Change the story*  
across our work

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This section describes and reflects on Our Watch's own ongoing work to implement the approach to prevention outlined in *Change the story*, and provide leadership, support and guidance to enable and encourage others across Australia to do the same.

This work is part of the commitment in our *Strategic Plan* to drive nationwide change through a shared national effort. Firmly grounded in the evidence base outlined in *Change the story*, this ongoing work includes:

- providing policy advice, support and input to governments, decision-makers and policy processes to influence public policy, systems and institutions and drive societal-level change that shifts social norms and supports and reinforces other prevention strategies
- developing innovative communications and social marketing campaigns that aim to shift the social norms, public attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that drive violence against women
- providing leadership to practitioners, supporting organisational development and capacity building to expand and develop the prevention workforce, and working with civil society organisations, networks and communities to build a sustainable movement for change
- leading a sustained and constructive public conversation that keeps violence against women on the public agenda, with a focus on the need for effective prevention
- monitoring and evaluating prevention efforts, from the program level to the national level.

Each of these aspects of our work is described in more detail on the following pages.

## Using *Change the story* to influence public policy and decision making

Since the publication of *Change the story*, Our Watch has provided specialist prevention policy expertise to decision-makers and policymakers based on the evidence and approach it outlines.

Our goal has been to drive a coordinated national policy approach to prevention, and to encourage the integration of the approach outlined in *Change the story* into policy and institutional systems.

We have developed constructive and bipartisan relationships with state/territory and Commonwealth Government agencies across Australia, and we provide various forms of direct advice and input to these agencies to support the development of relevant policies. We also actively participate in public inquiries and other policy processes, and provide policy advice to our member governments and to the National Plan Implementation Executive Group.

We are also developing multipartisan relationships with political and other leaders in diverse sectors across Australia to help build and support the broad political will and active leadership that will help sustain prevention in the long term.

### Policy advice and submissions

We have provided direct policy advice and input to support the development of various new policies and strategies developed since the release of *Change the story*, advocating for these to incorporate an explicit focus on primary prevention and include prevention strategies that directly address the drivers of violence against women outlined in *Change the story*. These include:

- *Third Action Plan (2016-2019)* of the Council of Australian Governments' *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*
- *Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*
- *Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change*
- *Queensland Violence Against Women Prevention Plan 2016-2022*
- *NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018-2021*
- *The Northern Territory's Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028*.

The degree to which these policies reflect the input and advice provided is varied. As discussed on page 12, more work is needed before government policy frameworks across Australia incorporate the kind and scale of prevention efforts that *Change the story* calls for, and support these efforts with the resourcing required to make a difference in the long term.

At the time of writing, Our Watch was also providing input and expert policy advice to governments to inform the development of:

- The *Fourth Action Plan* of the Council of Australian Governments' *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*
- a new 10-year strategy for reducing family and domestic violence in Western Australia
- the Queensland Government's new sexual violence strategy
- the Tasmanian Government's next family violence action plan, *Safe Homes, Safe Families*, and new sexual violence action plan.

Our Watch has also made submissions to various government inquiries and other policy processes using *Change the story* as the evidence base for recommendations about how these processes can contribute to effective prevention across the country. Some examples include:

- Australian Human Rights Commission's National Inquiry into sexual harassment in Australian workplaces (2019)
- ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety's Inquiry into domestic and family violence – policy approaches and responses (2017)
- Queensland Parliament Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee's Inquiry into improving the delivery of respectful relationships and sex education relevant to the use of technology in Queensland state schools (2017)
- Australian Parliament Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee's Inquiry into domestic violence and gender inequality (2016)
- South Australian Government's Domestic Violence Discussion Paper (2016)
- Victorian Government's Gender Equality Strategy (2016)
- Victoria's review of the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* (the Act) (2016).

- Next steps for effective primary prevention of men's violence against women in Victoria: A Joint Response to the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence Report, with Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria, CASA Forum Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Domestic Violence Resource Centre of Victoria, Domestic Violence Victoria, inTouch Multicultural Centre against Family Violence, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, No To Violence, Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission, Women with Disabilities Victoria, Women's Health Association of Victoria, Women's Health Victoria (2016).

## Advice to Our Watch member governments

Since our establishment by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments in 2013, all other Australian governments (with the exception of NSW) have become members of Our Watch. Our network of member representatives (senior bureaucrats in each jurisdiction) provides another means by which we provide expert policy advice and input to influence the development of prevention policy across the country and encourage the use of *Change the story* as a critical evidence base and framework for action.

## Advice to ImpEG

Our Watch also provides regular advice to the National Plan Implementation Executive Group (ImpEG), which is charged with driving the implementation of the *Third Action Plan*.

More work is needed before government policy frameworks across Australia incorporate the kind and scale of prevention efforts that *Change the story* calls for, and with the resourcing required to make a difference in the long term.

# Using *Change the story* as the evidence base for campaigns to shift social norms

Our Watch delivers social marketing campaigns to shift the kinds of individual attitudes and broader social norms that can lead to violence against women.

Our Watch campaigns take a holistic approach, informed by a range of academic, pre-formative and developmental research. Each campaign strategy identifies what kinds of interventions are needed to bring about the desired change (which might include advertising, public relations and engagement strategies, practical tools and resources, influencing strategies, or further research), and considers the most effective timing and delivery. There are four phases to campaign development: research, development, implementation and evaluation.

Each of Our Watch's campaigns is underpinned by *Change the story* and seeks to address one or more of the gendered drivers of violence against women. For example:

## Doing Nothing Does Harm

This is a bystander campaign, which addresses all four drivers of violence against women.

In Australia, there is a moderate but widespread acceptance of the kinds of sexist attitudes and behaviours that *Change the story* shows drive violence against women. Our research<sup>13</sup> shows that Australians think it is common for females to be treated unfairly and/or without respect, most often in male-dominated settings, but also in clubs, bars and pubs, social media, workplaces and on the street.

Bystanders can play a significant role in challenging the attitudes, norms and behaviours that drive gender-based violence and creating a culture where comments and actions that trivialise, condone or encourage violence and disrespect towards women are unacceptable.

Doing Nothing Does Harm aims to motivate people to 'do something' when they see or hear disrespect towards women. The advertising and supporting communications for this campaign demonstrate what sexism and disrespect towards women looks like, and give practical examples of different actions people can take in response.

See [Doing Nothing Does Harm](#)

## No Excuse for Abuse

Campaign about non-physical forms of violence. Specifically addresses the condoning of violence against women.

*Change the story* highlights that to prevent violence against women, we first need people to understand what this violence looks like. This means increasing awareness of the various non-physical forms of violence against women and understanding that these can be just as serious and harmful as physical or sexual abuse, and should not be overlooked or excused. It also means building an understanding of the gendered drivers of these non-physical forms of violence.

One of the drivers of violence against women outlined in *Change the story* is the condoning of violence. In seeking to increase recognition of non-physical forms of violence, Our Watch's No Excuse for Abuse campaign encourages the community to challenge the condoning of *all* forms of violence.

See [No Excuse for Abuse](#)

## The Line

This is a campaign for young people aged 12 to 20 years, which also provides guidance and support to parents, carers, teachers, educators, coaches and other influencers. It focuses on challenging male peer relationships that emphasise aggression, stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity and the condoning of violence against women.

Our research<sup>14</sup> shows that many young people are struggling to work out what healthy, respectful and consensual relationships look like. Since 2010, *The Line* has focused on implementing the essential actions outlined in *Change the story* with young people. It supports young people in understanding 'what's okay, and what's not' in intimate and interpersonal relationships and encourages them to call out behaviour that could be hurtful or disrespectful to others. Advertising and supporting communications cover issues such as pressure for sex, consent, harmful forms of masculinity and the long-term impact of violence.

See [The Line](#)

## Because Why

Because Why is a series of online resources aimed at helping parents and families to challenge gender stereotypes.

With funding support from MIMCO, Our Watch undertook research into gender stereotypes in the early years, including a literature review and discussion paper on early childhood and parenting, and a survey of over 800 parents.

Gender stereotypes shape children's views of who they can and can't be. Reinforcing gender stereotypes sets up a future where women and men continue to be seen as unequal, and as *Change the story* shows, gender inequality is a key driver of violence against women.

Our Watch research shows parents want their children, regardless of gender, to have equal access to opportunities. However, while parents want to challenge limiting gender stereotypes, many find it's not always easy to recognise where and how these stereotypes affect children.

Because Why aims to help parents with this, and to provide support and practical guidance in identifying and challenging stereotypes. The online resources, videos, tools and FAQs show how parents can challenge stereotypical constructions of gender roles, masculinity and femininity, and support children to explore their interests regardless of rigid gender associations. The resources support families to help children to develop positive personal identities and respectful relationships that are not constrained by gender stereotypes.

See: [Because Why](#)

## The impact of pornography

(Campaign currently in development). *Change the story* identifies that accessing pornography at a young age may influence behaviours, attitudes and norms about violence against women. An appropriate, evidence-based campaign would seek to encourage and support young people to recognise when and how pornography portrays sexism, gender discrimination, gender inequality and other norms, attitudes and behaviours that drive violence against women. For campaign materials to be effective they would need to target young people and their parents, with the aim of encouraging and supporting young people to engage in positive, equal and respectful interpersonal relationships.

Each of Our Watch's campaigns is underpinned by *Change the story* and seeks to address one or more of the gendered drivers of violence against women.

# Using *Change the story* to provide leadership and support to practitioners and to expand and develop the prevention workforce

*Change the story* points to the need to support and resource those practitioners already doing valuable work in this emerging field. At the same time, it stresses the need to significantly expand, develop and build the capacity of the prevention workforce – both to meet current demand and to scale and expand the reach and uptake of initiatives across the country.

As noted in the earlier discussion of the environmental context for *Change the story*, there remain significant gaps in the prevention practitioner workforce across Australia. Expanding and scaling up primary prevention to the extent envisaged in the framework requires resourcing not only for projects and programs themselves, but also for the development of a workforce that has the infrastructure, systems, capacity and support to implement such approaches on the ground. Our Watch will continue to work in partnership with governments and key stakeholders to achieve this.

## Supporting and developing the prevention workforce

Our Watch works to support the existing and emerging prevention workforce to implement quality and effective prevention practice based on the approach and principles outlined in *Change the story*. Since its release in 2015, further resources and tools to support practitioners have been released.

Central to these is a practice handbook: *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: how to Change the story*. This shows how the ‘big picture’ framework of *Change the story* can be translated into ‘on-the-ground’ action. It includes:

- tips for best practice based on the experiences of practitioners in Australia
- key principles to inform project planning, evaluation, and communication
- case studies and examples of existing practice
- links to further resources and tools.

The handbook has received a positive response from practitioners. Less than 12 months after its publication, 40% of respondents to the Our Watch stakeholder survey reported having begun integrating its content into their work.

Since the release of *Change the story*, Our Watch has implemented several other actions that aim to help develop and build the capacity of the prevention workforce. These have included:

- a ‘roadshow’ series of presentations to key stakeholders explaining the purpose of *Change the story* and giving examples of prevention practice, which was delivered to over 340 participants across most jurisdictions in Australia during 2016
- development and delivery of various forms of training to over 800 participants across Australia. This has included:
  - two-day training workshops for new and emerging practitioners – both specialists and contributors – to build knowledge on the principal elements of prevention practice. Based partly on pioneering work done by VicHealth, this workshop includes a detailed analysis of the gendered drivers of violence against women, explanation of the different approaches and settings for prevention, an understanding of intersectionality and principles for good prevention practice
  - shorter one-day workshops, with some of these adapted for specific audiences, such as local government and sporting organisations
- development and delivery of more tailored training and presentations specifically for prevention contributors in specific settings, notably sports, media, schools and workplaces. Delivered to over 2000 participants in total, these workshops have varied in length and content and have each been offered as part of larger pieces of work being implemented by Our Watch in these settings
- supporting the development and implementation of Communities of Practice for practitioners.
- providing advice on workforce development actions being undertaken as part of prevention initiatives implemented by other organisations



- supporting longer-term planning for workforce development, including the development of a competencies framework for prevention practitioners and actions being undertaken by educational institutions
- conference presentations and workshops delivered to a range of audiences.

Responses from many of these audiences are included in the summary of results from the feedback survey on page 13-15.<sup>15</sup>

## Leading the development of prevention practice in particular settings

*Change the story* identifies 11 priority settings in which there is significant potential for prevention efforts to have an impact. Since the release of *Change the story*, Our Watch has been funded to implement prevention actions in four of these settings:

- workplaces, corporations and employee organisations
- sports, recreation, social and leisure spaces
- media
- education and care settings for children and young people.

Our work in these four settings is described on the following pages.

## Workplace Equality and Respect

Workplaces have a significant influence on many people's professional and personal lives, and on society more broadly, and this setting provides a significant opportunity for prevention work to reach large populations. As *Change the story* points out, workplace prevention activity has the potential to influence aspects of organisational culture, work environment and practices, social norms and relationships. Workplaces are also settings in which both individuals and organisations can play an active role in addressing the drivers of violence against women.

Recognising this, Our Watch, supported by the Victorian Government, led the development of a whole-of-workplace approach to primary prevention with the Workplace Equality and Respect initiative project from November 2015 to September 2017. The initiative consolidated and built on existing approaches to produce a package of evidence-based standards and tools that guide a whole-of-workplace model for prevention. The model translates the evidence outlined in *Change the story* into a framework based on five standards and practical actions that workplaces can take to promote and embed gender equality and respect through a comprehensive organisational change process.

The five Workplace Equality and Respect (WER) Standards<sup>16</sup> focus on ensuring the commitment of leaders and staff to the prevention of violence against women, ensuring workplace conditions support gender equality, rejecting sexist and discriminatory culture, supporting staff and stakeholders who experience violence, and integrating gender equality into a workplace's core business. The Standards do not provide a prescriptive program for workplaces, but rather offer comprehensive, flexible and adaptable guidance on best-practice actions workplaces can take to prevent violence against women. They are designed for use across all industries and sectors, by organisations that are committed to integrating equality and respect into their practices, strategies and workplace culture, and to assessing their progress against agreed standards.

Tested with four workplaces in 2016, the WER Standards and associated suite of tools and resources are now being piloted with refugee and migrant support services and adapted for sports organisations as part of our ongoing work to ensure that prevention resources are appropriately tailored to different audiences and settings. Since the original pilot in 2016, many governments and industries have used these standards to guide their whole-of-workplace actions for prevention. This includes rollouts within public services, local governments and migrant and refugee community organisations.

**To view the WER Standards and associated tools, resources and information, visit our website: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/Workplace-Equality-and-Respect-Hub/Home>**

## Engagement with national sporting codes

Our Watch's engagement with national sporting codes supports sporting organisations and partners to embed gender equality and respectful relationships into their networks and communities and to build cultures that prevent violence against women. Outputs have included videos and other resources for social media that translate *Change the story* into the sports setting, training and other capacity-building activities with key staff, and an evidence paper<sup>17</sup> on the role of sport in preventing violence against women.

Our Watch has now progressed this work to develop a model of prevention. In partnership with four national sporting codes, Our Watch is drawing on the WER Standards (see page 23) to develop a whole-of-sport approach to primary prevention.

## National Media Engagement Program

*Change the story* names media as a setting with a key role to play in preventing violence against women, given its large audience, wide reach across society, and significant influence in shaping and maintaining social norms.

In particular, news media is a place where the drivers of violence against women are often reinforced. The condoning of violence against women regularly occurs through reporting that uses language and news frames that implicitly or explicitly blame victims or excuse perpetrators. Women and men are often portrayed in stereotypical ways, and stories about men given greater prominence and importance as 'hard news'. Newsrooms are frequently not gender equitable spaces, with men more likely to hold leadership positions and be paid more, and female journalists more likely to be subjected to both online 'trolling' and workplace harassment.

As a setting for prevention, media offers significant potential to address these drivers through a whole-of-setting approach that engages diverse groups – from journalists to journalism students, newsroom staff and those working in other parts of the media industry.

The condoning of violence against women regularly occurs through media reporting that uses language and news frames that blame victims or excuse perpetrators.

Under the National Media Engagement Program, Our Watch has developed a range of innovative initiatives in this setting, which seek to effect broad cultural change in two ways:

1. encouraging best-practice media *reporting* on violence against women, informed by the evidence in *Change the story*, in order to influence social norms and public attitudes on this issue
2. working with the media as an industry to build respectful and gender equitable newsrooms, industry bodies and news sectors. For example, by increasing the representation of women at all levels of management and editorial control.

Our work under the National Media Engagement Program has included:

- developing National Media Guidelines for best-practice reporting
- implementing training in newsrooms to promote the use of language and framing techniques in reporting that resist victim-blaming and perpetrator-excusing narratives that condone violence against women
- developing and implementing university curriculum for journalism students that focuses on ethical, best-practice reporting of violence against women and gender equality in newsrooms (produced in collaboration with the University of Melbourne)
- developing and launching a national survivor media advocacy project to build the capacity of violence against women specialists and survivors to use the media as a vehicle to deliver effective prevention messaging
- the annual Our Watch Awards (2014-2018) and developing and launching a new mid-year Walkley Award for excellence in reporting on violence against women, which recognise and celebrate best-practice reporting on violence against women
- developing and launching a Fellowships Program in collaboration with the Walkley Foundation, which in late-2018 awarded fellowships to support 14 outstanding journalists to become newsroom champions of primary prevention.

These activities are overseen by our National Media Advisory Group, which consists of major news directors, producers, industry experts and journalism educators, ensuring that our work is relevant to news industry leaders across the nation.

Work undertaken as part of this project is in addition to, and complements, Our Watch's own engagement with the media, described in more detail in the next section of this report.



## Respectful Relationships Education

*Change the story* identifies education as an important setting for prevention. Prevention work in this setting has come to be known as ‘respectful relationships education’, with the most effective approaches adopting a whole-of-school approach. This recognises that while schools play an important role in the socialisation and cognitive and emotional development of children and young people, they are also important local community hubs with the potential to influence community attitudes and norms, and they are workplaces with a responsibility to work towards gender equality and ensure that all staff and students feel respected, safe and valued. Effective respectful relationships education, therefore, uses the education system as a catalyst for generational and cultural change by engaging schools as education institutions, as workplaces and as community hubs, in order to address the drivers of gender-based violence and create a future free from such violence.<sup>18</sup>

In recent years, an increasing number of schools and education departments across Australia have engaged with respectful relationships education, supported by its inclusion in the Australian curriculum and the provision of a number of evidence-based tools and resources, including the Our Watch *Respectful Relationships Education toolkit*.<sup>19</sup>

Our Watch has helped drive this trend, playing a key role in promoting the benefits of respectful relationships education, connecting and supporting key stakeholders in this field, and advocating for uptake across Australia. An independent evaluation of Our Watch’s first five years of operation<sup>20</sup> highlighted our work in this area as a key achievement.

### CASE STUDY

#### NATIONAL RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION EXPERT GROUP

Our Watch facilitates the National Respectful Relationships Education Expert Group, including members of state, territory and commonwealth departments of education, national education organisations and other national NGOs that work in the area. The group has been meeting since early-2017 and enables members to share lessons and strengthen their approaches. This is an example of the kind of prevention infrastructure that *Change the story* identifies as essential to support and build this work.

### CASE STUDY

#### RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION PILOTS

**In 2015, Our Watch led a respectful relationships education in secondary schools pilot in partnership with the Victorian Department of Education and 19 schools.**

The evaluation showed that students’ knowledge of, attitudes towards and confidence in discussing issues of domestic violence<sup>35</sup> improved and that schools made positive steps towards developing a culture of gender equality and respect throughout the school.<sup>36</sup> The evaluation of this pilot not only reconfirmed the evidence base in *Change the story*, but it also helped inform the recommendations of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, and in turn the statewide roll out of respectful relationships education in Victoria.

**Our Watch is currently leading a trial of approaches to respectful relationships education in primary schools, with a focus on grades 1 and 2, working with 18 schools in partnership with the Queensland and Victorian departments of education.**

There is an increasing understanding of and commitment to respectful relationships education in some jurisdictions, however, there remains a need for further resourcing and coordination in order to ensure consistent, quality-assured and evaluated respectful relationships education throughout Australia.

There is also a growing awareness that, as highlighted by *Change the story*, early childhood education and care settings also have a crucial role to play in implementing respectful relationships education. Some promising initiatives are emerging in these settings.

# Using *Change the story* to lead a public conversation that keeps violence against women – and the need for prevention – on the public agenda

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*Change the story* informs all Our Watch media engagement. This is a key part of the work we do to keep the issue of violence against women on the public agenda.

Specifically, we aim to deepen public understanding of the gendered drivers of violence against women, promote reporting and analysis that challenges these drivers, and highlight the specific and urgent need for prevention.

With a dedicated media team working nationally on this issue, our proactive media engagement involves a daily media analysis that informs and generates a tailored and strategic combination of opinion pieces, stories and interviews with the CEO, Chair and our many high-profile Ambassadors, which we seek to have covered in a range of media outlets in order to reach multiple audiences.

Our Watch also has a strong online presence that includes regular articles on our website and tailored content for use across Our Watch social media channels.

In addition to this proactive media work, Our Watch regularly provides information, comments and assistance in response to requests from journalists working on relevant stories. We work to explain the importance and nature of a primary prevention approach, highlight our own role in driving nationwide change, and achieve effective media coverage of this issue.

Our National Media Engagement program (described on page 24) is another way in which we work specifically with the media industry to improve coverage of this issue.

We work to explain the importance and nature of a primary prevention approach, highlight our own role in driving nationwide change, and achieve effective media coverage of this issue.

# Using *Change the story* to guide our approach to the monitoring and evaluation of prevention efforts

Our Watch is committed to ongoing learning to develop our understanding of the effectiveness and impact of our work, and to conducting evaluations that use a range of existing and innovative approaches that are ethical, participatory and robust.

This is central to the way in which we seek to continuously improve our own work, and to help build the shared evidence base about what works to prevent violence against women and their children across Australia.

## Project evaluation

As each initiative at Our Watch seeks to shift the gendered drivers of violence, our evaluations are specifically designed to assess the impact of the project on these drivers (and potentially on the reinforcing factors).

The socio-ecological model described in *Change the story* stresses that individual attitudes and behaviours both influence and are influenced by factors at organisational, community and societal levels. This points to the importance of evaluations that investigate each of these levels. For example, our respectful relationships education work includes measures at an individual level (students and staff), at the level of school culture, and in relation to institutional policy and practices.

There is one sense in which our project evaluations are yet to meet the best-practice approach recommended by *Change the story*, namely the need for a long-term approach. The scope of evaluations is generally limited by project funding time frames (usually 12 months), which preclude long-term follow-up to assess the sustainability of any changes observed.<sup>21</sup> This is currently a significant barrier to undertaking this work in a way that helps build the evidence to inform successful campaigns in the long term.

We conduct evaluation at three different levels:

- project and campaign evaluation
- whole-of-organisation evaluation
- national monitoring of progress towards the prevention of violence against women in Australia.

*Change the story* informs our approach to evaluation and monitoring at each of these levels, as described on the following pages.

Our Watch receives frequent requests for evaluation advice on prevention projects. As our expertise develops, we are continually working to provide updated resources to support and inform this emerging area of knowledge. We are currently developing an internal guide to primary prevention evaluation that aligns to the drivers outlined in *Change the story* and applies an intersectional lens to each step of the evaluation design, implementation and reporting process. Options for sharing this guide externally are being explored.

### CASE STUDY

#### EVALUATING OUR SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

**As part of the Third Action Plan, Our Watch is running a number of social marketing campaigns designed to encourage and support Australians to challenge the drivers of violence against women. These include *The Line*, *No Excuse for Abuse* and *Doing Nothing Does Harm*.**

Our campaign evaluations explicitly measure changes (pre-campaign launch and numerous waves post-campaign launch) in individuals' subscription to the gendered drivers of violence against women. This enables us to see the effectiveness of our campaigns in encouraging people to challenge the attitudes and behaviours that drive violence against women.

## Organisation level evaluation

As part of our ongoing commitment to learning and continuous improvement, the tools, resources and findings of Our Watch's project and program-level evaluations are used to inform the whole-of-organisation evaluation.

While interim evaluations have provided initial data for internal use, the first summative evaluation of Our Watch's work in its first five years of operation has recently been completed by an independent consultant. A summary of this report, titled *Our Watch, Our journey*, will be released publicly in 2019.

To date, our organisation-level evaluations have been aligned to the Our Watch *Five-Year Strategic Plan* (2014-2019), which predated *Change the Story*; however, our future approach to evaluation at this level (from 2019 and beyond) will be more closely aligned to measuring the drivers of violence against women described in *Change the story*.

As part of our ongoing commitment to learning and continuous improvement, the tools, resources and findings of Our Watch's project and program-level evaluations are used to inform the whole-of-organisation evaluation.

## National monitoring

Our Watch has developed the world's first guide to monitoring and measuring national, population-level change against the drivers and reinforcing factors outlined in *Change the story*.

Released in 2017, *Counting on change* is a crucial step in developing a clear map of the long-term cultural change process. It offers detailed guidance and advice on how Australia can measure the development of primary prevention infrastructure and the other inputs that are necessary to build an effective long-term approach to reducing violence against women.

The analysis provided in *Counting on change* has proven useful in communicating and building a shared understanding of the kind and scale of investment and subsequent cultural change that is necessary to reduce the prevalence of violence against women in the long term. This publication has been positively received; less than a year after its release, the 2018 Our Watch stakeholder survey showed 20% of respondents (n=264) had read or begun to integrate *Counting on change* into their work.

Our Watch is currently producing Australia's first statement of national progress on the primary prevention of violence against women, implementing our *Counting on change* guide for the first time.

**Please refer to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 for further details on *Counting on change* and *Progress in prevention* respectively.**

Lessons from  
Our Watch's ongoing  
work to deepen and  
extend the evidence  
base for prevention

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Based on a significant review of the Australian and international evidence together with substantial consultation, *Change the story* provides a rigorous and reliable evidence base for the development of a shared national approach to prevention.

As this report has shown, it also sets the foundation for all Our Watch's own ongoing work across policy and evaluation, practice leadership, and marketing and communications.

While we strive to ensure all our work is consistent with *Change the story*, we are also committed to continued learning and development of our understanding, analysis and approach. Specifically, our Operating Plan includes an objective to continue to 'expand the evidence base for prevention and share and integrate new analyses and understandings into prevention work internally and externally'. Since the publication of *Change the story*, we have been doing this in a number of ways.

We are committed to continued learning and development of our understanding, analysis and approach.

These include:

- increasing our advocacy of the need for attention to and investment in prevention workforce development
- emphasising and promoting the need for a whole-of-setting approach.
- Increasing our emphasis on the many forms that violence against women takes, in addition to physical violence
- exploring the opportunities and challenges of putting a 'gender transformative' approach to prevention into practice
- extending and deepening our capacity to take an intersectional approach to prevention, including developing resources and updating our training to incorporate this approach across all our work
- exploring the dynamics of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and working collaboratively to develop, publish and disseminate *Changing the picture*, a specific framework for prevention
- reviewing emerging research on family violence against LGBTI people.

These seven elements of our ongoing work to extend and enhance the approach outlined in *Change the story* are described in the following section.

# An urgent need for investment in, and development of, the prevention workforce

In pointing to the need to develop and significantly expand the prevention workforce, *Change the story* also noted the need for mechanisms for coordination and quality assurance as important elements of the workforce ‘infrastructure’ necessary for effective prevention.

Since its release, the critical need to address these workforce development issues has only increased. As momentum and public interest in this issue have begun to grow, the acute workforce shortage has become more obvious. There is a clear need for an approach that lays the foundations for sector development in order to enable investments at the setting or programmatic level to be effective.

*Change the story* notes that the prevention workforce will need to include both specialist prevention workers and other contributors who are working in more generalist roles in diverse sectors and settings. Specialist workers are needed not only to help develop and deliver new prevention initiatives, but also to provide content and practice expertise, leadership, technical assistance, program development and policy support to a range of important stakeholders including politicians, public servants, funders and program designers.

In addition, the scaling and ‘mainstreaming’ of prevention in diverse settings requires contributors working in generalist positions to play a critical role by embedding prevention and gender equality efforts into their existing work and the core business of their organisations.

These include, for example, human resource specialists, teachers, sports coaches and administrators. This mainstreaming also requires leadership teams in these settings who understand prevention and are prepared to commit the resources and support required for professional development, and to drive and secure whole-of-organisation support for this work.

## CASE STUDY

### BUILDING THE PREVENTION WORKFORCE

**The Victorian Family Violence Reforms provide an interesting example of work being undertaken to build an expert workforce.**

The reforms include initiatives that cover the full spectrum of response, early intervention and prevention, such as the development of a Centre for Workforce Excellence, the release of a 10-Year Industry Plan and a Census of ‘workforces that intersect with family violence’, as well as funded initiatives specifically focused on the development of the prevention workforce and the release of a Prevention of Family Violence Capability Framework. Implementation is in its early stages, and Our Watch and others will monitor developments to help build our understanding of the evidence on what works in building prevention infrastructure.

While we are seeing the slow emergence of a prevention practitioner workforce across Australia, further significant and coordinated investment and planning is required to ensure its continued growth, particularly in rural and regional locations. *Change the story*, together with *Counting on change*, our guide to prevention monitoring (described on page 46), will continue to provide the evidence base for Our Watch’s ongoing work and advocacy in this area.



## Emphasising the importance of a whole-of-setting approach

As described earlier, since the release of *Change the story*, Our Watch has been implementing its proposed approach to prevention in four specific settings (sports, workplaces, media and education).

In each case, our experience has reinforced the importance of taking a whole-of-setting approach, and provided valuable lessons about what this requires in practice. This approach recognises that within a single setting there are many different stakeholders and influencers, and therefore a need to identify actions that address the gendered drivers of violence across the whole setting.

For example, in the sports setting, this includes actions that involve players, coaches, high-performance staff, administrative staff, board members, governance personnel and fans. In the education context, it means recognising that a school is not just a place of education, it is also a workplace and a community hub, and that prevention strategies need to engage people at all of these levels.

This whole-of-setting approach is also a response to the need outlined in *Change the story* for prevention efforts to work in holistic, complementary ways at many levels, addressing norms, structures and practices at the individual, community, organisational, institutional and societal levels.

The work of Our Watch in these four settings has allowed us to continue to test the implementation of *Change the story*, including identifying gaps in practice knowledge and ways that existing practice knowledge and resources can be adapted for each setting. Through this work, we are adding to the growing evidence base of what works to prevent violence against women in these particular settings, as well as providing models for how prevention work in the other seven settings identified in *Change the story* might be approached.

Some of the findings and lessons learned from the development and implementation of this settings-based work can be found in our various publications.<sup>22</sup>

The whole-of-setting approach recognises that within a single setting there are many different stakeholders and influencers



## Reiterating the need to identify and prevent *all* forms of violence

*Change the story* stressed that, as the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) makes clear, violence against women takes many forms, including physical, sexual and psychological violence.

Since its release, public recognition of the prevalence of violence against women in Australia has significantly increased. Arguably, however, it has most often been physical violence that is the specific focus of media reporting and public and political debate.

Most recently, the rise of the #metoo movement has helped increase the focus on sexual violence, particularly non-partner sexual assault and harassment – a long-overdue recognition of the prevalence of these particular forms of violence against women.

Our Watch continues to work to bring attention to *all* forms of violence against women and to build understanding that, as *Change the story* states, the many forms of gender-based violence are interrelated, exist on a continuum and share many of the same drivers.

Our recent submission<sup>23</sup> to the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Inquiry into sexual harassment in Australian workplaces is one example of our ongoing work to bring attention to the connections between different forms of gendered violence.

Another example is our No Excuse for Abuse campaign,<sup>24</sup> which focuses on raising awareness of non-physical forms of violence, including financial, social, emotional, spiritual and technological abuse and control, and stalking. Related to this is our practitioner tool, *Unpacking violence: a storytelling resource for understanding non-physical forms of abuse and the gendered drivers of violence against women*.<sup>25</sup>

The rise of the #metoo movement has helped increase the focus on sexual violence, particularly non-partner sexual assault and harassment.

## Emphasising the importance of a ‘gender transformative’ approach

*Change the story* noted the importance of a ‘gender transformative’ approach to prevention. Our ongoing work across many areas, from policy to practice, media and campaigns has reiterated the need for greater emphasis on this principle, including further explanation of why such an approach is critical, and greater clarity and guidance about what it means for prevention policy and practice.

Gender transformative theory, in relation to various areas of social policy and practice, has outlined a continuum of gendered approaches, ranging from ‘gender blind’ and ‘gender exploitative’ to ‘gender sensitive’ and ‘gender transformative’.<sup>26</sup> Our ongoing work to develop gender transformative approaches to the prevention of violence against women continues to demonstrate the importance of this approach compared to other approaches:

- ‘Gender blind’ policy and practice either assumes there are no gender issues and dynamics relevant to the issue at hand, or deliberately ignores them, in the name of ‘treating everyone the same’. Given the clear evidence about the gendered dynamics of violence against women in Australia, such an approach to prevention is highly inappropriate. At best it will make no difference to the problem because it does nothing to address the gendered drivers of this violence, and at worst it will reinforce and perpetuate those drivers.
- ‘Gender exploitative’ approaches actively take advantage of rigid gender norms, harmful gender stereotypes and unequal power relations between women and men to achieve policy or program goals. Examples are campaigns that suggest that ‘real men’ are not violent towards women, or that appeal to women to protect themselves from violence by changing what they wear or how they behave. Such an approach can simply reinforce the stereotypes and power inequalities that underpin violence against women in the first place.
- ‘Gender sensitive’ approaches take gender into account by acknowledging the way it shapes and influences different people’s experiences, perspectives and needs, and attempting to respond to these by ‘meeting people where they are’. When carefully designed, such approaches can be a very useful starting point for prevention policy and practice, and can help to effectively engage people and organisations. However, in the long run, sensitivity to current gendered experiences and dynamics does not necessarily challenge or change the underlying power relations that produce these experiences and that also underpin violence against women.
- A ‘gender transformative’ approach to prevention contrasts with these other approaches because its aim is to *transform* the prevailing social systems and structures that produce and maintain gender inequality and drive violence against women. In order to be gender transformative, prevention work must actively challenge and change (rather than inadvertently reinforce or perpetuate) those harmful gendered social norms, structures and practices. Gender transformative prevention work therefore deliberately questions and challenges rigid and hierarchical gender roles and stereotypical constructions of masculinity and femininity, and promotes alternative norms, structures and practices that are based on gender equality and respect.

Implicit in gender transformative theory is the understanding that gender inequality is produced and reproduced through a complex interplay of social norms, practices and structures. Because they operate at all levels of society, these gendered dynamics both produce the gendered drivers of violence against women, and make these drivers highly resistant to change.

This means that the task of preventing violence against women is ultimately one not of individual behaviour change, but of long-term social change. It requires us to transform the systems and structures of gender inequality, rather than ignoring them, reinforcing them, or only working within them. Building support for, and encouraging investment in, systemic and structural change (as opposed to only individual behaviour change) is an ongoing challenge.

A further challenge is to ensure that our pursuit of gender transformative approaches is integrated with our ongoing work to acknowledge and respond to other systems and structures of discrimination, described in the discussion on the following pages on the need for an intersectional approach. This involves applying what *Change the story* calls 'an intersectional gender-power analysis',<sup>27</sup> recognising that, in order to prevent violence against *all* women, prevention work needs to be both gender transformative and intersectional.

In order to be gender transformative, prevention work must actively challenge and change (rather than inadvertently reinforce or perpetuate) harmful gendered social norms, structures and practices.

# Developing our capacity to take and promote an ‘intersectional approach’ to prevention

*Change the story* focuses on gender inequality as critical to understanding the gendered patterns and dynamics of violence against women.

However, it also recognises that gender inequality can never be considered in isolation from the other intersecting forms of systemic social, political and economic discrimination and disadvantage that characterise our society, such as racism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia.<sup>28</sup> Such intersecting factors not only reduce or limit some women’s access to social and economic power and resources, and their perceived worth, but also affect the relative influence of gender inequality, gendered drivers and reinforcing factors in any given context. As such, they can play a significant role in increasing the frequency, severity and prevalence of violence against women and in creating particular forms of impunity and immunity to violence.

It was for this reason that *Change the story* included an action to ‘promote broader social equality and address structural discrimination and disadvantage’.<sup>29</sup> Adopting this intersectional approach is necessary to ensure we are working to prevent violence against *all* women in Australia.

Through implementing *Change the story*, Our Watch has continued to develop our understanding and analysis of intersectionality. We have determined that while an intersectional *response* to violence often requires a focus on the experiences, perspectives and needs of particular women, or groups of women, who are experiencing violence, an intersectional approach to *preventing* violence is quite different.

Intersectional prevention work requires more of a structural and systemic focus to address the social systems, structures, norms and practices that create complex intersecting forms of discrimination and privilege, and that influence patterns of perpetration as well as experiences of violence. In practice, embedding an intersectional approach in prevention work means allowing the time and space to think about both similarities and differences, and to consider nuances and complexities, and how these might be effectively addressed within, and as part of, an approach that aims to reach everyone across our diverse population.

Our Watch has taken a number of steps to act on and strengthen our organisational commitment to an intersectional approach. We resourced a role to guide our organisational focus on this issue and ensure we continue to evolve our understanding and build our capacity to take an intersectional approach. We formalised this work by developing an inaugural organisational *Intersectional strategy 2016-2017* (since reviewed, renewed and extended to 2020). This strategy is driving our work to embed intersectional approaches across all our work.

An intersectional lens also means acknowledging that no single initiative or approach will be equally relevant to all groups or effective in every context. This reinforces the need outlined in *Change the story* for multiple different, but mutually reinforcing, efforts that collectively will build a national approach to the prevention of violence against *all* women.

Building alliances and partnerships is critical to support this collective approach. We have maintained an ongoing dialogue with partners in our sector, especially organisations that specialise in working with populations affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequality.

Our Watch is committed to further developing our capacity to be an effective ally, and to using our profile and platform to amplify the voices of groups that have previously been given little opportunity to contribute to public debate on this issue. This approach will also help ensure Our Watch contributes appropriately to collective challenges of racism, ableism, ageism, classism, homophobia and transphobia and efforts to address the legacies of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, all of which are outlined as aspects of Action 10 of *Change the story*.<sup>30</sup>

As part of our deepening intersectional approach, Our Watch has also continued to build the evidence base about the dynamics and drivers of violence in specific population groups, and the implications for prevention. This work is based on a key principle of intersectionality, namely that rather than developing totally separate or 'additional' approaches for particular groups, we need to recognise and respond to the complex *intersections* between different forms of discrimination and disadvantage, power and privilege. Two examples of this evidence-building work on violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and family violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people, are described on the following pages.

While an intersectional *response* to violence often requires a focus on the experiences, perspectives and needs of particular women, or groups of women, who are experiencing violence, an intersectional approach to *preventing* violence is quite different. It requires more of a structural and systemic focus.

# Exploring violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and developing a specific approach to prevention

Between 2016 and 2018, Our Watch dedicated significant time and resources to the development of a follow-up to *Change the story* focused specifically on preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (for a description of this publication, titled *Changing the picture*, see Appendix 3).

As *Change the story* originally noted, a national framework designed for relevance across the diverse Australian population could acknowledge the specific dynamics, context and impacts of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, but it could not explore the issue in the depth required to do it justice.<sup>31</sup>

For this reason, *Change the story* committed Our Watch to a separate project that would give dedicated consideration to the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in particular. It also committed us to developing this in a way that was guided by a participatory process where the voices, experiences, ideas and solutions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people themselves were central.

The development of this work provided an opportunity to explore this issue in depth. It enabled us to carefully consider what aspects of *Change the story* might be relevant, and what additional analysis and conceptual development were needed to understand the unique dynamics of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and to develop an effective approach to its prevention.

Throughout the substantial research and consultation that informed *Changing the picture*, it became clear that there were a number of highly significant drivers and contextual factors underpinning violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, which are both additional to and intersect with the gendered drivers outlined in *Change the story*.

It also became clear that gendered drivers themselves can play out in particular racialised ways. Both these points suggest that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's experiences of both gender inequality and violence are both similar *and* different to the experiences of non-Indigenous women.

The analysis developed in *Changing the picture* shows that violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women cannot be understood in isolation from its social, cultural and political context – one that includes both the significant impacts of colonisation and gendered factors. This context influences both the perpetration of this violence (by men of all cultural backgrounds) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's experiences of it.

*Changing the picture* shows that neither a gendered analysis, nor an analysis of the impacts of colonisation, is on its own sufficient to understand this violence. What is needed is to combine the insights of both these approaches – in a careful intersectional way, rather than simply 'adding' the two sets of factors together. By doing this, the conceptual model developed in the *Changing the picture* background paper both highlights the many impacts of colonisation as drivers of this violence, and integrates a gendered analysis. This model informs the explicitly intersectional approach to prevention outlined in the action framework section of the resource – one that calls for multiple actions to address each of the intersecting drivers of this violence.

The development of this resource provided valuable lessons and insights into the complex interactions and intersections between the different systems of oppression, discrimination and inequality that characterise contemporary society, and highlighted the importance of developing a careful intersectional analysis of, and approach to, this issue. It also provided an opportunity for Our Watch to develop alliances with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Continuing to find ways to develop such alliances will be critical to help build the kind of collective approach described in Action 10 of *Change the story* that is necessary to challenge racism and address the ongoing legacies of colonisation.



# Exploring the issue of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people

In 2017, Our Watch worked with a series of partner organisations in Victoria to explore emerging evidence about family violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. (For a description of this publication, see Appendix 3.

The scope of this work is slightly different from Our Watch's usual focus. The specific focus on 'family violence' is narrower than our usual concern with 'all forms of violence against women', while the focus on violence against LGBTI people is broader than our usual specific focus on women. This project provided an important opportunity to work with our partners to review, share and develop the evidence base on these overlapping and interconnected issues.

*Change the story* recognises that women who experience violence are diverse, and specifically that some are lesbian, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, queer or intersex.<sup>32</sup> However, because *Change the story* is a broad national framework, it does not go into any depth about the specific issues relevant to violence experienced by these groups of women, nor the specific drivers of violence perpetrated against them. This follow-up piece of work delves deeply into these issues. As such, it is aligned with Action 10 in *Change the story*, which calls for an intersectional approach to promoting social equality and transforming structural discrimination and disadvantage, as well as partnerships and coalitions that build collective challenges to all forms of discrimination, including homophobia and transphobia.<sup>33</sup> The development of the report itself involved forming alliances of precisely this kind with LGBTIQ<sup>34</sup> organisations and experts, with the goal of jointly challenging homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and intersexism as well as sexism and gender inequality.

As the report highlights, there are similarities and intersections, as well as significant distinctions between, the drivers of violence against cisgender heterosexual women and violence against LGBTI people. For example, the report notes the way in which dominant approaches to sex, gender and sexuality not only drive violence against women, but contribute to the prevalence of violence against LGBTI people, noting that efforts to address societal gender structures are fundamental in preventing both forms of violence. It also discusses the need for approaches to family violence against LGBTI people to include analyses that move beyond binary gender and hetero-centric approaches.

Acknowledging and understanding these complexities can help to inform more effective, intersectional approaches to the prevention of violence. It can also help identify opportunities for more effective cross-sectoral collaboration on violence prevention strategies. This report gives Our Watch and other stakeholders a significant foundation for further collaborative work on this issue in the future.

Dominant approaches to sex, gender and sexuality not only drive violence against women, but contribute to the prevalence of violence against LGBTI people.

# Conclusion

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Since its launch in 2015 *Change the story* has had noticeable impacts, both internally in providing a robust evidence base for the organisation, and externally in advancing the primary prevention agenda nationally.

At the organisational level, *Change the story* has created a robust evidence base for all Our Watch's developing work. All our subsequent activities, in practice leadership, policy, media and communications, have been informed by this evidence base, and by the conceptual framework and practical approach to prevention outlined in *Change the story*. This has created a high degree of conceptual consistency across Our Watch's activities, and helped us to prioritise and focus on those activities that the framework shows are most needed to prevent violence against women. In turn, this consistent, comprehensive, evidence-based approach has enabled a new organisation to grow into the respected national leader on primary prevention that Our Watch has become in this relatively short period.

The impact of *Change the story* externally is also marked, particularly given the short period since its release. In a recent evaluation of Our Watch, it was the evidence base provided by *Change the story* that was noted as the most significant and valuable contribution of the organisation so far. Among those stakeholders who are aware of the framework – both policymakers and practitioners – there are high levels of understanding, respect for its evidence base, and endorsement of its approach. By embedding it into the *Third Action Plan* under the *National Plan*, all Australian governments formally and collectively endorsed *Change the story*. In addition, many individual jurisdictions have referenced and endorsed it in their own policy strategies and plans. Among practitioners too there is a high level of respect for *Change the story* as the national prevention framework, with many already incorporating elements of the approach into their own work, or that of their organisations.

These are promising early signs of uptake and impact. However, there remains significant further work to do to translate this initial awareness, understanding and overall endorsement for *Change the story* into concrete, appropriately funded and long-term actions at the policy level in every jurisdiction. There is also much work and investment needed in order to build and support the kind of prevention workforce that will be necessary to implement *Change the story* on the ground, across the country, in diverse settings and in the consistent and comprehensive way that a whole-of-population approach requires.

Our Watch remains committed to driving this change, working with governments, policymakers and practitioners, both existing and emerging, across the country to realise the enormous potential represented by the initial positive response to *Change the story*, and the shared national approach to prevention that it outlines. We also remain committed to continuing to improve our own work, building on and expanding the initial evidence base that *Change the story* provides, evolving our thinking, and embedding the lessons we continue to learn into all of our ongoing work.

In a recent evaluation of Our Watch, it was the evidence base provided by *Change the story* that was noted as the most significant and valuable contribution of the organisation so far.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: References to *Change the story* in government policies, by jurisdiction

(as at December 2018)

Australian Capital Territory	<i>ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026.</i>	None – strategy predates <i>Change the story</i> .
National (COAG)	<i>Third Action Plan (2016-2019) of the Australian National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022.</i>	Action 1.1a: All jurisdictions commit to implementing Our Watch's <i>Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia</i> .
Northern Territory	<i>The Northern Territory's Domestic, Family &amp; Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028.</i>	Directly references <i>Change the story</i> as key to understanding the issue, and cites the gendered drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women as they are described in <i>Change the story</i> .
New South Wales	<i>NSW Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2017-2021.</i>	No direct reference. Includes a broad action to implement the <i>Third Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women &amp; Their Children 2010-2022</i> .
New South Wales	<i>NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018-2021.</i>	No direct reference. Includes a broad commitment to support prevention initiatives under the <i>National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women &amp; Their Children 2010-2022</i> .
Queensland	<i>Queensland Violence Against Women Prevention Plan 2016-2022.</i>	A key action under outcome 1 (shifting community attitudes and behaviours that support or excuse violence against women) is to support Our Watch to implement <i>Change the story</i> and to develop a primary prevention model for violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
Queensland	<i>Queensland says not now, not ever. Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy, 2016-2022.</i>	None – strategy predates <i>Change the story</i> .
South Australia	<i>A right to safety: the next phase of South Australia's Women's Safety Strategy 2011-2022.</i>	None – strategy predates <i>Change the story</i> .
Tasmania	<i>Safe homes, safe families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020.</i>	None – strategy predates <i>Change the story</i> .
Victoria	<i>Ending family violence: Victoria's plan for change.</i>	Indirect reference: 'Respect Victoria will work with Australia's national primary prevention organisation, Our Watch, and other organisations working in the field of prevention to change the attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence in Victoria'.
Victoria	<i>Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.</i>	Cites <i>Change the story</i> and adopts its definitions of violence against women and gender inequality.  Notes that <i>Free from violence</i> builds on the evidence and conceptual model and approach of <i>Change the story</i> (including gendered drivers of violence against women, reinforcing factors, key settings and messages to affect change), but deviates from it to ensure all (other) forms of 'family violence' are addressed.  Notes the compounding nature of violence against women when gender inequality intersects with other forms of systemic social, political and economic discrimination and disadvantage, such as racism, ageism, ableism and homophobia, consistent with <i>Change the story</i> .
Western Australia	<i>Western Australia's Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022.</i>	None – strategy predates <i>Change the story</i> .

## Appendix 2: Qualitative feedback about the limitations of *Change the story* to date

(Thematic summary based on the 64 open-ended comments provided in 2018 stakeholder survey)

Theme	Illustrative quote
Respondents unsure of the influence of <i>Change the story</i> nationally.	'I work in a Victorian-focused organisation and am not as up to date with PVAW work in other states/nationally. So I'm not sure how much of an influence CTS has had nationally but it certainly promotes and creates the space for a more consistent approach.'
<i>Change the story</i> requires more nuance about children, cultural and linguistic diversity and violence against Aboriginal women.	'The <i>Change the story</i> National Framework needs to reflect the diversity of the population. In its current state [it] does not reflect a story that the majority of population groups can associate with.'
Respondents have a personal understanding of the framework but others in their workplace or sector do not.	'I work for a very large organisation where most people, particularly senior leadership, do not seem to understand the issue of violence against women. So even though I am familiar with the work Our Watch does and with <i>Change the story</i> , that does not mean my organisation is on board and ready.'
Degree of influence to date is limited because there has not yet been wide social and legal change.	' <i>Change the story</i> has not yet led to changes in the law, regulations, prosecution style [or] inherent values of decision-makers at each step of the social process. It would be effective if it led to mandated requirements for properly trained people at every step of the social process. Utopia notwithstanding.'
Follow-up work needed to translate <i>Change the story</i> into practice.	'The framework is incredibly complex and hard to navigate for practitioners as it is highly theoretical and evidence heavy. I don't think the framework should be different as I think the tone gives a level of rigour that's required; however, it will be important to ensure that easy-to-use and understand tools are developed to support analysis, understanding and implementation for policy and practice staff. Current toolkits that have been developed are incredibly intensive and difficult to work through for anyone who isn't well-versed in prevention and they require a significant amount of time to digest and work through'.

## Appendix 3: Additional resources produced to complement and extend *Change the story*

This section provides a description of some of the key resources Our Watch has produced since the publication of *Change the story*, which complement the framework and help deepen, extend and nuance the evidence and approach presented there.



All these resources are available on the Our Watch website: [www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)

### *Putting the prevention of violence against women into practice: how to Change the story*

This practice handbook shows how the ‘big picture’ framework of *Change the story* can be translated into ‘on-the-ground’ action. Written for practitioners, it provides practical advice and information on how to implement the actions that *Change the story* identifies as necessary for preventing violence against women. It includes:

- tips for best-practice based on the experiences of practitioners in Australia
- key principles to inform good prevention practice, project planning, evaluation, and communication
- case studies and examples of existing practice
- links to further resources and tools.

Although written with practitioners in mind, how to *Change the story* is also a valuable tool for policymakers and others with responsibility for planning and investment in prevention practice.

### *A team effort: preventing violence against women through sport*

Produced by RMIT University and Our Watch, this resource analyses current initiatives, literature and evidence and outlines 10 key actions that sporting organisations and communities can take to help prevent violence against women.

*A team effort* draws on stakeholder consultations and a review of both peer-reviewed academic and grey literature (reports, reviews and evaluations) on sport as a setting for change, as well as current prevention initiatives in this setting. It draws on and distils this evidence into 10 key elements of promising practice in sport. These outline the actions sporting organisations and communities can take to help eliminate violence against women by promoting women’s participation and opportunities, challenging gender stereotypes and roles, challenging violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours, and encouraging respectful, healthy and equal relationships on and off the sporting field.

## *Primary prevention of family violence against people from LGBTI communities: an analysis of existing research*

A comprehensive literature review exploring family violence against people from lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse and intersex (LGBTI) communities, and implications for prevention. This review was commissioned by the Victorian Government in response to needs identified by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, and in recognition of the significant gaps in research and knowledge with respect to this issue. It was produced in partnership with Dr Philomena Horsley and GLHV@ARCSHS, La Trobe University.

The report considers the social context of family violence against LGBTI people, and develops an LGBTI-inclusive model of family violence. This model incorporates consideration of the intersections between constructions of sex, gender and sexuality, the influence of gendered structures on violence against LGBTI people, power and control in LGBTI relationships, and the multiple expressions and impacts of heterosexism and heteronormativity. The report then reviews existing LGBTI violence prevention initiatives in Australia and internationally, as well as other potentially relevant programs for LGBTI audiences. Informed by the evidence reviewed and the specific conceptual model it develops, the paper makes recommendations about future directions, guiding principles and next steps for prevention initiatives and research.

## *Counting on change: a guide to prevention monitoring*

*Counting on change* is a world-first publication that provides a comprehensive guide to measuring population-level progress towards prevention. How to best monitor and measure change at this level was one of the key challenges highlighted by *Change the story*. While Australia measures population-level prevalence of violence against women through the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey, *Change the story* acknowledged that it may take 10 years or more of multi-pronged and sustained prevention efforts to create quantifiable change against these prevalence indicators. *Counting on change* seeks to 'fill in the picture' by providing a framework on how to consistently collect and report on data that will tell us, in the short- to medium-term if there is population-level change against the drivers and reinforcing factors of violence. In doing so it aims to support data collection and measurement at the national, state and territory levels, and provide funders and policymakers with evidence-based practice guidance on how they can best measure progress towards prevention.

## *Changing the picture: a national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children*

Developed by Our Watch in close collaboration and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, *Changing the picture* is a two-part resource to support the primary prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The solutions-focused practice framework outlines how violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women can be prevented. It describes the actions that are needed to change and shift the many underlying drivers of this violence, presents a set of principles that should guide this prevention work, and includes illustrations of current work being undertaken around the country.

The framework is supported by a background paper that draws on extensive research and consultation to examine the dynamics and impacts of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to develop a conceptual model for understanding the intersecting drivers of this violence. The background paper provides the evidence, analysis and conceptual approach that underpins the practice framework.

*Changing the picture* is designed as a national resource – intended to encourage, guide and support a national effort – by many organisations and stakeholders, at many levels and in many settings. It is aimed at a diverse audience – government and non-government, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and individuals and organisations. It is relevant both to practitioners who are working 'on the ground' (in numerous fields and in both Indigenous-specific and 'mainstream' contexts), as well as those involved in policy development and program funding, design, planning or implementation.



## Appendix 4: Forthcoming work and future directions

In addition to the completed work described in this report, at the time of writing, Our Watch was engaged in a number of ongoing projects that aim to apply, deepen or extend the approach outlined in *Change the story*. These include:

### Assessing and reporting on progress towards prevention at the national level

Our Watch is currently operationalising *Counting on change* by producing a 'baseline and progress' report on population-level change towards prevention in Australia. When complete, this will represent Australia's first assessment of national progress on the primary prevention of violence against women.

This work, titled *Progress in prevention*, will first track changes in prevalence, drivers and reinforcing factors of violence against women from 2009-2017, and will then look to map and measure primary prevention infrastructure and programming (including, for example, measures in relation to prevention workforce development, policy and legislative reform, mechanisms for collaboration, and development of quality standards).

It is envisaged that the *Progress in prevention* reports will help us support governments to deliver on their commitments under the *National Plan*. The reports will also inform Our Watch's own strategic role in building primary prevention infrastructure and practice capability. Accompanying communication pieces will be used to foster public discussion about how Australia is progressing in the prevention of violence against women.

### Development of an evidence paper on the role of masculinities

This project will develop an evidence paper that examines the links between challenging dominant forms of masculinity and preventing violence against women by addressing its key drivers.

The project involves a thorough review of Australian and international literature and practice evidence. We are also consulting with experts – both to inform the paper and to build relationships to help strengthen the national capacity for masculinities research and advocacy as a critical contribution to primary prevention strategies and efforts.

The paper will analyse the findings of this research and consultation to identify implications for prevention efforts, with a specific focus on:

- engaging men and boys in ways that support and equip them to recognise and challenge harmful forms of masculinity
- promoting respectful and positive forms of masculinity
- reducing backlash to gender equality violence prevention strategies.

This project will help extend and develop the evidence base for Our Watch's own work, deepening our organisational knowledge and improving our capacity to develop effective policy, campaigns and practice tools and resources. It will also enable us to provide valuable evidence-based guidance on this issue to prevention practitioners and policymakers.



## Development of an evidence paper on the prevention of violence against women with disabilities.

Our Watch is working in collaboration with Women With Disabilities Victoria to review the evidence on what drives violence against women with disabilities, and what specific approaches are needed to prevent this violence.

The current phase of this project is compiling a literature review, which will be used to inform the development of a draft conceptual model, and a set of practice principles to guide the prevention of violence against women with disabilities.

Resources allowing, it is envisaged that future phases will consult and 'test' these materials with a diverse range of stakeholders with relevant expertise, knowledge and experiences.

## Pornography, young people and preventing violence against women

Our Watch has produced a (currently unpublished) paper exploring the relationship between young people's use of, or exposure to, pornography and the development of the kinds of attitudes and beliefs that are known to drive violence against women. The paper approaches pornography as a powerful medium for conveying messages or ideas about sex, sexuality and relationships, men's and women's roles and identities, and masculinity and femininity. It draws on (largely international) literature on young people's experiences of pornography, together with new data from a 2018 Our Watch survey of nearly 2,000 Australian young people aged 15-20. It finds that there is reliable evidence that pornography reinforces the underlying drivers of violence against women, is regularly accessed by young people, and is impacting on their attitudes, behaviours and experiences.

The paper was produced to inform the development of an effective approach to working on this issue, with a view to reducing the underlying drivers of violence against women and assisting young people to develop positive, equal and respectful relationships by seeking to address pornography's influence.

## Endnotes

- 1 Webster, K., Diemer, K., Honey, N., Mannix, S., Mickle, J., Morgan, J., Parkes, A., Politoff, V., Powell, A., Stubbs, J., & Ward, A. (2018). *Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality. Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS)* (Research report, 03/2018). Sydney, NSW: ANROWS.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 This term is used to point specifically to the targeted anti-feminist tactics that deliberately aim to discredit any approach that includes an analysis of gender inequality. It is not intended to include other divergent but constructive perspectives on the issue that, for example, point to the need to consider other factors in addition to, or at intersection with a gendered analysis.
- 4 Such backlash is evident in the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey, which shows that between 2013 and 2017 there was a decrease in understanding that women are more likely to suffer from domestic violence and that men are more likely to perpetrate it. Webster, K., Diemer, K., Honey, N., Mannix, S., Mickle, J., Morgan, J., Parkes, A., Politoff, V., Powell, A., Stubbs, J., & Ward, A. (2018). *Australians' attitudes to violence against women and gender equality. Findings from the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS)* (Research report, 03/2018). Sydney, NSW: ANROWS.
- 5 Only commonwealth and state/territory policies were reviewed. This project did not have the capacity to review local government policies. However Our Watch is aware of a number of cases of *Change the story* being used at the local government level. One key example is the Municipal Association of Victoria's reference to *Change the story* as the key framework guiding the approach to the prevention of violence against women across local governments in Victoria. See Municipal Association of Victoria (2018) Preventing Violence Against Women Network Terms of Reference: [https://www.mav.asn.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/21309/MAV-PVAW-Network-ToR-September-2018.pdf](https://www.mav.asn.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/21309/MAV-PVAW-Network-ToR-September-2018.pdf). In addition, *Change the story* is a key framework used in the Commonwealth Department of Social Services' *Local Government Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Toolkit*, currently being trialled in five Local Government Areas across Australia.
- 6 PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2018). *Our Watch, Our Journey* (independent evaluation report). Available at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/>
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Following the adoption of General Recommendation 19 in 1992, this is an obligation under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to which Australia is a signatory. While other stakeholders also need to play a part, the need (and obligation) for the state to take primary responsibility for this work is widely noted. See, for example, United Kingdom Department for International Development (2012) A theory of change for tackling violence against women and girls, CHASE Guidance Note 1, p.4. <http://gadnetwork.org/violence-against-women-and-girls/>
- 10 See for example, Michau, L., Horn, J., Bank, A., Dutt, M. and Zimmerman, C. (2014) Prevention of violence against women and girls: lessons from practice, *The Lancet*, 385(9978), pp. 1672–1684, and Dyson, S. (2012) Preventing violence against women and girls: From community activism to government policy: Working paper, Partners for Prevention, Bangkok, [http://partners4prevention.org/sites/default/files/documents/right\\_to\\_respect.pdf](http://partners4prevention.org/sites/default/files/documents/right_to_respect.pdf)
- 11 PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2018). *Our Watch, Our Journey* (independent evaluation report). Available at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/>
- 12 Our Watch undertook stakeholder surveys previous to 2017, however, as the data is not comparable to previous years, it has not been included in this analysis.

- 13 (Unpublished) preformative and developmental research undertaken to inform the development of the Doing Nothing Does Harm campaign.
- 14 TNS Kantar 2015 and 2017. Survey research undertaken for Our Watch to inform *The Line* campaign.
- 15 Not all these audiences received the stakeholder survey – for example, those who attended conference presentations did not.
- 16 To view the WER Standards and associated tools, resources and information, visit our website: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/Workplace-Equality-and-Respect-Hub/Home>
- 17 Liston, R., Mortimer, S., Hamilton, G. and Cameron, R. (2017). *A team effort: preventing violence against women through sport*. Evidence Guide prepared for Our Watch. Melbourne: RMIT University. Available at [www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)
- 18 Our Watch 2015, *Respectful Relationships Education in Schools, Evidence paper*. Available at [www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)
- 19 Our Watch (2016) *Respectful Relationships Education toolkit*. Available at [www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)
- 20 PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2018). *Our Watch, Our Journey* (independent evaluation report). Available at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/>
- 21 Our longest running campaign, *The Line*, is the exception to this, with three years of tracking data collected to date.
- 22 See for example, Liston et al. (2017) at note 17 above, and Our Watch (2015) *Respectful Relationships Education in Schools evidence paper*, available at [www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)
- 23 Available at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/News-media/Latest-news/National-Inquiry-into-Sexual-Harassment-Our-Watch>
- 24 View the six *No Excuse for Abuse campaign* videos at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/no-excuse/home>
- 25 Available at: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/News-media/Latest-news/Our-Watch-launches-new-storytelling-resource-for-p>
- 26 See Women’s Health Victoria (2012) *Gender transformative policy and practice*. Available at: [http://prestohost32.inmagic.com/Presto/search/SearchResults.aspx?q=\(Clearinghouse.CatID=\(30411\)\)](http://prestohost32.inmagic.com/Presto/search/SearchResults.aspx?q=(Clearinghouse.CatID=(30411)))
- 27 *Change the story*, p. 49.
- 28 See *Change the story*, p. 22, 28 and 31 for further explanation.
- 29 *Change the story*, p. 34.
- 30 *Change the story*, p.34.
- 31 See *Change the story*, p.3.
- 32 *Change the story*, p.19.
- 33 See *Change the story*, p. 34.
- 34 The scope of the project described here, as set by the Victorian Government that funded the project, was family violence against ‘LGBTI’ people, hence this is used when referring to this project, however Our Watch generally uses the broader acronym ‘LGBTIQ’.
- 35 In the evaluation surveys, the term ‘domestic violence’ was used instead of our usual reference to ‘violence against women’ for consistency with the wording of existing standardised tools – in this instance, the 2017 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey.
- 36 Our Watch 2016, *Respectful Relationships Education in schools: the beginnings of change. Final evaluation report*. Available at [www.ourwatch.org.au](http://www.ourwatch.org.au)



